"Thus saith the Lord. 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."

The above passage pictures a man standing where a number of roads lead in different directions. There is only one, however, leading to the desired destination. He has the responsibility of choosing the proper one — the old paths. The prophet does not say that it doesn't make any difference which path the traveler takes. He does not say that one is just as good as another. On the other hand, he places strong emphasis upon choosing the right way and walking therein. Thus, let's observe that although the ways of false teachers are many, there is only one way taught by the Lord. In John 14, Jesus said: "I am THE way." Peter said in 2 Pet. 2:12. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways: by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

He who follows the true way in religion, the Old Paths, is following the divine pattern. I would like to insist that in every dispensation God has given his people a divine standard, a pattern.

In Gen. 6:14. Noah was commanded to make an ark of gopher wood. In verse 15 God said. "And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of." Then in verses 15 through 22 instructions were given in regard to the ark. And in verse 22 the record says: "Thus did Noah according to all that God commanded him. so did he." He built the ark, therefore, according to the pattern.

In Heb. 8:5. the writer said. "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for. see. saith he. that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." Moses could have built the tabernacle to please himself had God not given him a pattern. However, since he was given a pattern by the God...
of heaven, he was obligated to follow it. In the Christian dispensation, the New Testament is our pattern. Every religious act must be according to it. Paul said in 1 Thess. 5:21, "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good." John gave a warning. He said in 1 John 4:11, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: for many false prophets are gone out into the world." Paul also warned the elders of the church at Ephesus in the following statement: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:29.)

According to the divine pattern, from which we are warned not to depart, the gospel was preached, and those who believed and obeyed made up the church. There was one church, and it was organized on the day of Pentecost. Jesus commissioned the apostles to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," stating that "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mk. 16:15,16.) Peter preached the gospel and told his hearers to "repent and be baptized for the remission of sins." The record further states that those who "gladly received the word were baptized." Then in the 47th verse of Acts 2, it is stated that the "Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." According to the divine pattern — the old paths — the gospel was preached, people received it, obeyed it and were added to the church. No one joined the church, neither was he voted in by the members. The members were called Christians. (Acts 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16.) They dared not wear any other name.

According to the divine pattern, there are definite characteristics of this early church. The church was benevolent and missionary-minded. It did its work without a separate organization. The work was supported by voluntary offerings. (1 Cor. 16:2.) The Christians met upon the first day of the week to break bread and were warned not to forsake it. (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Heb. 10:25.) When these disciples met upon the first day of the week, they observed the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7); they sang hymns and spiritual songs (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19); contributed of their possessions as the Lord had prospered them (1 Cor. 16:2); read the scriptures (Acts 2:42); and prayed. (Acts 2:42.)

Eventually the church strayed from the Old Paths — God's pattern. Instead of following the original pattern with reference to the conditions of pardon, men began to teach that it was not necessary to conform to the original plan. As a result, the "unconditional salvation" theory was taught and also the "faith only" theory. (It is a rare thing to hear a preacher tell a penitent believer what Peter did on the day of Pentecost: "Repent, ye, and be baptized for the remission of sins.") Believers in Christ no longer wore the name Christian to the exclusion of all other names. Names were worn to honor men, like "Lutheran"; to exalt a doctrine like "Baptists" or "Holiness"; or to describe a system of government, like "Presbyterian" or "Methodist."

With reference to the weekly assembly, there was a departure. Some advocated the members should meet quarterly and others, semi-annually to partake of the Lord's Supper.

The work of the church was supported by suppers, shows, etc. Instrumental music began to be used; missionary societies were organized; sprinkling and pouring were substituted for baptism.

In the 19th century a plea was made

(See A PLEA . . . Page 5)
The law and the gospel are separate and distinct. The latter is superior to the former in all its essentials. While the two are closely related in the sense that the one foreshadowed the other, they are as different as a man and his shadow, a house and the blueprint, a real image and a faint outline. Christianity is not a new patch on an old garment. It is a new system. The New Testament is not a sort of remodeling of the Old Testament. If we fail to recognize the fundamental differences between Judaism and Christianity, Moses' law and Christ's gospel, the first covenant and the second covenant, the Bible will be meaningless to us.

Weaknesses of the Law

Christ stands in the exalted position of being the mediator of a better covenant, "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second." (Heb. 8:7.) The old law was perfect in one sense—for the accomplishment of all for which God designed it. On the other hand it was faulty. The following are some of its outstanding weaknesses:

1. **It was for the Israelites only.** (Ex. 20:1,2; Deut. 5:1-5.) God never intended that the old covenant be the means of saving the multitudes throughout all the world. It was His agreement with one nation. It no more included you and me as Gentiles than the constitution of the United States applies to the people of Brazil. Therefore the need existed for something broader. That need is supplied in the gospel, God's power to save Jews and Gentiles alike. (Rom. 1:16.)

2. **It was temporary.** Jeremiah lived under the law but prophesied the giving of a new and different covenant. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." (Jer. 31:31,32.) Paul explains the design of the law in these words: "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." (Gal. 3:24,25.)

3. **It could not take away sin.** The sacrifices of the law were animal offerings. Those sacrifices were powerless to take away sin so that there would be no more remembrance of it. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." (Heb. 10:1-4.)

4. **It could not justify.** Paul wrote to the Galatians. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the
law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for, The just shall live by faith." (Gal. 3:10,11.) He quoted from the law itself (Deut. 27:26) to show that it brought a curse to every man who failed to do all that it commanded. Lipscomb correctly observes, "None kept the law perfectly, hence all who were under the works of the law were under a curse." (Commentary on the New Testament Epistles, Vol. 3, p. 225.)

5. It could not give life. The apostle reasons that "if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." (Gal. 3:21.) This logically follows in consequence of the law's inability to take away sins. The gospel, on the other hand, offers "newness of life" and "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:4,23.)

6. It could not give righteousness. "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. 2:21.) It is true that men were classed as righteous before the death of Christ. Abraham, living before the law, was strong in faith, "And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." (Rom. 4:22.) The people who faithfully endeavored to follow the law in the Jewish dispensation were counted righteous, but the law itself was powerless to bring true and complete righteousness. Had it been able to do so, Christ's death would not have been "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament." (Heb. 9:15.) Yea, His death was useless if righteousness in the full sense could be made possible without it.

7. It could not make perfect. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." (Heb. 7:19.) Robert Milligan observes, "It was an introductory arrangement, and had not the power to bring any thing to perfection. Had it been sufficient to meet and accomplish God's benevolent designs in reference to the justification, sanctification, and redemption of mankind, then indeed . . . perfection would have been by the law. In that event, Christ would never have died for the salvation of the world (Gal. 2:21), and the New Economy would never have been inaugurated." (Commentary on Hebrews, p. 208.)

8. It could not give peace of conscience. The writer of Hebrews states that the gifts and sacrifices offered by the Jew under the law "could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience." (Heb. 9:9.) "They related mainly to outward and ceremonial rites, and even when offerings were made for sin, the conscience was not relieved. They could not expiate guilt; they could not make the conscience pure; they could not of themselves impart peace to the soul by reconciling it to God. They could not
fully accomplish what was needed to be done in order to give peace. Nothing will do this but the blood of the Redeemer." (Barnes' Notes, comment on Heb. 9:9.)

**Christ's Death**

One of the grand designs of the law was to emphasize the world's need for a saviour. If the law itself could have justified, saved, given peace of conscience, etc., the Jews under the law would have felt secure without the coming of Christ. What the law could not do Christ accomplishes. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:4,5.) Moses E. Lard observes in this connection: "The law could deliver only on condition of being perfectly kept; but as this never happened, its failure was complete. Had either Jew or Gentile ever perfectly kept the law under which he lived, he would of course have been sinless and so uncondemned. This would have been his deliverance. But each alike broke his law; and therefore each was alike condemned. From this, the law provided no escape. Hence the necessity for another way... The justification of the law is the justification which the law proposed and sought, but which it never realized, namely, complete acquittal from every sin. This is the justification which is now, in Christ, accomplished in us." (Commentary on Romans, pp. 249, 251:)

The atonement of Christ was needed by the people who lived before the cross just as it is needed by men today. I cannot comprehend all the details of how Christ's blood extended to those who had lived and died under the first covenant, but the fact of it is clearly revealed in Heb. 9:15. If His blood had not atoned for their sins, they would be eternally doomed. Their whole system was but a figure of better things to come. (Heb. 9:9, 23,24.) They will surely be judged by the covenant under which they lived, not the present covenant, but their salvation, like ours, could not be a reality without the death of Christ. Some things about the atonement of our Lord are "past finding out." (Rom. 11:30.) "It is not likely that we will ever in this life know all the reasons for the death of Christ, nor all of its meaning and results." (R. L. Whiteside, Annual Lesson Commentary for 1939, p. 82.) The human mind does not have the capacity for fully comprehending all the infinite wisdom of God.

Christ was the center of Old Testament prophecy. His death was typified by the sacrifices under the law. He was the end or culmination of the law for righteousness. He was the hope of those men and women who lived and died under the law. He is our hope today.

(A PLEA..................Continued) to restore primitive Christianity, to return to the "Old Paths," to follow the divine pattern. As a result, hundreds of people responded, leaving denominations. Perhaps there was no place where the movement was more effective than in Kentucky. It is tragic that after a few years division came as a result of the introduction of instrumental music, and the organizing of missionary societies. As in the case of the restoration movement so it was in digression, Kentucky felt its effect more than any other locality. There is a special effort being put forth at present, calling on religious people to return to the Old Paths. We are appealing especially to those who are members of the Christian church to give up all innovations and once again walk in the Old Paths. This was the plea of Campbell, Stone and later, McGarvey.
Another year has begun. This marks the beginning of the editor's sixth year of preparing material for a monthly publication. This issue introduces volume four of APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE.

I am taking this opportunity to thank all who have contributed articles for this publication. Without the help of interested brethren a work of this kind would be virtually impossible. I solicit the continued support of brethren who have an interest in written gospel messages.

And I must not fail to express gratitude to our friends who have subscribed to the paper for others and have recommended it to people who have subscribed for themselves. I appreciate the words of encouragement which have come from across the country.

With the help of God we shall continue to take advantage of this medium for teaching the basic principles of the Bible. APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE is published primarily for the benefit of people who need to be taught elementary truths. We trust that Christians, as well as the untaught and unsaved, may benefit from it.

The paper now goes into homes in thirty-seven states and a few foreign countries. Will you help us to give it a still wider circulation? Here are five ways you can help: (1) Make sure your own subscription does not run out; (2) speak to others about subscribing at "club" rate; (3) write us for free samples to distribute; (4) send gift subscriptions to some of your friends; (5) order a bundle each month for the tract rack where you worship.

Bound copies of volume three will be ready in a few days. The price for these volumes is $2.50 each. Volumes one and two may be purchased in book form at the same price. We suspect that it will be necessary to increase the price on all bound volumes in a few more months. Order yours now. Each volume contains 192 pages and is fully indexed.

Best wishes to our readers in 1963!

In case you think the Roman Catholics don't "make a fuss" about Mary, look at some of their material reproduced on the opposite page. All of this is taken from one issue of a small monthly periodical called Tabernacle and Purgatory (May, 1961), published with ecclesiastical approbation by the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, Clyde, Missouri.

We challenge you to open your Bible and see if you can find any of the following in connection with Mary:

"Our Lady."
"Our Queen."
"Mariology."
"The Rosary."
"The Madonna."
"Gates of Heaven."
"The Assumption."
"Immaculate Lily."
"Our Blessed Lady."
"The Mother of God."
"Our Blessed Mother."
"Perpetual Divinity."
"Veneration of Mary."
"Perpetual Virginity."
"The Immaculate Conception."
"Immaculate Queen of Peace."
"The Feast of the Assumption."
"The Feast of Our Lady's Nativity."
"Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament."

"Figure of the Church, and its most prominent member."

There is a vast difference between the
Mary: Our Spiritual Spring

This is May, the month of the Virgin Mary, dedicated to her as our Queen and Mother. How proper for the Church to recall the month of May to us as a time of new awakenings to see who in the words of Pope Pius XII the month of May 'awakens in the spirit of men's redemption and once again represents the springtime of man's redemption and once again represents the springtime of God's salvation and favor.

Long and dreary had been the winters of God's wrath. For centuries the world lay in the grip of spiritual death. Like captives the world lay in the slumber of winter, men were spiritually dead, unable to rise to the task of awakening to the life of grace. At last the time of grace came to the world, and men were freed from the clutches of death. From the moment of grace dawned, the faith of humankind began to grow. The faith of the Church of God, the faith of Mary, the faith of the Holy Spirit, began to grow.

Devotion to Mary

So beautiful and so entrancing is the story of Mary that it is not surprising that devotion to her is so widespread. Mary is the Mother of God, the Queen of Heaven, the Queen of all the faithful. She is the Mediatrix of grace, the Intercessor of the faithful. Her name is a symbol of the Motherhood of God, the Motherhood of Christ, the Motherhood of Mary, the Motherhood of all the faithful.

A Candle to Mary

Honor Our Lady in a special way this month by having a CANDLE burned before the Blessed Sacrament. Mary is called Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, and will show her love for your loving devotion. A candle will be burned for your intention before the Blessed Sacrament exposed in any of our chapels or porticoes.

Benedictine Convent of Perpetual Adoration
Mary of the Scriptures and the Mary of Catholic dogma. In the Bible, Mary is called "his mother" several times (Matt. 2:11, 14, 20, 21; Lk. 2:33,34; John 19:25, 26); "the mother of Jesus" (John 2:2); and by Elizabeth, "the mother of my Lord." (Lk. 1:43.) The Bible writers said nothing about "Our Lady," "the Mother of God," "the Heavenly Mother," etc., etc. Mary was indeed blessed among women in that she was chosen to be the mother of Jesus Christ. We have no desire to take from her any of the honor which is properly hers, but we emphatically deny that God intended for her to be elevated in the manner that Roman Catholics have exalted her. To exalt Mary above and beyond the manner taught by Jesus indicates a lack of respect for His authority.

After our Lord's resurrection Mary is referred to only twice in the New Testament. She is mentioned as "the mother of Jesus" in Acts 1:14. She is referred to in Gal. 4:4 but not mentioned by name. This latter reference is the only one made to her in the Bible after the establishment of the church of Christ. The apostles did not preach Mary; they preached Jesus. (1 Cor. 2:2.) The early Christians did not pray through Mary; they prayed through Christ, the one Mediator between God and men. (1 Tim. 2:5.) In the first century the followers of Christ knew nothing of the sort of Mary that Roman Catholics have invented.

Conway, a Catholic writer, says of "the Immaculate Conception," "The Scriptures nowhere expressly teach this doctrine . . ." He says of the sinlessness of Mary, "Catholics believe the Blessed Virgin was free from all actual sin because of divine tradition confirmed by the Council of Trent." He says of the "Assumption," "It cannot be proved from the Bible . . ." (Question Box, pp. 359, 360, 361.) Conway admits lack of Biblical proof for these dogmas pertaining to Mary. Since the Scriptures are designed "that the man of God may be perfect, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:17, Catholic Bible), all this "tradition" about Mary should be discarded.

Paul warned about preaching anything different from the gospel he had already preached (Gal. 1:6-9)—and he preached neither the "Perpetual Virginity," "the Sinlessness of Mary," "Veneration of Mary," nor "The Assumption." Jesus warned that the teaching of the precepts of men makes our worship vain. (Matt. 15:9.) Let us hold to pure New Testament doctrine and refuse all dogmas of later origin.

—I. H.
"Holding the Pattern of Sound Words" (No. 1)

There are two ways in which organized religion in general has departed from the "Pattern of Sound Words." (2 Tim. 1:13.) First, they have introduced into the prevailing fashion of speech among religious people, both WORDS and PHRASES nowhere to be found in the Bible. And of course, neither are the ideas they are used to express. Second, they have given to certain scriptural words and phrases, a meaning and usage which they do not have in scripture, and which therefore, pervert the divine truth they originally conveyed.

Let us now and in the articles which follow, point out specific instances of each of these departures, that there may be no failure to understand what is meant, and to perceive what could be accomplished by a return to a strict use of Bible terms and Bible phraseology when we would designate Bible things. By way of illustrating the introduction of unscriptural WORDS into the vernacular of religious peoples, one might think of any or ALL the denominational names and party designations used by the various religious groups to denominate both their members and the sect or Party to which they belong. It is seen at once that a return to the use of Bible names for both the professed followers of Christ and for the church would eliminate ALL of these, and do away with all the division and useless strife that is Perpetuated by them.

If this were done, and the Bible itself were given its rightful place as the only creed, or rule of faith and practice; if ALL human creeds, Disciplines, Confessions of Faith, Manuals, and such like, as the books of Ephesian Magic, were committed to the flames as they deserve to be: and if the Bible itself were put into the hands of every man with the one solemn injunction, "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15), "Holding the pattern of sound words in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (Ch. 1:13), such useless distinctions would soon be forever forgotten, nor would they ever be thought of again. And the whole religious world would soon come to "The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3.)

Commenting upon Paul's language to Timothy in which he enjoined him to, "Hold the pattern of sound words," James McKnight, in his well known Commentary has this most appropriate observation to offer. He says, "This is an insinuation that the false teachers had proudly and impiously introduced into their discourses, a variety of high-sounding mysterious words and phrases of their own invention (called foolish talking, 1 Tim. 1:6) on pretense that they expressed the Christian doctrines better than those used by the apostles.
This bad practice Timothy was to resist, by adhering closely to the words and phrases in which the apostle had taught him the doctrines of the gospel, and which he terms WHOLESOME WORDS, because being dictated by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:13) they are more fit for expressing the doctrines of Christ, than any words of human invention. He further says, "Teachers in modern times, who in explaining the articles of the Christian faith, use phrases different from the scriptural phraseology, would do well to attend to this apostolical injunction." (Vol. 4, p. 294.)

This lengthy quotation from McKnight is included here because of its supreme timeliness. And may I say further, at the possible expense of being odious at least to some of my readers, honesty and candor forces me both in my preaching and writing, continually to urge that the body of Organized Religion today as it is manifested in the various denominations, with their spacious and well equipped buildings, their numerous adherents and their well ordered rituals, because they have forgotten this injunction of Paul, is but the product of man! And further, that it has just enough of the coloring of truth mixed with its presumptive theories and philosophical abstractions to make it possible with any semblance of sincerity for them to profess allegiance to the Bible, as the source and expression of their faith.

Denominationalism, in all its parts, represents not the establishment but the frustration of the will and purpose of God, as his will is made known in the New Testament. (More next month.)

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Personal Responsibility in Division

By Paul K. Williams, Columbus, Ohio

It grieves me to see the divided condition of the religious world because it grieves my Saviour. Jesus prayed, "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me." (John 17:20-21.) But instead of being one, we are woefully divided.

Who is to blame? How did it come about? And what is my personal responsibility in regard to it?

Of course, the devil is to blame. He has deceived man into thinking he can substitute human schemes for God's divine revelation. But we are to blame, too. God has given us all we need to keep us on the strait, narrow way that leads to Heaven. He has given us His word to keep us all united—one in Christ. But because we did not love the truth, we allowed ourselves to be deceived by Satan into thinking we could be members of this denomination or that and still be pleasing to God. Any time Satan succeeds in leading anyone astray, the one led astray is just as guilty of sin as is Satan. We are all given minds and wills and the ability to resist temptation and do right. So the truth is that all those who are partakers of religious division—who are members of religious denominations or who endorse denominationalism—are to blame for this division. That makes a lot of us
guilty, doesn't it? Does it make you a partaker of the sin of division? Are you a member of a denomination? Anyone who is anything other than a Christian is a partaker of the sin of religious division!

**Very Few Stirred**

But I can cry out against religious division every Sunday and stir very few souls concerning it. Why? Because most of us are in the same boat. We have so much company in our sin that we refuse to regard it as a sin. "Dr. So-and-So is a member of my denomination. Everybody I know goes to one denomination or the other. Why should I worry my brain about it? I don't know much about the Bible anyway. Surely these other people know enough to guide me right. I will just go along with them. Anyway, if we all go to Hell, I'll have plenty of company."

And yet, I suppose everyone of us knows that it is the broad, easy way that leads to Hell. It is the narrow, hard way that leads to Heaven, and Jesus says that there are FEW who find it. Numbers, respectability, and what Dr. So-and-So says will not take you to heaven. The Truth of God—and obedience to it—is the only thing that will. God's truth condemns denominationalism, and you can't continue to be a partaker in it and expect God to hold you guiltless in the judgment day.

**What You Can Do**

"But what can I do about it?" you say. "I am only one. I am powerless to bring about unity among the denominations. Why worry me about it? What choice do I have, anyway?"

God has ever judged each man on his own actions. It makes no difference what others do as far as my salvation is concerned. When the judgment day comes and I stand before the throne of God, I will answer for my own actions regardless of what others have done or not done. God will not ask me what the denominations did or what the majority did. He will hold me accountable for what I did in regard to His word. And there is something I can do—something every individual can do whether anyone else does anything about it or not. You and I do not have to be partakers of the sin of denominationalism just because everyone else is. We have it in our power to be guiltless of this sin, just as we have it in our power to be free from any sin on earth. You don't have to be anything but a Christian. You don't have to be anything but a member of the Lord's church. There is not anything on earth to force you to be a member of anything else.

Herein lies your responsibility—and mine. Our responsibility is to get out of anything we know to be wrong—and we know that being a member of any denomination is wrong. Any religious organization which has for part of its doctrine something contrary to God's word, or something not contained in God's word, is wrong. Our responsibility is to study the Bible and continue in its truths. Jesus said in John 8:31-32, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." You believe in Jesus, I am sure. But you are not truly His disciple until you abide in His word. You cannot be free from your sins until then. A person knowingly continuing in a state of sin cannot be His disciple.

Yes, you DO have a personal responsibility. Yes, there IS something you can do. You can bring your life into conformity with the will of God regardless of what anyone else does about it. But you will have help. Throughout the United States and in many other places in the world there are already groups of Christians meeting together.
God's Eternal Purpose and Grace

By Jimmy Tuten, Jr., St. Louis, Missouri

God's revelation to man discloses a plan sometimes designated as "the scheme of redemption." Few people realize that there is such a plan according to God's eternal purpose, and that the Bible is an inspired book revealing the unfolding of that divine plan. Salvation is of God and is not based upon the works of man. (Tit. 2:5.) It is according to God's "own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9.) Since this work was accomplished in Christ, we are able to view this purpose not only from its source, but in fulfillment. Divine revelation sets forth the fact that God's scheme for redeeming fallen humanity is a theme more glorious than ever known to man. We marvel as we ponder the thought, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Man is the beneficiary of God's purpose. He rejoices and cries, "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (Psa. 8:9.)

A study of God's eternal purpose and grace, if properly understood, would eliminate error centering around God's foreordination and election. It would also serve as a better basis for greater fidelity among those who are the children of God. For saint and sinner alike, comprehension of the subject should result in a greater determination to do the will of God.

God's Relation to Time

God's eternal purpose in Christ Jesus comprises the entire span of time. Man cannot conceive of eternity. It is endless and immeasurable. We can only think of time and then eternity. Even here we are limited. God is not bound by time, for inspiration declares that one day is with the Lord "as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day." (2 Pet. 3:9.) The omnipotent God can, if he so wills, view all things from beginning to end. Since God purposed man's salvation before the world began, we conclude that He viewed the fall of man and made provision for his redemption. This does not conflict with the fact that God repented that he made man, for he created man free to choose between good and evil. (Jos. 24:15.)

God's plan was therefore contingent upon certain conditions. God's foreknowledge of the alternatives man faced expressed itself after the fall with the first messianic prophecy. (Gen. 3:15.) It was concluded in the "fulness of times" when Christ was born of woman under the law. (Gal. 4:2,4.)

The Bible speaks of God's foreordina-
tion, but this in no wise is to be confused with the Calvinist's speculative theory of predestination. The system known as Calvinism advocates that man's life and destiny were determined before he was created and that the number is so fixed that it cannot be altered. This would make man a mere machine without any freedom of action! God's plan is a foreordained plan and it applies to the whole human race. (Rom. 3:23.) Man has the responsibility of exercising his own volition in accepting the benefits of this plan, just as he did in breaking God's law. The apostle Paul speaks of Christians as being "chosen—before the foundation of the world." (Eph. 1:4.) But in order to become God's elect, they had to BELIEVE and TRUST in the Lord. (Eph. 1:13.) Salvation therefore, is by grace through faith. (Eph. 2:8.)

The Time of God's Purpose

Some have concluded that "the time of God's purpose is unknown with certainty." This is false! All that the New Testament has to say about the purpose of God, places it at a period prior to the creation of man. (2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:20.) Such an expression as "before the foundation of the world" has reference to past eternity, before the casting or laying down of this universe. Salvation is no accident! Christ's death was no afterthought in the mind of God. It was all planned before the ages.

A Mystery Until Revealed

Before the plan of God was revealed, it was known as a "mystery." The term denotes "knowledge withheld," and has reference to God's hidden purpose. It was kept "secret since the world began." (Rom. 16:25.) In the "fulness of the "me" (Eph. 4:4), God revealed his plan. (Rom. 16:26.) He manifested it by delation. It therefore is no longer a mystery. Paul says, "Even the mystery which had been hid from ages and generations, but is now made manifest to his Saints." (Col. 1:26.)

No man could know the mystery until God chose to reveal it. It was beyond the apprehension of both prophets and angels. The prophets who prophesied of this grace "inquired and searched diligently" into this matter. (1 Pet. 1:10.) Even the angels desired to "look into" this. (1 Pet. 1:12.) In spite of this passionate desire, no one knew the fellowship of the mystery which was hidden in God from the beginning of the world. (Eph. 3:9.) In the appointed time God made known unto man the mystery of His will which declared his manifold wisdom. This was according to His good pleasure. (Eph. 1:10.)

The Mystery Revealed

The mystery has been revealed, but not unto past generations! It has been revealed unto US. (Eph. 3:8-9; 1:9.) It has been proclaimed and made manifest unto the Saints. Hear the inspired writer:

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." (1 Cor. 2:7-8.)

Paul was made a minister according to the dispensation of God to fulfill the mystery to us. (Col. 1:25-26.) Not only has the mystery been revealed, manifested and proclaimed; it is of such a nature that we are filled with the "knowledge of his will in all wisdom and understanding." (Col. 1:9.) Paul desires that we have a FULL ASSURANCE of understanding "to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God." (Col. 2:2.) The mystery of God is no

(See PURPOSE . . . Page 15)
"So Shall the Son of Man Be Three Days and Three Nights in the Heart of the Earth"—Matt. 12:40

By J. W. McGarvey (1829-1911)

As Jesus was buried late Friday afternoon, and arose before sunrise Sunday morning, he was in the tomb only an hour or two of Friday, all of Saturday, and between eleven and twelve hours of Sunday, counting the day, according to Jewish custom, as beginning with sunset. It was not, then, according to our mode of expression, three days and three nights, but only two nights and a part of three days. We inquire how the statement of the text can be true, and, in order to give an intelligible answer, we note the following facts and considerations.

1. The time between his death and his resurrection is expressed in three different forms. Most frequently it is said that he would rise again on the third day. (Matt. 16:21; 17:23; et al.) Once it is said that he would rise after three days (Mark 8:31); and once, in our text, that he would be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. When Esther was about to venture into the king's presence, she instructed the Jews in Shushan to fast three days, night and day; yet she went in on the third day. (Esth. 4:16; 5:1.) Still more in point, when the Pharisees petitioned Pilate for a guard, they said to him, "This deceiver said while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day." (Matt. 27:63,64.) Now with us, if he were going to rise after three days, it would be necessary to guard the sepulchre so, the fast for Esther should have run into the fourth day, the people should have returned to Rehoboam on the fourth day, and Joseph should have released his brethren on the fourth day. It is the peculiar and inaccurate usage of the Jews which makes the difference; and that the New Testament writers continued this established usage is proved by the fact, that when Matthew and Mark report the same words of Jesus, one of them uses the expression "on the third day," and the other, "after three days." (Matt. 16:21; Mark 8:31.)

2. The Jews, in all periods of Bible history, used the expressions after three days and on the third day, as equivalents. Thus Moses says that Joseph put his brethren into prison three days; yet in the next sentence he represents him as releasing them on the third day." (Gen. 42:17,18.) When the people petitioned Rehoboam to lighten their burden, he said, "Depart ye for three days, then come again to me." They departed and "came again the third day, as the king had appointed." (1 Ki. 12:5,12.)

3. In reality, after three days, and after three days and three nights, are equivalent expressions, for if you count, for example, from Friday at sunset, after three days would be after sunset on Monday, the three days being Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. But in this period would be included three nights, viz, Friday night, Saturday night, and Sunday night. Now it is not always true in the use of words, as it is in Mathematics, that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other: but seeing that the expression after
three days means the same with a Jew as on the third day, and that the expression after three days covers the same length of time as the expression three days and three nights, the last expression would most naturally be used as an equivalent for the first. That it was so used by Jesus, is clear from the fact that, in speaking of the same lapse of time, he sometimes says on the third day, and at least once he says, "three, days and three nights." The only escape from this conclusion is to suppose that on the occasion of our text he deliberately and without reason contradicted himself in the presence of his enemies. But those enemies themselves, as we have seen, understood and employed the usage as he did, and it appears that all parties among the Jews understood these expressions as equivalents. There is no contradiction, then, between this and other passages on the subject, but the appearance of contradiction arises entirely from a peculiar Jewish usage.

It may be well to remark at this point that the above mentioned facts refute the hypothesis of some, that Jesus was buried on the afternoon of Thursday. If he had been buried on Thursday, and had risen Sunday morning, he would have been in the grave three nights, but he would also have been there parts of four days, and the Jewish expression would have been, he will arise the fourth day, or, after four days. As proof of this, if we count the time from the appearance of the angel to Cornelius (Acts 10) till the arrival of Peter at the house of Cornelius, we find that it is precisely three days, according to our mode of counting; but it includes three nights and parts of four days, and hence Cornelius says to Peter, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour," etc. (Acts 10:30.)

(The foregoing material is selected from McGarvey's Commentary on Matthew and Mark. It offers some sound reasoning on a problem which is a frequent topic of discussion among students of the Bible. McGarvey gives some additional thoughts along this same line in the little book, "JESUS AND JONAH," which sells for $1.50. —Editor.)

MOVING? Please notify us in advance so you will not miss an issue.

"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine . . ." (Titus 2:1.)

"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever . . ." (Deut. 29:29.)

(PURPOSE .... Continued) longer a mystery, for the veil has been lifted, and all men can now know it. (Eph. 3:9.) It is fully revealed in the pages of the New Testament, and when we read it we can have Paul's understanding of the mystery. (Eph. 3:4.)

What God Purposed

God "purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ." (Eph. 1:10.) As long as the law existed, the Gentiles were alienated from the commonwealth of Israel. Both Jews and Gentiles were without hope. Through the blood of Christ all are now made nigh. (Eph. 2:11-13.) It was the will of God that all be reconciled through the cross of Christ, and that Gentiles be fellow heirs of the same body and partakers of the promises in Christ. (Eph. 3:6.) Now there is neither bond nor free, Jew nor Greek, for all are one in Christ. (Gal. 3:28; Col. 5:11.)

God's will included the adoption of
children (Eph. 1:5), and the forgiveness of sins. (Eph. 1:5, 7.) Those who are God's children are to be "holy" and "without blame." (Eph. 1:4.) In our joy over the knowledge of salvation in Christ, let us not overlook the fact that saints must be holy. The latter is as much a part of God's plan as the former.

Conclusion
What a wonderful thought! God purposed and planned our redemption. Through his Son that plan is a reality, and now all who are willing to come to Christ can be heirs of God. God's children are heirs "according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29.) How to become a child of God is a most important thought to ponder. Listen to the New Testament: "for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27.) These are they who are the "children of God by faith." (Gal. 3:26.) In our sins, we were not abandoned to destruction, but redeemed by God's grace!

(Next month: "Christ, the Revelation of God's Purpose.")
Sprinkling for Baptism

By Paul K. Williams, Columbus, Ohio

In the past few months I have been dealing in these articles with the fact that denominationalism is sinful, that the fact of division in the religious world is not pleasing to God, and the fact that we have the responsibility to separate ourselves from any party which seeks to perpetuate this division and to seek to pattern our lives after the New Testament. This month I want to begin examining with you some errors which are very prominent among denominations. The only reason denominations exist is that error has been taught and practiced. If all taught and practiced the truth, we would all be united in the one New Testament church. The very existence of hundreds of denominations argues the existence of much religious error. Examining some of this error helps a person see the evils of denominationalism, and helps him to see the difference between this and the gospel of the New Testament. In this and succeeding articles I will attempt to examine a few of the leading doctrines of denominations. In this article we will study the practice of sprinkling for baptism.

Many denominations, I would say the majority, baptize by sprinkling some water on the head of the one to be baptized. That this practice is contrary to New Testament teaching I think we will all be able to see when we examine a few passages of scripture. Jesus said in Mark 16:16. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned." Peter said in Acts 2:38, "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 Ghost." These scriptures show the importance of baptism. It is necessary to salvation. The command to be baptized must be obeyed in order to receive the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Two Common Errors

Realizing the importance of this command, we should be very careful that we obey it—as God has commanded it. Most churches make two fundamental errors concerning water baptism. First, they deny it is necessary to salvation, and second, they teach that sprinkling some water on the head of a person constitutes baptism. That
baptism is necessary to salvation should be apparent by reading the two scriptures referred to — Mk. 16:16 and Acts 2:38. And that baptism is not sprinkling is equally apparent from the reading of a few more passages.

Greek Meaning

One reason this error is so widespread is that the word "baptize" is not originally an English word at all. The New Testament was written in Greek, and the word for "baptize" is "baptidzo." The translators of the New Testament did not give the meaning of the word when they translated it — they merely took the Greek letters and made English letters out of them, making the word "baptize," and left us to gather the meaning of the word from the way in which it is used. If they had translated the word, they would have translated it "immerse, or dip, or plunge;" as this is what the Greek word means. Abbott-Smith's Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament defines it "to dip, immerse, sink." To baptize something was to immerse it. The immersion could be in water, in suffering, in fire, in the Holy Spirit — but whatever kind of baptism the writer was talking about, he always had the idea of immersion in mind, for that is what the Greek word meant. In water baptism, then, the one baptized was completely immersed in water.

But you don't have to know any Greek to tell that. All you have to do is read your New Testament. In every case, immerse will translate smoothly wherever baptize is found. But in many cases, sprinkle or pour would make the meaning of the passage ridiculous. A careful reading of a few passages should convince any unbiased person that New Testament baptism is immersion.

"Much Water"

For instance, the New Testament talks about John's baptism in this way. "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized." (John 3.23.) John the Baptist chose a location where there was much water to do his baptizing. This suggests that baptism requires a considerable amount of water. It would require a stretch of the imagination to consider a few drops as "much" water.

The story of the Eunuch's conversion gives us a step-by-step picture of the performance of a baptism. This is found in Acts 8:36-39, "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down into the water; both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."

Notice what took place. Both Philip and the man he baptized went down into the water. It was there that the baptism took place. Then, and only then, did they come up out of the water. They did not go down to the water, but INTO the water. They did not come "back from" the water, they came UP OUT OF the water. Thus it is necessary for both the preacher and the one baptized to be in the water when the baptism takes place.

Buried

Romans 6:4-5 explains why this is necessary. "Therefore we are buried
with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the dory of the father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." This explains what took place down in the water. Philip BURIED the eunuch—and the element in which he buried him was water, because that is what they went down into. Let us read the first part of Romans 6:4 again, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." Only complete immersion could ever be considered a burial. One doesn't bury anything by sprinkling a few grains of sand on it, and one does not bury a person with Christ into death by sprinkling a few drops of water on him. It is a mockery even to suggest it.

Again, Colossians 2:12 also affirms that baptism is a burial. "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." We are buried with him in baptism.

**No Other Way**

These are a few of the New Testament passages which indicates definitely that baptism is a complete burial or immersion of the person in water. Search as you may, you will not find one Bible passage which teaches that New Testament baptism was ever administered in any other way. There is no authority, either in the word baptism itself or in the passages in which it is used, for baptizing by sprinkling or pouring.

But men have decided sprinkling is just as good as immersion and not nearly so much trouble. So they have decided to baptize their way instead of God's. This is what leads to division—when men substitute their will for God's. And friend, trifling with God's word leads men to lose their souls. Paul wrote in Galatians 1:8. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, (See SPRINKLING ... Page 24)

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**The Importance of Proper Thinking**

*By Terrell Jenkins, Bowling Green, Kentucky*

"Think with me for a moment" is a common expression, but few people actually think. Jane Taylor wrote:

**Though man a thinking being is defined, Few use the grand prerogative of mind. How few think justly of the thinking few! How many never think, who think they do! "Learn to think," wrote one of the ancients, "It will profit you well, for there is so little competition." It has been said that 5% of the people think: 10% think they think; the rest would rather die than think.

Mental faculties have been given us by God. It is His intention that they be used to His glory. Psalm one emphasizes that the blessed (happy) and prosperous man is the one who delights in the Law of the Lord and meditates on it day and night. This points out the importance of thinking on the Will of God. Alexander Campbell advised young men to think and meditate two hours for every hour they read. This is certainly good advice, and we could all, no doubt, profit by it. Our lives become so cluttered with the trivial
things (that we think are important) that we often do not find time to think.

**No Thinking**

There are two extremes to be avoided in thinking. One extreme is to drift along with the crowd and do no thinking on our own. The person with this disposition just "me too's" what the majority is saying or doing. He has already decided that some parent, pastor, priest, or preacher is right and he will just go along with him. He asks no questions and raises no objections.

The Bible is replete with illustrations of the no thinking type. Read Genesis 6 and 7. Only eight souls, from among all living, were saved. The majority had too many important things to do and too little faith in God to be concerned about preparing for the flood. Elijah stood alone against 450 prophets of Baal, but he was right even though in the minority. The masses cried out "Let him be crucified" when Pilate desired to release Jesus. Pilate is a good example of the moral coward who just says "me too." We often talk with people who are members of churches that practice things in work and worship that are without authority in Scripture. They sometimes have an idea that certain things are wrong, but they do not have the courage to teach the truth and stand firmly against error. They often refuse to really think about the matter. It is indeed important that we THINK.

**Rationalism**

The other extreme is to make reason the supreme authority—this is Rationalism. This attitude rejects the Word of God as the supreme authority in religion. It leads to a rejection of the inspiration of the Scriptures. We must remember that God's ways are higher than man's. (Jer. 10:23; Isa. 55:8-9; Eph. 3:20.) Whenever you say "I know the Bible says, but I think . . ." you are on the road to rationalism and infidelity.

**A Challenge**

If you are among that number who dare to use the Divinely given capacity to THINK, we encourage you to do just that as you peruse these pages now and in the coming months. The writers for this paper do not claim infallibility for themselves. This, we claim for God, Christ, and the Bible. It is our desire that you will always read our articles with an open mind and an open Bible. Think seriously about what we say and about the condition of your soul.

At times, articles will appear in this journal that will cut across your former or present religious beliefs. Someone said, "Make persons think they can think and they will like you. Make them think and they will hate you." Surely we will not become your enemy by telling you the truth! THINK!
Cursed by Ignorance
By Irvin Himmel, St. Louis, Missouri

Today's mail brought a church bulletin with an interesting story in it. A certain preacher entered a classroom while the lesson was in progress and began asking the children some questions. "Who broke down the walls of Jericho?" was one question. A boy responded, "Not me, sir!" The preacher turned to the teacher and asked, "Is this the usual standard in this class?" The teacher replied, "This boy is honest and I believe him. I really don't think he did it." The preacher sought out a deacon and explained what happened. The deacon remarked, "I have known both the teacher and the boy for some time, and neither of them would do such a thing." In shock the preacher reported the incident to the elders. One of them replied, "We see no point in being disturbed; let's pay the bill and charge it to upkeep."

This story has a very humorous twist, and for all I know someone may have made up the whole thing. On the other hand, like the parables of Jesus, it is true to life. Incidents of this kind do occur. It brings to my mind another story. Several couples were having a get-together. They decided to play a game relating to the Bible. Each one was called upon to name a husband and wife mentioned in the Bible. Someone named Adam and Eve; another mentioned Abraham and Sarah; another named Isaac and Rebekah. One church-goer in the group scratched his head thoughtfully as his turn came. There was a lengthy pause, then he exclaimed, "Oh, yes, Sodom and Gomorrah!"

One is sometimes made to wonder just what is being taught in the classroom and from the pulpit. How could people attend church services over a long period of time and still be completely in the dark? How can people with any interest at all in the Bible remain in such gross ignorance as some do? And, above all, how can men come to be accepted as religious leaders who do not know the ABC's of God's word?

Two things seem evident. (1) There is a lack of plain, down-to-earth teaching. So-called "Bible" classes are often turned into play houses for the children and social sessions for adults. Crafts, handworks, and similar gadgets have replaced the Bible in children's classes. Adults are exposed to book reviews, philosophical lectures, and much discussion of social affairs rather than Bible study. The preacher addresses his audience with great swelling of words. When his message is boiled down to bare facts, he has taught little or no scripture. (2) Knowledge of God's word is no longer held to be essential. People read all sorts of books about religion but spend precious little time in reading the Bible itself. Men come to be recognized as religious leaders, not because of their advance in knowledge, but because of their friendliness, their ability to organize, their prestige in the community, their wealth, or perhaps their persuasive manner.

Hosea said in the long ago, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...

(21)
our enlightenment in science, medicine, and various fields. But where are the Biblical scholars of yesteryear? Where are the preachers we used to call "walking Bibles?" Where are the elders who once fed the sheep with solid food? Where are the statesmen that showed familiarity with the Bible in the frequent quotations from it? Where is the mother that had her children memorize Bible verses and recite them daily? Where are the crowds of common people that once congregated to hear public debates on Bible subjects?

One may boast of all sorts of degrees of learning and may be praised to the sky for his vast knowledge in numerous fields of human endeavor, but he places a premium on his own ignorance when he neglects the most important of all sources of true knowledge—God's holy oracles. Let not that man think that he is educated who knows not the Bible.

During the second and third centuries before Christ much of the Egyptian land was divided among the Greeks who then dominated the land and ruled it under Ptolemies. Page 411 says, "The other classes of land may be described as semi-private; it consisted of estates given to favorites, the sacred land of temples, and the lots, (kleroi) given to soldiers." The portion of land each soldier received was his kleros. This was his as distinguished from the land owned by all others. This was his clergy.

In Ephesians 1:11 God refers to His kleros (clergy) the same way. All who had been redeemed by the blood of Christ (verse 7) "... were made a heritage ..." They were made a clergy of someone and that was none other than God, as verse 18 shows. Paul prayed for the Ephesians that, "... having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints ..." God's inheritance (kleronomia) includes all the saints and since His inheritance or lot is His clergy then all Christians compose His clergy.

In His Word God never made a distinction between "Clergy" and "Laity." This is the sole work of men who exalt themselves against the wisdom of God.

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**Clergy**

The practice of casting lots to decide matters human and divine is of ancient origin. In the time of Christ both Jews and Gentiles engaged in casting lots as two examples will show. Acts 1:26 shows that Matthias was chosen to replace Judas. This choice was made by casting lots, In Matt. 27:35 lots were cast by Roman soldiers for the robe of Jesus. These lots were spoken of by the word kleros which in English is clergy.

Vine, in his word studies of the New Testament, points to two uses of kleros. It is basically the "object used in casting or drawing lots." Secondly, it also is used of "what is obtained by lot, an allotted portion." This latter use of kleros is illustrated in Botsford and Robinson's book, *Hellenic History.*
None of the apostles knew anything of it nor did God reveal it to anyone through them. No man is among the inheritance of God who rejects His will for that of men, and no matter how high he may climb in the hierarchy of a religious group, his salvation and lot with God will still depend upon humble submission to the Will of God and not to the prestige of men.

Yes, God has a clergy. It is all His people on earth. For the man who thinks for himself it's good sense to be apart from the clergy, but don't let it turn your collar backwards.

The Conversion of Saul
By Jay Bowman, Lubbock, Texas

Perhaps the most frequent battleground among those who profess loyalty to Jesus Christ is that field which concerns the relation of baptism to salvation. This situation has arisen from a scarcity, not of scriptural evidence on the subject, but of the disposition to accept without question that testimony which is given by the inspired writers.

The author of this article does not entertain the notion that he will, in these few lines, be able to persuade the masses to accept the truth on this subject. Indeed, to induce obedience on the part of those who are determined to reject any evidence which does not conform to their pre-established beliefs — though it be the very word of God—is a task which proved too great even for the ingenious teaching devices of the Master Teacher Himself.

And, though man often proves himself unworthy of the distinction, yet he has been given, the choice of either accepting or rejecting any evidence presented in relation to his soul's salvation, according to its merits, with the understanding that he must bear the consequences of his decision.

We, therefore, invite only those who are sincere and honest—who are quite willing to accept the word of God without dispute—to consider with us a very important example of conversion which is recorded in the book of Acts of Apostles.

I trust that the proposition may be taken as self-evident that a person's claims to membership in the church of our Lord may be evaluated according to his conformity to those cases of conversion recorded in the book of Acts. One's conversion is to be adjudged right to the extent that it accords with those of which the inspired historian wrote, and wrong to the extent that it differs.

The conversion of Saul is an instance of peculiar value to us in consideration of the relation of baptism to salvation because, first, we have no less than three accounts of the same conversion, of which two are reported by the subject himself. And then, the interval of three days between the appearance of the Lord on the road to Damascus and the inception of his work as an apostle, permits us to observe his behavior and thus to judge his own evaluation of the events that occurred. These three accounts are recorded in the 9th, 22nd, and 26th chapters of Acts.

That the man of Tarsus believed on the road to Damascus cannot be gainsaid. His immediate behavior, and subsequent references to the event (Acts 26:19) both bespeak the indisputable fact that faith in Jesus Christ was produced during, and as a direct result of, the heavenly vision. But the question is, "Was he, then and there saved?"
The answer to this question may be satisfactorily determined by the events which took place during the three-day interval of which we spoke above.

Now, I assume that anyone who is sufficiently mature as to be concerned
about the question of salvation from sin will also recognize that man's alienation from God results from the fact that God, in spite of the infinite love He has shown for man, cannot countenance sin. "Salvation," then, consists in the elimination of that barrier which separates the two estranged parties, that is, the forgiveness of sins.

The problem before us, then, is this: at what point in Saul's conversion were his sins forgiven? When he believed, on the road to Damascus? Or at a subsequent time, after his arrival in the city?

I submit to you first of all that the intense spiritual agony which the subject exhibited during the three days which followed his belief is hardly consistent with those seasons of refreshing that are promised to those who obey the Lord and which would logically attend the forgiveness of sins. Indeed, Saul's behavior indicates that, even though he had believed, he was tortured by the knowledge that the weight of his guilt was still upon him. This view is confirmed beyond question by the fact that, upon the arrival of Ananias (Acts 22:12-16) Saul was instructed to "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Can it be that Saul was saved before his sins were forgiven? No, for we have already established that salvation is itself tantamount to the forgiveness of sins. In the case of an alien sinner, this is accomplished through repentance and baptism in addition to belief.

It is sometimes asserted that the greeting of Ananias, "Brother Saul," is to be taken as evidence that Saul was already a Christian. This objection does not account for the incongruity of a sin-laden man's being supposed in a covenant relationship with God, as argued above. It is neither effective in accomplishing the purposes for which it is advanced when we consider that the Jews addressed each other in such a manner for centuries before Christ ever came to the earth. In fact, as one of several New Testament examples, Paul (Acts 22:1) addressed the very council which had placed him on trial for preaching the doctrine of Christ as "Men, brethren, and fathers." (Also see Ex. 2:11.)

We are thus driven irresistibly to the conclusion that, in the case of Saul of Tarsus, faith alone did not secure the forgiveness of sins. Neither can it do so in our case, but regardless of the depth of sorrow for sins, or the sincerity of repentance, the procedure is still, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

(SPRINKLING .... Continued)
"Holding the Pattern of Sound Words" (No. 2)

We need not be surprised to find professional preachers and leaders among the popular denominations of the day, using every means that artifice and sophisticated ingenuity can invent to sustain and perpetuate the doctrines and tenets peculiar to their particular sect or party. This follows naturally, since from the sect they derive their standing in the community, receive their livelihood, and generally, maintain a much venerated family tradition from generation to generation.

Such a system, existing not by the authority of the scriptures but contrary to them, and being made up in many of its parts by doctrines and practices wholly unknown to the scriptures will, of necessity, create a vocabulary and phraseology as foreign to the Bible, as the doctrines and practices they are used to express. Then, as time wears on, and these expressions gather the sanctions and deference of age and of common consent among the multitudes, it comes to be thought of as next to BLASPHEMY AND SACRILEGE to call them in question.

But, let us remember well, that the BIBLE HAS NOT and WILL NOT change; it speaks the same language today that it has ever spoken! And no amount of theological juggling by a Professional "clergy" nor any measure of common consent by the multitudes, can make SCRIPTURAL an unscriptural vernacular, nor validate in the sight of God the doctrines and practices for which it stands.

God's people will learn to speak of Bible things by Bible names and to give to Bible phraseology the same import and bearing attached to it by the Holy Spirit, else they will cease to be God's people. Such carefulness to hold the very pattern of sound words will not only insure and preserve their own doctrinal purity, but will avoid giving credence and encouragement through the use of an impure speech, to the doctrines and practices of men.

Too much emphasis could hardly be placed upon this most vital point of Holding the Pattern of Sound Words, if ever we are to expect a return to, and a restoration of the apostolic order of things. And, that the religious world in general has drifted so far from the New Testament pattern of the truth and of the church as to fail utterly to present to the world any strict resemblance, but presents instead an ungainly assemblage of dissimilarities labeled with the claim of identity with both, is an indictment which I think no really thoughtful man, after a careful study of the New Testament, would deny.

So literally true is this indictment, that for the most part, when these dissimilarities and unscriptural features are pointed out, those who compose the popular religious bodies of our day, make no effort to deny the allegation, but rather deny that the matter is im-
important; that it makes any difference! And thus the BIBLE is set aside, and human ingenuity and traditional theology are made the basis of faith and religious practice.

And thereafter, these respective sects (denominations) go right on minimizing the necessity of a strict conformity to the "PATTERN OF SOUND WORDS," and instilling in their children love and reverence for family religion, loyalty to the denomination, and teaching in general, that to call in question the validity of ANYTHING in religion is narrow and bigoted, and that anyone who does it is highly unethical and ought to be avoided.

But I ask you, can you not see that such a course sets a premium upon both ignorance and disregard for the exclusive teaching of the Bible and makes SECTARIAN PREJUDICE and a PARTY SPIRIT instead of conviction and personal faith, the basis of religious affiliation?

Surely you can see these things, and are ready to agree that there is needed a return to the BIBLE and to the BIBLE alone, as the only basis and expression of both faith and practice.

This alone, is the only insurance against the loss again of Bible ideas through the employment of an unscriptural speech.

(Continued next month.)

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Passages in Matthew

"There are a few verses in the Bible that I would like to know the meaning of. Matt. 10:30, 'But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.' Matt. 23:9, 'And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.' I would like to know what will happen to the children that call their Daddy, 'Father' here on earth." (D. T.)

In the tenth chapter of Matthew we find Jesus sending out the apostles to preach to their fellow Israelites. He warns them that they will be scourged, hated, called by ugly names, persecuted, and exposed to numerous dangers. To encourage them He reminds them that those who endure to the end shall be saved; their Master is persecuted, and the servant is not above his master; God is to be feared more than physical death, for, after all, men can kill the body but not the soul; and, God watches over us in His kind providence, taking note of our affairs even to the smallest details. Jesus uses the sparrow as an illustration. This little bird is of small value, sometimes even a nuisance to man. But God is capable of observing such a little thing as the fall of a sparrow. Surely, his children are of more value than an insignificant bird. God knows how many hairs one has in his head, and if He can number or count the hairs of the head, why should we suppose He is unmindful of what befalls us in life? God is all-powerful watching over His children with fatherly protection. A similar lesson is taught in Matt. 6:26-30.

Turning now to the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, our Lord is teaching against hypocrisy as manifested in the lives of the scribes and Pharisees. Among other things, the Jewish leaders are condemned for their love of titles of religious distinction, such as "Rabbi," "Master," and "Father." When Jesus said "call no man your father upon the earth," he was not teaching that it is wrong for a child to call his daddy "father." Jesus and the disciples frequently referred to male parents as "fathers." For example: "Honour thy father and mother" (Mk. 10:19); "... and delivered him again to his father" (Lk. 9:42); "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath . . ." (Eph. 6:4); "but his father was a Greek." (Acts 16:1.)

There is no harm in using the term father to describe a relationship, whether physical or spiritual. Paul was a "father" to the church at Corinth in a spiritual sense. (1 Cor. 4:15.) Anyone who teaches the word of God and converts another is "father" to him in the sense that he has begotten him through the gospel. But this is a far cry from using the word Father as a title of religious distinction. Jesus was forbidding titles of honor and distinction. The context of Matt. 23:9 explains the sense in which His language is to be understood.

The American Bible Society reports that portions of the Bible have recently been translated into six additional languages, bringing the total to 1,181 languages and dialects.

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(27)
In our study of the eternal purpose and grace of God, attention was called to the fact that God planned the salvation of the human race before the world began. (2 Tim. 1:9.) This plan for the redemption of humanity was not revealed until the fulness of time and was known as a "Mystery" until its revelation. (Col. 1:26.) The mystery was made known and manifested by the appearance of Christ unto all nations for the obedience of faith. The revelation of this plan was by the everlasting commandment of God. (2 Tim. 1:10; Rom. 16:26.) The disclosure of God's hidden purpose makes known the awe-inspiring and sublime fact that Christ is the propitiation for our sins. (1 Jno. 2:2.) He is the end of man's search for salvation, and is the medium through which God expressed His love. (Eph. 1:3; 7; Rom. 5:8.) To fulfill the justice of God, and at the same time meet the needs of fallen mankind, Christ Jesus emptied himself of all former glory and died an agonizing death on the cross of Calvary. Now the hope of the world lies in the fact that He was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. (Rom. 1:4.) In all that Christ accomplished on earth, we see the fulness and completeness of the revelation of God's wisdom and knowledge.

It is sad indeed to see human wisdom in the form of modernism and liberalism seeking to undermine the preeminence of the Son of God. Christ is despised and rejected among some even in this modern age! From the time that Jesus began His work of redemption, there have been those who have sought to do an injustice to Him. Arianism is being revived in the form of Russellism, and has as its goal the destruction of man's faith in the co-existent, co-eternal nature of Christ with God the Father. In this article stress is being placed upon the unique dignity and absolute power of the only begotten Son of God. (Rom. 8:32.) I wish to point out the eternal deity of Christ as seen in the name he bears and in the honors ascribed to Him. This will be a study of relationships, which I believe illustrates the greatness of Christ.

**Relation to God**

Inspiration declares that "in the beginning was the Word . . . the same was in the beginning with God." (Jno. 1:1-3.) The "Word" (Logos) has a personal manifestation and is to be identified with the Son of God. Jesus is not only the Word, He is the "Word of LIFE." (1 Jno. 1:1.) "In the beginning" refers to an indefinite period of time in past eternity. It precedes time as we know it. The expression points out the fact that Christ was pre-existent and co-existent with God. His existence beyond time was in active communion with God in terms of equality. His attitude toward this relationship is expressed by Paul in Philippians 2:6, He thought it not "robbery (i.e., a prize, J. T.) to be equal with God." He who was associated equally with God, was God and was manifested in the flesh. (1 Tim. 3:16.) He is of the same essential nature and essence as the Supreme Father. Before
His death, Jesus prayed: "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (Jno. 17:5.) Christ now has that honor and glory as he sits at the right hand of the Father. (Acts 2:33.)

Another thought pointing out the preeminence of Christ is the fact that He is in "the image of the invisible God." (Col. 1:15.) This glorious relationship is further made known by the statement that Christ is the "effulgence of his glory, and the express image of his person." (Heb. 1:3.) Since effulgence means "brightness" or "radiance" one can see that all that God possesses is expressed in His Son. "Image" is translated from a word that denotes "representation" and "manifestation." Christ represents and manifests God to the world and is "essentially and absolutely the perfect expression and representation of the arch type, God the Father." (Vine.) The very statement, "image of the invisible God," suggests that He is the visible manifestation of God to man. It is no wonder then, that Paul spoke of the "glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4:6.) If any man hath seen the Son, he hath seen the Father. (Jno. 14:9; 1:18.)

From this we learn that Christ is pre-existent and co-existent with God the Father, possessing the same essence as God. To say that Christ is "a god", and not God, is to take the position of the anti-Christ. (2 Jno. 7.)

Relationship to Creation

Christ is said to be the "firstborn of every creature." (Col. 1:15.) This verse, as translated in some versions, leads some to conclude that Christ has not always existed, and that He was the start of God's creative work. It is said that He was the FIRST of beings created by God prior to time, and that He is of a different essence from the Father. Those who take this position do not deny Christ's part in the creation, for they say He was created before the world and helped in its creation. They do maintain however, that since Christ is a created being, he is not eternal nor pre-existent.

It is difficult to see how anyone can draw such a conclusion from the passage cited. The passage does not teach that Christ was a created being, but that He himself was the creator! "Every creature" would be better translated "all creation." Translators recognize this and some have translated the verse, "the firstborn of the whole creation." (The Living Oracles.) The term "firstborn" like the word "beginning" in Revelation 3:14, has reference to Christ as the source of God's creation rather than His being the "very first person or thing created." "Beginning" refers to that "by which anything begins to be, the origin, active cause." (Thayer, commenting on Rev. 1:14.) An investigation of "firstborn" will result in one's understanding that it too has reference to active cause. The word demonstrates the "absolute pre-existence of Christ in the universe." (W. E. Vine.) Christ has absolute pre-existence; He was before all things, and by Him were all things created. (Col. 1:16-17.) The Apostle John sums the whole matter up thusly, "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." (Jno. 1:3.)

Let it be noted that Christ is not only the creator of the heavens and earth, but He is also the sustainer as well. In Him "all things consist." (Col. 1:17.) All things owe their being to Christ and are therefore subject to him. (Col. 1:16; Eph. 1:21.) The universe begins and ends in Christ. He upholds all things "by the word of his power." (Heb. 1:3; 2 Pet. 3:7.) As
Lightfoot states it. "He expresses upon the creation that unity and solidarity which makes it cosmos instead of chaos." Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending. (Rev. 1:8.) "He ante-dates time and the creation that pertains to time." (Hailey.)

His Relation to Sinners

The greatness of Christ can be further seen in the relationship which he sustains to sinful humanity. "For Christ hath also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God ..." (1 Pet. 3:18.) This act of "bringing us to God" is the act of "reconciliation" made possible only through Christ. God decreed that through the blood of His Son, all things would be reconciled unto Himself. (Col. 1:19-21.) Since Christ is the medium and His death the means of reconciliation. He is the ONLY reconciler. Sinful man needs reuniting with God. for without it, there is no hope. The unconverted man is an enemy to God and is alienated through sin. (Col. 1:21: Rom. 5:10.) He walks according to the course of this world and follows the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. (Eph. 2:1-2.) His very condition suggests a hostile attitude toward God. Unless a change takes place, the sinner will be exposed to the wrath of God in the judgment day. There is no need for man remaining an alien today, for the means of being reconciled is ever present in the person of our Saviour. All enmity and alienation brought on by sin can be removed and man can be united with God the Father. This is done through the "body of his flesh through death." (Col. 1:22.)

He died to atone for sins not his own;
Your debt he hath paid, and your work
he hath done!

Those who have been reconciled through obedience to Christ will be presented holy before God if they remain steadfast and loyal to Christ. (2 Cor. 5:22.)

Conclusion

Who is the Christ? He is the true exegesis of God. He has all power and all authority in heaven and earth. All things are subject to Him. He is the preeminate Christ! Since he occupies such an exalted position, we ought to submit to him in all things. If we reject Him, there is none other to whom we can turn. He alone is the way, the truth, and the life. God will bless us with all spiritual blessings needed to nourish the soul. But these blessings are in Christ. Believe and be baptized into Christ today. (Gal. 3:26-27.) In our next article we will discuss the importance of entering into Christ by viewing the blessings that are promised in Him.

Glory and honor and power and might.
Be unto his excellent name!
Let nations and men before him fall,
And repent of their guilt and shame!

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Many valuable lessons are often overlooked in our lack of concern for Old Testament teachings, and often these lessons can be a real source of strength and encouragement as we see the rewards given: One such case is that of the times of Noah. Let us notice a few valuable lessons from Genesis, Chapter 6.

**God's Patience**

Mankind had grown more and more sinful, and less and less concerned about God and faithfulness to Him. Finally, God decided to destroy man for his sinful ways. BUT, He was going to be fair—He would give man 120 years in which to repent. (Gen. 6:3.) He selected Noah, a preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5), to carry His message. He waited—not one week, not one month, not one year, not five years—but ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS. He didn't have to, but He did for the benefit of mankind. God is patient today, in a world filled with sin, also. We are here today because of His patience. He has given His Son and the gospel, and therein warned, begged and pleaded—and is now waiting, "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Pet. 3:9.) How are you treating God's patience?

**Noah's Example**

Noah also gives us many lessons. First of all, he remained faithful to God, never doubting nor ceasing his work, although he was likely mocked, ridiculed, and called a fanatic and many other names typical of humanity that do not wish to take warning. He had never seen such a flood before, he heard their mockery of such an idea, but HE NEVER DOUBTED GOD, and did all God instructed him to do. He took the warning seriously and kept at his job. We too have received the warning. (2 Pet. 3:17.) Will we let a mocking world detract us from its seriousness, from complete obedience to Christ? Remember, Noah was saved in the end BECAUSE OF HIS OBEDIENCE.

Secondly, his faithfulness is manifested in that he never gave up his efforts. He not only prepared for his own salvation, but constantly sought that of his fellow-man. Laughed at, mocked, ridiculed, scorned, denounced, called a fanatic, etc., yet he never resigned them to "their justly deserved fate," but kept on trying. No converts (other than his
family) during the 120 years, but he didn't quit, he kept trying. Things may not always be easy today, they may not always show immediate results, but maybe we can accomplish more than we realize by steadfastly working at our goal. After all, he preserved the human race!

So, using a quote from Leslie Diestelkamp, let us remember, "We can, if I will"—and then let's. Are you?

The person who is satisfied with being average admits that he is as near the bottom as the top.

Many a man has opposed the Bible because the Bible opposed his wickedness.

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Mis-leading Assertions About the Bible

By Luther W. Martin, St. James, Missouri

Recently, newspapers have published a display ad, paid for by the Knights of Columbus, with a bare-faced assertion serving as the title ... "The Bible Is a Catholic Book." Now if by using the word "catholic" they mean that the Bible is a book for UNIVERSAL use or application, then we will agree with the assertion. But if they mean that the Bible was or is the product of the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, then we flatly reject such a claim, and ask the Knights for PROOF rather than mere CLAIMS.

One might as well assert . . . "The U. S. Constitution is a Democratic Document," meaning that it is the product of the Democratic Party, when in reality it ante-dates the Democratic Party. The same could be said if we had asserted . . . "The U. S. Constitution is a Republican Document." The point that we wish to firmly establish is that the books of the Bible existed for centuries before there was any religious movement in the world known as the ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Even "Saint" Jerome, the translator of the Latin Vulgate which is the primary version of the Bible that the Roman Church uses, rejected the books of the Old Testament which modern Romanism adds to the canon of the Old Testament. Other ancient scholars who rejected the "Apocryphal" books of the O. T. now accepted by the Latin Church, include Origen, Athanasius, Hilary, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Epiphanius, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Melito.

The Jewish historian, Josephus, listed the canon of the Old Testament as received and accepted by the Jewish nation. His list agrees exactly with the canon of the Old Testament as has been accepted by non-Catholics from the beginning. Josephus was born in the year 37 A. D.

Historians of the Roman Catholic persuasion such as Bellarmine and Du Pin, also admit that the apocryphal books (which non-Catholics reject) were rejected by the Jews . . . and after all, was not the Old Testament designed for, written for, and delivered to the Jews?

Thus, history establishes that the Roman Catholic Church has perverted and distorted the Bible, rather than protecting it or giving it to the world! (Read 2 Timothy 3:15-17.)
The Gospel Is for Aliens

By Irvin Himmel, St. Louis, Missouri

Two extreme views regarding the design of the gospel are in circulation. One of these is the notion that the gospel is for aliens alone. A few months ago (Aug., 1962) I wrote a short essay in which this error was considered. The other view, equally extreme and equally erroneous, limits the gospel to the saved. In this article it is my intention to expose the latter error.

Among the Baptists there is a group calling themselves "Primitive." This group holds to the views set forth long ago by John Calvin. They believe in unconditional election, direct operation of the Holy Spirit, and impossibility of apostasy. A "Primitive Baptist" preacher, J. D. Holder, has written a book entitled Principles and Practices of the Church. Holder puts forth considerable effort to prove that the gospel is not designed to be the means of reaching and saving the aliens. I now direct attention to some of his arguments.

Not For Believers Only

First, Mr. Holder reasons that the gospel is designed to reach and teach believers and save them from error and disobedience. He then assumes that all believers are saved, hence concludes that the gospel is for God's children, not the aliens or unsaved. (Of course, if believers cannot fall away and be lost they do not really need the gospel to save them from error and disobedience!)


The Bible teaches that there are saved and unsaved believers. All the saved are believers, but not all believers are saved. In Acts 5:14 we read of believers being added to the Lord. They were believers before they were added. If all believers are saved, they were saved before and without being added to the Lord. Some believe and do not confess Jesus. (John 12:42.) One must believe AND confess Jesus to be saved. (Rom. 10:9, 10.) If "belief only" results in salvation then the devils are saved, according to James. (James 2:19.) But "faith only" does not prove justification. (James 2:24.) The "believers" contemplated in the passages cited by Mr. Holder are saved believers—obedient believers.

The fact that the gospel benefits believers does not prove that it does nothing for unbelievers. Yea, the written word turns men from unbelief to belief. John said, "But these (signs) are written, that ye might believe . . ." (John 20:31.) The Lord said, "preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mk. 16:15, 16.) Paul asked, "how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? . . . So then faith cometh by hearing,
and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:13-17.) THE GOSPEL IS DESIGNED TO PRODUCE BELIEF! Acts 18:8. "...and many of the Corinthians HEARING believed, and were baptized." Acts 14:1. "...they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and SO SPAKE, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed."

Not Food Only

Mr. Holder makes another argument on food. He reasons that the gospel is food for the living (Acts 20:28: 1 Cor. 5:2: 1 Pet. 2:2). therefore it is "that which nourishes or sustains life and not a means to give life." Here he places himself in direct opposition to Paul. While the gospel is admittedly food for the living (God's children), it is also the means of imparting life to the dead (aliens). Paul said he had "begotten" the Corinthians "through the gospel." (1 Cor. 4:15.) He was a minister "by whom" they believed. (1 Cor. 3:5.) He preached the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-4): they heard and believed (Acts 18:8). thereby being "begotten": then they were baptized (Acts 18:8). being then, like the Romans, "raised to walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6:4.)

The "Seal" Argument

"The gospel of Christ is the seal of apostleship in preaching it to those who are in Christ, and not to the alien sinner (1 Cor. 9:1. 2). Those who are in Christ are new creatures." (p. 99.)

Here is a deceptive statement. Paul did not say what Mr. Holder did. Paul said, "for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord." The Corinthians, Paul's converts, were the seal of his apostleship. Read it again: "for the seal of mine apostleship are YE in the Lord." The fact that he had preached to them and as a result they were now in the Lord was the demonstration, seal, proof, certification of his apostleship.

Preaching and Foolishness

Mr. Holder uses 1 Cor. 1:18 in an effort to prove that the gospel is foolishness to the alien but God's power to the saved, therefore it is not designed for the alien. The passage says. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." By the expression "them that perish" he refers to those who reject the gospel. Not all aliens who hear the gospel are disposed to reject it. so Holder's argument does not hold.

It is further contended by Mr. Holder that the prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are gifts in the body of Christ, "designed to edify the body, to perfect the saints, to bring to a unity of the faith, and therefore not a means to reach and teach the lost." While they were gifts in the body of Christ and designed to edify, etc.. that does not exclude their preaching the gospel to the lost. If so. why was Paul, an apostle, sent to the people and to the Gentiles "to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins"? (Acts 26:17,18.) People who are in darkness and under the power of Satan are certainly not the saved. Why was Paul sent to such people to turn them from all of this if the Holy Spirit does it directly?

(35)
Primitive Preacher Perverts Paul's Point

Primitive Baptists believe the Holy Spirit works on the sinner in a direct manner, not by means of the gospel. Holder says, "The Spirit writes on the fleshly tables of the heart." 2 Cor. 3:6 is cited. He adds, "Now let the hand that holds the pen represent the Father, the pen represent Christ, the ink represent the Holy Spirit, and the paper on which you write, the heart and it plainly reasons that the preacher has no need meddling with God's grace as He work; and changes the heart of men." (p. 100.) But this is not what the passage says. It says, "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God: not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." Now look at the difference.

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<td>Hand represents the Father</td>
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<td>Ink represents Holy Spirit</td>
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<td>Paper represents the heart</td>
<td>Heart takes place of tables of stone</td>
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CONCLUSION: NOT MINISTERED BY MEN

CONCLUSION: "MINISTERED B'US" (MEN)

Facts in Acts

The examples of conversion in the book of Acts clearly demonstrate that the gospel is the means of reaching and teaching the alien. Mr. Holder dismisses...
these cases by declaring the people saved before they ever heard the gospel, but in so doing he contradicts plain Bible statements. He says of Paul that he "was saved before he heard the gospel preached by Ananias." This is more than Ananias knew, for he told him to "arise, and be baptized, and WASH AWAY THY SINS, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16.) Holder would say Paul had no sins because he was already saved. The Bible differs with Holder.

Holder states, "Cornelius was saved before he heard the gospel by Peter at the house of Cornelius." (p. 101.) The Bible says he was told to send for Peter, "Who shall tell the words, whereby thou and all thy house SHALL BE SAVED." (Acts 11:14.) "SHALL BE SAVED" does not' harmonize with ALREADY SAVED.

Our "Primitive" friend makes the same wild assertion of the eunuch. "The eunuch was saved before he heard Philip's preaching, and was baptized, because we are told he had been to Jerusalem to worship (Acts 2:27)." (p. 102.) Notice the line of reasoning. He had been to Jerusalem to worship, therefore he was saved! Who will fall for such logic? Are all people saved who have been somewhere to worship? Is a Mohammedan saved because he has been to Mecca to worship? Is a Catholic saved because he has been to Rome to worship? Is a Mormon saved because he has been to Salt Lake City to worship? Is John Doe saved because he has been to the country meeting house to worship? If not, by what rule are we to conclude that the eunuch was saved because he had been to Jerusalem to worship? Every loyal Jew went there for worship at certain seasons of the year, but many of these Jews denied Jesus.

Summary

These are typical of the arguments advanced in an effort to deny that the gospel is the means by which God expresses His grace and exerts His power in saving men from sin. The fact remains that our Lord wants the gospel preached to "EVERY CREATURE." (Mk. 16:15.) It is "THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION." (Rom. 1:16.) God saves us. He does it "BY GRACE" and "THROUGH FAITH." (Eph. 2:8.) His grace that brings salvation has appeared to all men, "TEACHING US." (Titus 2:11,12.) Teaching produces FAITH. (Acts 8:12.) Faith is expressed in OBEDIENCE. (Gal. 5:6; James 2:24.) The fact that God uses means does not make salvation any less of grace. That grace is appropriated through faith, and the faith demonstrated in action. GOD . . . GRACE . . . CHRIST . . . THE BLOOD . . . HOLY SPIRIT . . . GOSPEL . . . TEACHING . . . FAITH . . . OBEDIENCE — these things are not opposed one to another: God has linked them together in His arrangement for man's redemption.

In the first century members of Christ's church went wherever they could preaching the gospel to save the lost. A church which denies that the gospel is designed to reach and teach the lost is in no position to claim identity with Christ's church. "Through the gospel" God has brought life and immortality to light. (2 Tim. 1:10.) Without the gospel men are dead in trespasses and sins, groping in spiritual darkness. Those who do not obey the gospel will be punished with everlasting destruction. (2 Thess. 1:8,9.) Will God punish men for failing to obey something that does not apply to them?
Infant Baptism

By Paul K. Williams, Columbus, Ohio

When were you baptized? I imagine a good percentage of you readers were baptized when you were too small to remember. You know you were baptized because your parents have told you so. or because it is on the record of some church. Infant baptism is practiced by the leading denominations in America. But did you know that there is absolutely no Bible authority for the practice? In fact, the scripture shows that babies cannot be scripturally baptized.

The Soul That Sinneth, It Shall Die

A great Bible principle is given in Ezekiel 18. The word of God came to the prophet Ezekiel to dispel a false notion the people of that time had. They had a proverb that went, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." By this they meant that children were guilty of the sins of their fathers whether they had committed those sins or not. But God said in Ezekiel 18:3, "As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth it shall die." In further explanation Ezekiel wrote in chapter 18:19-20, "Yet say ye, Wherefore doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.

The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

This is a simple principle of justice recognized by all civilized people today. The court cannot convict a son of murder simply because his father killed a man. Every man must stand trial for his own crimes, and only for his own. But civilized people, who would not think of accusing a man of a crime he had not committed, teach that little babies, who have never had the least chance to commit any sin, are born guilty of sins they have not committed! These teach that if a baby should die who has not been baptized, he is lost eternally. The Bible does not teach such a doctrine. The Bible teaches in Ezekiel 18 that God holds a man accountable for his own sins, and only his own.

Original Sin

The doctrine of original sin is what gave occasion to the practice of infant baptism. The doctrine of original sin teaches that every person is born with the guilt of Adam's sin upon his soul. This is not taught in the Bible. We suffer the consequences of Adam's sin—man has to eat his bread in the sweat of his face, and woman brings forth children in pain and travail as a consequence of Adam's sin—but we do not inherit the guilt of sin. Instead, Jesus holds the little child up as an example of what we must become if we are to be saved. He said in Matt. 18:3, "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." The little
child is not guilty of sin—he is innocent. He can, therefore, be the example we must imitate.

**Terms of Salvation Exclude Infants**

This is why the terms of salvation do not apply to little children. Since they are born without sin, they need no salvation. Consequently, the terms of salvation are addressed to those who can believe and understand, who can have a consciousness of sin and an understanding of it, who then can turn from it in obedience to God.

When Jesus gave the Great Commission, He said as recorded in Matthew 28:19, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Jesus here tells who were to be baptized—those who were first taught. Mark records the Great Commission in Mark 16:16 in these words, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned. Belief is necessary before one can be baptized—and it is the unbeliever who shall be damned. One who is incapable of belief cannot be baptized with New Testament baptism.

**Dedicating Babies**

Some denominations have discarded their belief in original sin while at the same time clinging to infant baptism. This is completely inconsistent. They can do this only because they deny that baptism has any connection with salvation. They baptize infants as a ceremony, sometimes calling it "dedicating" them, and put them on the church roll expecting them to believe at some later date. They teach that a person does not have to be baptized to be saved, therefore baptism of infants is a matter of convenience or choice.

They have erred concerning the scriptures, also. Jesus said in Mark 16:16, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Baptism is just as much a condition of salvation as is belief. That is why Peter commanded the believing Jews on the day of Pentecost to be baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38), and why Ananias told Saul to "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." (Acts 22:16.)

Friend, the New Testament plainly teaches that one must believe and repent before he is baptized. And it just as plainly teaches that one must be baptized before he can be saved.

**Ask Your Preacher**

But you say, "He makes it sound pretty good, but my preacher can, too." Let me make a suggestion. You ask your preacher where the Bible gives a command to baptize babies, or an example of any baby being baptized. Ask him to give the chapter and verse for it. He won't be able to give it to you. You wait and see. He will tell you it is not important, or something of that nature. Sometimes a preacher will point to a case of conversion—where an entire family was baptized—and assert without proof that there were babies in the family. That is pretty weak evi-
dence in the first place, and in the second place in each instance where a family was baptized there are statements in the context which make it plain that all in the family were old enough to hear, understand, believe and obey. Read it and see.

Doctrines such as infant baptism are the things which make denominations. Men have added to the scriptures, denied others, and started their own teachings. Jesus said in Matt. 15:9, "But in vain do they worship me. Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." Our worship won't do any good if our doctrine is the doctrine of men. So I plead with you to come out from the unscriptural practices of denominationalism and turn to the word of God. Practice it without addition or subtraction. Be a Christian and nothing else. In this only is there salvation.

The Christian, the Recipient of God's Grace

By Jimmy Tuten, Jr., St. Louis, Missouri

According to a prearranged plan, God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners. Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8.) Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was the revelation or manifestation of God's purpose and grace to man. His greatness and preeminence are seen in the relationships which He sustains to God, to creation, and to man. In all things He has supremacy and to this end He was the firstborn from the dead. (Col. 1:18.) He is also the "fulness of the Godhead" according to God's own pleasure. (Col. 1:19.) This fulness is in Him bodily so that the completeness of the Godhead with all its virtues, glories, and excellencies is summed up in Him. (Col. 2:9.) All of the forces and laws engaged in the work of redemption are in Christ so that nothing can add to the greatness. He is the final and complete exegesis of God to man, and He alone has the words of eternal life.

The Christian Is Complete in Christ

Man is the object of God's grace. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3.) God is the source of all blessings: man is the recipient; Christ Jesus is the means through which these blessings flow. By obeying Christ one is made complete in Him. (Col. 2:10.) The Apostle Paul uses the word "complete" to denote the idea of being made full, replete, satisfied and fulfilled. (Liddell & Scott, p. 1195.) This means that we have an inexhaustible supply of blessings and have no need of more. Christ, like the inspired Word of God, furnishes us completely. (2 Tim. 3:16-17.) All that the soul could desire can be fulfilled in Christ Jesus our Lord. We must come to Christ and not throw away our confidence in His fulness. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is all in all; the absolute mediator between God and man. He offers the sin- ner grace to subdue his sins; wisdom to keep him from error; mercy and pity to succour him. It is no wonder that the Apostle could say, "My God shall

(See RECIPIENT....Page 42)
"Holding the Pattern of Sound Words" (No. 3)

Perhaps some, as they have read these articles on the above topic regarding the great necessity of our keeping close to the very words of Holy Writ in speaking of sacred things, have thought that this is making entirely too much of the phraseology even of the Bible. And does not such, some have been known to ask, justify the charge of "bibliolatry," worship of the Book, as that charge is made by the worldly wise and more liberal thinking? How could the mere use of words, they say, involve such seriousness of peril?

The answer of course, lies in the following consideration. Words are the signs of ideas; by words therefore, ideas are expressed or conveyed to others. Unscriptural words, or even scriptural words, if they be used unscripturally, express of necessity, unscriptural ideas. And unscriptural ideas are a perversion of the Bible, and lead men and women away from Christ, the church, and salvation.

It was for this very reason that the aged apostle, realizing that the time of his departure had come, and that Timothy and others who were not only younger than he but who still enjoyed the civil liberty of which he had been deprived, would have to succeed him in the great enterprise of carrying the gospel to all those who never yet had heard, instructed Timothy in the language upon which we are now commenting, saying, "Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me. in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

Once before he had written him very similarly on the same important point, saying, "take heed unto thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. 4:16.)

One great man has expressed the thought in this way. "We choose to speak of Bible things by Bible words, because we are always suspicious that if the word is not in the Bible, the idea which it represents is not there: and always confident that the things taught by God are better taught in the words and under the names which the Holy Spirit has chosen and appropriated, than in the words which man's wisdom teaches."

Let me give you now, as an illustration of the unscriptural PHRASES common to the general religious speech of our day the following statement: "All Christians should certainly join the church of their choice and serve God faithfully" etc.

Now, however common this statement may be in the pulpit, the press, on the radio, television, and in private conversation, it betrays a most inexcusable ignorance of the simplest and most rudimentary teaching of the New Testament regarding the church.

In the New Testament only the SAVED are called Christians, and the
CHURCH is itself, that group of saved individuals, or CHRISTIANS, ADDED TOGETHER BY THE LORD AT THE TIME THEY WERE SAVED. Hence, we have this language in Acts 2:47, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

When men today comply with the terms or conditions of salvation made known in the gospel just as those did at the beginning on Pentecost in the long ago, day by day as the people are saved, GOD ADDS THEM TO THE CHURCH; so says the passage. It is ridiculous therefore, for one to talk about people being saved out of the church. And it is just as absurd to say that a saved man is saved, he is already in person, a Christian, SHOULD JOIN THE CHURCH. If the man is out of the Lord's church he is not saved because the same God that does the saving says also that he adds men to the church day by day as and when he saves them. And if the man is saved, he is already in God's church, and it is foolish to talk about one who is already in the church—"JOINING THE CHURCH"! Unless of course, we have in mind some saved person, one who is already in GOD'S church, leaving it to join some human organization, a mere sect or religious party, of which there are by the admission of organized religion today, about three hundred. But this is a thing expressly pointed out in God's word as a step no Christian should take. (1 Cor. 1:10.)

Since the church as we read of it in the New Testament is itself, the saved added together by God when they were saved, there is, as you can see, but ONE CHURCH mentioned in the New Testament. Man has no CHOICE therefore, except to OBEY GOD and be saved, be a Christian and a member of HIS CHURCH and of nothing else, or to reject God and his word and do as he pleases. What will YOU do?

(RECIPIENT..........Continued)

supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19.)

In Whom Ye are Circumcised

To explain the fulness of our completeness in Christ, the Apostle Paul goes on to show that it involves our salvation from past sins; that it relates to our salvation in this life, and to eternal salvation of the soul. The remission of past sins, and the present condition of the Christian is described as a "circumcision." "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh." (Col. 2:11.) Circumcision is a part of the requirements for the hope of salvation: but it is in a different manner than that known to the Jew. The former is spiritual, and the latter is fleshly. Fleshly circumcision (the actual cutting away of the foreskin of all males on the eighth day) was for the Jews a ratification of the covenant made between them and Jehovah God. (Gen. 17.) It was a sign of a covenant people and all uncircumcised people had no right to share the hopes which the nation had nor could they worship God. These Jews were God's chosen people, selected from all the nations of the world. (Ex. 19:5-6.) Their relationship to God was based on natural birth or fleshly descent from Abraham. In time these people failed God and apostatized to the extent that they trusted in the flesh. (Amos 5:21-24; Jno. 8:31-39.) Salvation was according to man's works, and no man could be saved by the works of the law. (Rom. 8:3; 3:20.) All had sinned and therefore could not claim salvation by the Law of Moses. (Rom. 3:23.) God rejected His covenanted people according to the flesh. God has a "spiritual Israel, but these are not by fleshly
They are His by spiritual regeneration or "circumcision not made with hands." (Gal. 6:16.) Jews today cannot boast of the hope of salvation because of lineage, "for he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not of the letter." (Rom. 2:28-29.)

To become a part of spiritual Israel and have the hope of eternal salvation for the soul, one must be circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands. This is done by putting off the body of sins. (Col. 2:11.) Putting off the "body of sins" is putting off the "old man of sin" and this in turn is the sign of the covenant made between God and spiritual Israel. One puts off the body of sin by being crucified with Christ. (Rom. 6:6.) One is not crucified with Christ until he is "planted in the likeness of his death" in baptism! (Rom. 6:4-5.) The believer then, by being baptized has his sins put away and this obedience (spiritual circumcision) makes him acceptable to God. All who have believed and been baptized, become the children of Abraham and the children of promise. (Gal. 3:26-29; 3:7.) This is not to say that Jews are not Jews in any sense; but the Bible does say that a Jew today in the true sense of the term, in its proper content and dignity, is the Jew who is one inwardly and spiritually. Those who become the children of God by obedience to the Gospel constitute God's holy nation. (1 Pet. 2:9-10.) They are COMPLETE IN CHRIST because they have been CIRCUMCISED IN PUTTING OFF THE OLD MAN OF SIN!

Quickened Together With Christ

The Christian's completeness with Christ is further depicted in terms of "a quickening" or resurrection from death in sins. Those who are quickened with Christ, are made alive with Him spiritually. Just as the "circumcision not made with hands" is the putting off of the body of sins, so the quickening is the forgiveness of sins. (Col. 2:13.) When one's sins are forgiven, he is quickened and this being made alive is final and complete.

To fully appreciate this point, let's notice the condition of the unregenerate sinner. He is "dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1.) Here is conscious existence in separation from God, and an example for illustration is found in 1 Tim. 5:6. "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (Italics mine, J. T.) Men and women who are dead in sin are doomed to eternal Hell while in that condition. However, they can be resurrected or quickened to new life in Christ Jesus which results in conscious existence with God. This is what Paul has reference to in the passage under discussion.

Let it be observed that the resurrection of the believer from sin to life in Christ takes place in baptism. Because one dies with Christ in baptism, and is buried, he is "raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father" that he should also "walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6:4.) The complete remission of sins is promised to those who believe and are baptized. (Mk. 16:16.) As a new creature, one is complete and must not yield his members as instruments of sin. (Rom. 6:12-13.) We believe that we "shall also live with him" and that we will be in the "likeness of his resurrection." (Rom. 6:8, 5.)

Christians are Sealed With the Holy Spirit of Promise

Having been circumcised spiritually and made alive through the forgiveness of sins, one is sealed with the spirit of promise. Hear the Apostle and
notice the steps that led to this sealing: "In whom ye also trusted (Christ) after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise:1 (Eph. 1:13-14.) The term "sealed" denotes ownership and security. It suggests the idea of our knowledge of destination in the "day of redemption." The Spirit is called a Spirit of promise, which brings to our mind Peter's statement in Acts 2:38, "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." The Spirit is given to those who obey the gospel. (Acts 5:32.)

The apostle testifies that God will faithfully fulfill His promises to the Christ. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the assurance of this fact. The Holy Spirit is the "earnest of our inheritance." (Col. 1:14.) To help in our understanding of the word "earnest" please note: "In the N.T. it is used only of that which is assured by God to believers; it is said of the Holy Spirit as the Divine pledge of all their future blessedness." (Vine, Vol. 2, p. 11.) Thus, the Holy Spirit is the earnest or down-payment of God with the promise to fulfill His pledge. The inheritance awaiting the faithful saint is "reserved in heaven." (1 Pet. 1:4.)

**Conclusion**

Let us marvel over the fact that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and that those who are thus reconciled by obedience are made complete in Christ. All that God bestows, that Christ can provide and the Holy Spirit applies is given us in Christ.

Come to the Saviour now, He gently calleth thee;

In true repentance bow, Before Him bend the knee.
A Look at the Bible (No. 1)
By Donald P. Ames, Aurora, Illinois

Paul, in writing to Timothy, said, "Study ('Give diligence' in the ASV) to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15.) Although the apostle Paul here is affirming a study and proper handling of the word of God for teaching purposes, involved in our understanding of the word of God is also a knowledge of the divisions and an overall picture of the great "Book of Books." We shall attempt herein to present such an overall picture that we might be better equipped to approach the book as a whole.

The sixty-six books of the Bible divide themselves into two major divisions, the Old Testament (containing 39 books) and the New Testament (containing 27 books). The Old Testament tells us how God dealt with His people before the coming of Christ, while the New Testament tells us how God deals with us today. The Old Testament can benefit us (1 Cor. 10:1-13), but was not given to us (Rom. 7:1-7, Col. 2:14-16, Gal. 3:23-25), so it is important that we realize we must go to the New Testament rather than the Old if we wish to find out the will of Christ for us today. (Matt. 28:18, Eph. 1:21-22, Col. 1:18.)

The Old Testament
The first five books of the O.T. are known as the books of the law, and were written by Moses. Included in these books is the story of the creation, the flood, the Egyptian bondage, deliverance, giving of the law, and the journey by the Israelites to the promised land.

Genesis begins with the creation, and covers a period of about 2,500 years in man's history. During this period of time there existed no divinely written law, but rather God spoke with the people in family units. Thus, this period of time is frequently spoken of as being a patriarchal (father rule) age. Herein is related the story of the creation, Noah and the flood, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Esau, and the story of Joseph.

Exodus begins with the birth of Moses during Egyptian bondage, and relates his deliverance of the Israelites following the ten plagues. It follows them to Mt. Sinai where the law is given, and is then pretty well occupied with the law of Moses for the balance of the book, as is also the case with the book of Leviticus.

Although Numbers is well filled with portions of the law, it picks up the history of the Jews during their 40-year wanderings, including the attempted rebellion against Moses and the declaring of the Aaronic priesthood. Deuteronomy contains more details of the law and some additional history, as well as a review of former events to a degree.

Following the giving of the law of Moses to the Jews (and to them only), they were removed from the "Patriarchal age" to that of a national group with a written law. This time, to the cross, therefore, is frequently referred to as the Mosaical age—after the law of Moses. We must remember that only (See BIBLE................. Page 47)
This writer has never seen a placard with these words written on it. But he has seen, on a number of occasions, this disposition manifested. When a person sells his soul, he is the one who decides the "price tag." Satan is the buyer and the soul or his life is the commodity sold. The prices are varied but always inadequate.

Judas Iscariot sold his own soul and betrayed the Savior for thirty pieces of silver. Tainted money he could not find the occasion or the conscience to spend. We tell ourselves that we would not do what Judas did but in reality we do the same thing in principle. Let us consider some sales that never pay.

**What will a man give in exchange for his life?** The man that saves his life for himself will lose it. Such a life is self-centered rather than Christ-centered. He lives for himself, as if Christ had never lived and died for him. He has not denied himself. He has not found his life by losing it in the service of Christ. He aspires to gain the whole world but he will forfeit his own life. He has made a poor bargain. The world, pleasure, and riches are gone and his life is empty, disillusioned and condemned for an eternity. What keeps you from becoming a Christian is the price tag you have put on your soul. Friend, is it worth it?

**Parents sell their happiness and their children for a price.** A father and or mother seeks escape from reality by drinking. The children are left to themselves and bring their parents to shame. A mother places greater value on her bowling league or bridge club than on the training of her children. Is it worth the price? The divorce rate is alarming! In St. Louis County 3 out of every 5 marriages end in divorce. A divorce is a sale that never pays. It is an admission of failure. The children in such circumstances are the innocent sufferers of Mom's and or Dad's lack of moral responsibility. Parents, can you afford to pay such a price?

**Preachers sell their soul for popularity.** Usually popularity is Satan's consideration. Preachers want to be popular so their messages are determined by what the majority wants to hear. Paul warned against such, saying, "Preach the word." (2 Tim. 4:1-4.) The result of such an attitude is a perverted, distorted gospel which can only place one under a curse.

Every gospel preacher worthy of the name will preach exactly what God has commanded in the Scriptures. He will be popular with God and his word will be blessed of Him. With some brethren it is unpopular to preach giving, but God has commanded it. Similarly, God has ordained that the local church is the divine organization to do his work collectively. This is the revealed will of God in the matter but such is unpopular with many brethren. They have substituted their own schemes to help the Lord out. It is always right and safe to simply obey the Lord and forget about popularity!

**Some Christians sell their souls for pleasure.** Esau put the desires of his flesh over his own birthright. The prodigal Son squandered his inheritance...
in riotous living. A person who lives in pleasure is dead while he lives. Some brethren sell their worship to God for the pleasure of a fishing rod, camping trips, etc. Do not allow pleasure, deceitfulness of riches and cares of the world to become the price tag on your soul.

Some parents exchange the Bible classes for themselves and their children for one hour's sleep! Esau needed food, and they think they need sleep. Is it worth it? Some even sell their services as a teacher in Bible classes for pleasures that disqualify them. Can you afford to pay the price?

Use your time, talents and means in God's service. To be his servant you must deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Christ. Put no price tag on your soul. Lose yourself in the Master's service and you will receive the greatest reward possible—eternal life.

(BIBLE......................Continued)

the Jews were included in this arrangement, and that the rest of the world continued in a patriarchal arrangement.

After the books of the law, we have twelve books of history. These books record events in the lives of the Jews, including the conquering of the promised land, the selecting of King Saul, David, Solomon, and then the divided kingdom. Included in these books of history are: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. The author of each of these books is not specifically known, nor do they follow in chronological order. To illustrate: Ezra and Nehemiah actually belong (chronologically) at the very end of the O. T., along with the book of Malachi, while the events of Esther took place during the Babylonian captivity of the time of Ezekiel. Many people, failing to realize this important fact, soon become confused and lose interest at this point.

The next five books are generally called the books of poetry, and are books of devotion and exhortation. They include Job (believed by some to have been written by Moses), Psalms (by David), and Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon (all three written by Solomon). They are not history, nor are they meant for casual reading as history, but are books of ideas and meditations and wise thoughts. One can learn many worthwhile ideas from these books.

Following the books of poetry, we come to the remaining seventeen books of the O. T., all of which are books of prophecy, looking at both present and future events. These books are divided into two segments: the Major prophets and the Minor prophets, each bearing the author's name (except Lamentations by Jeremiah).

The Major prophets (so named because of their greater length, not because of greater importance) include: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel. They were written just prior to and during the time of the captivity of Israel (721 B.C.) and Judah (586 B.C.), and thus contain both prophecy and history. Ezekiel is harder to understand because it was written in figurative language so the enemies of the Jews would be unable to understand its message of deliverance and not heap additional persecution upon them.

The Minor prophets, covering a period of time from 850 B.C. clear down to 400 B.C., include: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Like the major prophets, they deal with various conditions of their times, and also contain
many prophesies of the coming Messiah and his kingdom, the church.

Scrawny Zero

After months of talk, endless "prayers for success," and publicity ad nauseam, the first round of the Vatican Council has achieved exactly nothing.

—Church & State

"... God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." (Acts 10:34,35.)

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Scriptural Giving:

By J. Wiley Adams, Fairmont, West Virginia

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." (1 Cor. 16:2.) "But this I say. He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9: 6. 7.) These two passages of scripture are the basis of scriptural giving. Perhaps you are one of those who have wondered just how churches of Christ are able to do all that they do without tithes, pledges, bake sales, rummage sales, ladies aid societies, raffles, camouflaged gambling, carnivals, begging campaigns, and the like. Some religionists would say that "it couldn't be done" but they are mistaken. Loyal churches of Christ have done without these man-made schemes for raising money and are doing without them now. There is always enough money by the Lord's plan for churches of Christ to do what the Lord expects them to do.

On the first day of the week, as prescribed in this passage, faithful members of the Lord's church give of their means according to their prosperity. They plan ahead of time (purpose in their hearts) what they will give and when the time arrives for the collection to be taken they give all their contribution at one time for the whole week. When this is done there is enough to carry out the Lord's work. I used to be a member of the Christian Church many years ago, and I remember that their methods of obtaining funds were quite different. There was a collection taken in each Sunday School class, one at the morning services and evening services on Sunday, one at choir practice, one at prayer meeting, one at every one of the various club meetings, one on Sunday evening at the Christian Endeavor Society (a young people's group), and in addition to all this, there were plays, carnivals, barbecues, potato salad sales and many more schemes that space will not permit us to mention. In spite of all these collections and schemes there was never enough money. They were always behind on the preacher's pay, could not meet their building mortgage, held by the Virginia Christian Missionary So-

(See GIVING.................. Page 56)
Man's Greatest Tragedy

By Frank J. Jamerson, Louisville, Kentucky

When one loses his health, we extend our sympathy because it is tragic. When one loses his life, most cases are looked upon as tragedies. But the greatest tragedy a person could sustain is the loss of his soul. In this article we propose to show the value of the soul and the consequences of losing it.

Christ’s Estimate of it

Over nineteen hundred years ago, Jesus asked: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26.)

Men are interested in profits and losses in material things and should be even more interested in spiritual profits. If a man loses his soul he has profited nothing even though he may have had great material wealth during this life. Jesus taught that even if a man gains the "whole world" and loses his soul, he has lost all and there is nothing that can buy it back in eternity.

Endlessness of Soul

Death means separation. "The body without the spirit is dead." (Jas. 2:26.) In physical death the spirit or soul leaves the body, but the spirit lives on. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10:28.) "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccl. 12:7.) The value of the soul is seen in the fact that it continues through eternity. This should cause the enjoyment of sin for a short time here to be less appealing. Indeed, nothing in this short life is worth the forfeiture of our souls for eternity. We should, with Paul, "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." (Phil. 3:8.)

Cost of Redemption

The saying, "We get what we pay for," shows that generally speaking, the value of a thing is determined by the price paid for it. The value of a man’s soul is seen in the price paid to redeem it. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Jno. 3:16.) "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Pet. 1:18, 19.) "Redeem" means to buy back. When man sins, he is separated from God. (Isa. 59:1, 2.) The value God places upon the soul is seen in the price He was willing to pay to redeem it.

If I Lose My Soul

What are the consequences if I lose my soul? (1) God’s grace will have been in vain. (2 Cor. 6:1.) God has made possible redemption for every man, but man must obey God in order to take advantage of the provision that has been made. (Heb. 5:8, 9.) (2) I will
have lost every tiling. "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." (1 Tim. 6: 7.) It is said that one man remarked to another concerning a rich miser, "He cannot take it with him when he goes"; to which the other replied, "Well, he won't go." The rich, the poor, the educated, and the uneducated must all die and be judged according to the deeds done in the body. (Rev. 20:13.)

(3) I will lose the blessings of heaven for eternity. (4) I will suffer eternally the tortures of hell. (5) Through my influence others may be lost.

We should realize the value of our souls and count the cost of losing them. God loved us enough to send His only begotten Son. Christ loved us enough to give his life that we through Him may have remission of sins. How much concern do you have for your soul? Do you have enough to cause you to learn the truth which will make your soul free from sin? (John 8:32.)

Ten Reasons for not Being a Methodist

There are over ten million Methodists in this country. Why don't I become one? The Methodist Church is one of the largest "Protestant" bodies in America. What is there to keep me from uniting with this church?

1. Methodism teaches that Christ suffered and died "to reconcile his Father to us." (Discipline, Art. 2.) God's word says Christ was in the world to reconcile us to the Father: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." (2 Cor. 5:19.) It was man, not God, who was responsible for enmity. Man sinned and set himself at variance with God, therefore man needed to be reconciled to God. Methodism makes reconciliation run in the wrong direction.

2. The Methodist Church is of human origin. John and Charles Wesley, Presbyters of the Church of England, are termed its "founders." (Discipline, Historical Statement.) A society was formed for the purpose of overcoming the formalism of the Episcopal Church. Other societies were formed for the same purpose, and these later banded together and became known as the Methodist Episcopal Church." All of this happened about 1700 years after Jesus established His church. The church we read about in the Bible was founded by Christ. (Matt. 16:18.) He is its head. (Eph. 5:23.) Moreover, Jesus says, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." (Matt. 16:13.)

3. The name Methodist is a party name. According to Nathan Bang's History, when the Wesley brothers formed their society in 1729, "Some of the wits at Oxford applied to the members the name of Methodists." That name was given because of their methodic lives. But the Bible says, "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts 11:26.) God is glorified when the name Christian is worn. "But if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name." (1 Pet. 4:16—A.S.V.) The name Christian is adequate to cover everything that is truly Christian. Sectarian names are added to distinguish a group holding to unscriptural practices from other groups holding to other unscriptural practices. Party names are condemned by the apostle Paul. (1 Cor. 1:10-15.)

4. Methodist doctrine changes. Prior to 1910 Methodist preachers were
to use the following words when administering infant baptism: "Forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour saith, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God: I beseech you to call upon God the Father." etc. After 1910 these words were to be used in place of the foregoing: "Forasmuch as God in his great mercy hath entered into covenant relation with man, wherein he hath included children as partakers of its gracious benefits: and our Lord Jesus Christ saith: Suffer the little children to come unto me: forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God; I beseech you to call upon God the Father," etc. *Discipline, Methodist Episcopal Church. Order for the Administration of Baptism to Infants.*) Before 1910 Methodist doctrine had children "conceived and born in sin." After 1910 they were partakers of the gracious benefits of the covenant and such as make up the kingdom of God. The gospel of Christ does not change. "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:9.)

S. Methodists use mechanical instruments of music in their worship. They sing and play. In the New Testament singing is specified as the kind of music God wants us to use in worship. *(Eph. 5:18,19; Col. 3:16.) When the Lord gives a specific command that excludes other items in the same class. For example, we cannot use anything as a part of the Lord's supper except bread and the fruit of the vine because those things are specified. The command to eat bread rules out the eating of cake, ice cream, or other such items in the communion. Likewise, the specific command to sing rules out making any other kind of music. Those who sing and play in worship have gone beyond the doctrine of Christ. Read 2 John 9.

6. The Methodist Church is unscriptural in organization. The bishops are over districts, including many congregations, and they preside over conferences, district conferences, and quarterly conferences. There are also presiding elders, preachers-in-charge, supernumerary ministers, district superintendents, stewards, trustees, and many others. In the New Testament the terms "bishop" and "elder" are used in reference to the same office. *(Titus 1:5-7; Acts 20:17, 28.) Elders were ordained in every church. (Acts 14:23.) There was never one bishop over a church nor a group of churches, but a group of bishops over a single church. There were also deacons who served under the elders. *(Phil. 1:1.) Preachers were not in charge of churches but were ministers of the word. (2 Tim. 4:2-5.) Every Christian was a steward. (Lk. 12:42; 1 Pet. 4:10.)

7. Methodism makes infants subjects for baptism. "We hold that all children, *(See METHODIST .... Page 55)
An Evangelist
By Alan Keith Burnett, Horse Cave, Kentucky

"I charge thee in the sight of God and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word: be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching ... But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill thy ministry." (2 Tim. 4:1-5.)

An evangelist is a "messenger of God," one who faithfully proclaims the good news of the gospel of Christ. Let us examine Paul's charge to Timothy concerning his work as an evangelist.

Preach (herald or proclaim) the word (having reference to the gospel), God's power to save is the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16), and it must be heard in order for one to be saved. (Rom. 10:17.) Thus, it is through preaching that God prefers to accomplish his purpose. But to many, preaching is foolishness. (1 Cor. 1:20-31.)

However, God's wisdom is higher than man's. (1 Cor. 1:25.)

The evangelist must be careful as to what he is teaching and be sure that it is only that which is recorded in the word. He must take heed not to go beyond that which is written (1 Cor. 4:6; 2 John 9) and not to fall short of the whole counsel of God. (Acts 20:27.) To do either of these would be to fail as an evangelist, to fail God, mankind, and himself.

"Take heed to thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. 1:16.)

When should an evangelist preach? Paul said, "be urgent in season, out of season." This means "unseasonable" or no set time. He must endeavor to use every opportunity.

The evangelist is to preach and teach, and in his teaching he must be longsuffering or patient. When teaching he may have to reprove. This means "to make full proof" or "bring to proof." The word of God will bring a thing to light whether it is good or bad. (Heb. 4:12.) Paul said, "Them that sin reprove in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear." (1 Tim. 6:20.) Which would you prefer — to be reproved and saved, or be lost because a brother, even though he knew you were in sin, never told you about it?

Again the evangelist may find it necessary to rebuke. This means to charge a person concerning a wrong. This is not an easy thing to do, but sometimes it is necessary. Those who have to be rebuked concerning Christian living should be happy someone is interested in their souls. This should be done in love. Some say that preachers are too pointed in their teaching. However, from time to time through the Old Testament God's prophets found it necessary to be blunt in teaching because it was the only thing to do. The people were so engrossed in sin that they had to be rebuked severely in order to jolt them back to their senses or a realization of their wrong.

In the church today, some brethren are going beyond the teaching of the scriptures. Thus, it is necessary to re-
buke, with love for their souls, so that people will see their wrong. There are all types of people in the church, and we need all types of preachers in order to teach them. Ezekiel was a "hard-headed" preacher sent to a "hard-headed" people. (Ezek. 2 and 3.) If the people of today become hardened as in the Old Testament, we will need some stern and hard preaching before it will penetrate hardened minds. Let us thank God for men willing to stand for the truth at all cost. Christ stood by the truth although the people found it hard to accept and thus would not follow him. (John 6:60-71.)

The evangelist must exhort, that is, to call on, to entreat, to admonish. Sometimes it means beseech. Thus he must exhort his brethren and friends to consider their lives and their conduct before God and man. He must admonish them to be faithful unto the Lord. Paul besought the brethren "to give their lives as a sacrifice and prove what is the good and acceptable will of God." (Rom. 12:1,2.) He exhorted the Hebrew Christians to forsake not their assembling. (Heb. 10:25.) Christians today must be exhorted in the same way.

One who does the work of an evangelist will suffer hardship. (2 Tim. 2:3; Rom. 8:17; 1 Pet. 2:20; 6:10; 4:16.) If one never suffers because of his preaching, he had better examine his teaching to see if it is the gospel of Christ or the teaching of man and to see if he is preaching the gospel correctly to Please God, or incorrectly to please them that hear him.

It is a fearful thing to stand before God and man and proclaim the simple gospel of heaven. (Read 1 Tim. 4:11-13.)

No one has the right to do wrong and expect the approval of God.

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ened meaning and could be defined, "... the power of authority, the right to exercise power . . ." This was the "... power of one whose will and commands must be obeyed by others ..." In the first century one with exousia was one with the right to give commands with the expectation of having them carried out. He was a man with the right to exercise power.

**Limitation**

Authority may be limited or unlimited. In the days of Christ on earth He gave limited exousia to His apostles by specifying the bounds of their authority. Matthew 10:1 records that He called the twelve and gave them "power (exousia) against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease."

Jesus was limited, himself, in exousia before His resurrection. He was subject to another's law and the conquering power of death ever before Him in the flesh. His power was much greater, however, than that of the apostles. In Matthew 9:6 Christ said, "But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins . . . arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house." Even when He spoke He affected the people as one having authority (exousia) and "not as the scribes." (Matt. 7:29.)

It was after His resurrection that His authority extended to heaven and earth. As Christ stood beyond death in immortality, He said of Himself, "All power (exousia) is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. 28:18.) In light of this exalted position He gave this perpetual commission to His apostles, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:19,20.) After His resurrection and ascension He was welcomed and seated by His Father at His own right hand where his authority extended, "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." In relation to His people on earth God, "... hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:21-23.) Today everything pertaining to His people is directed by Christ. What authority men may appear to have in religion they have taken upon themselves.

**Delegated or Usurped**

All authority is either delegated by a superior or it is usurped by one of his own accord. The authority of Christ "hath been given" to Him by the Father. Since the Father gave His Son "all authority (exousia)" no man today can have any unless he has usurped or taken it upon himself. May these words of warning from Christ be sufficient to those who would usurp rights which belong to Christ alone. "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: fear him, which after he hath killed hath power (exousia) to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." (Lk. 12:4,5.)

(METHODIST..........Continued)

by virtue of the unconditional benefits of the Atonement, are members of the Kingdom of God, and therefore graciously entitled to baptism . . ."

(Discipline. Board of Education, Pastors.) The Bible teaches that one must believe and repent to be a proper sub-
ject of baptism. (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38.) Babies are not capable of believing and repenting. The Bible is silent on dedicating babies in baptism. Those who practice infant baptism are acting without scriptural authority.

8. The Methodist creed endorses either sprinkling, pouring, or immersion for baptism. "Let every adult Person, and the Parents of every Child to be baptized, have the choice of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion." (Discipline, The Sacrament of Baptism.) The word of God always describes baptism as a burial. (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12.) Since sprinkling and pouring are not modes of burying, they are not modes of baptism. We are "buried with him in baptism," and there is "one baptism."

9. When one enters the Methodist Church he promises to be loyal to it, and that implies loyalty to its Book of Discipline. Many Methodists say they do not believe their own doctrine, but as long as they are Methodists they are giving moral support to Methodism. If one is loyal to Christ, he will not support any organization that teaches error.

10. Methodists believe in salvation by faith only. "Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." (Discipline, Art. 9.) The Bible says, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone ... Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (James 2:17-24.) "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mk. 16:16.) Methodism says "by faith only"; the Bible "not by faith only." I believe the Bible.

Such reasons as these prevent my being at all interested in becoming a Methodist, and they make me desirous of urging people who are Methodists to turn to the Bible.

—I. H.

(GIVING...................Continued)

The Second Coming
"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:16,17.)

MOVING? Please notify us in advance so you will not miss an issue.
Let us consider another statement often made by religious teachers both in the pulpit and out of it, but which is completely foreign to "The Pattern of Sound Words" as used in the New Testament. It is often said that the different churches as we see them today are just "branches of the universal church." And the question is often asked, "To what branch of the church do you belong?"

But, in all the New Testament, neither the Lord nor any of his apostles ever gave countenance to such an idea as that!

The idea grows out of a gross perversion of the language of the Lord in John 15, where he does say, "I am the vine and ye are the branches." But if we read the passage carefully we shall see that he tells very plainly who the branches are, saying, "He that abideth in me, and I in HIM, the same beareth much fruit: If a MAN abide not in me, HE is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." (John 15:5-6.)

The branches then, are not religious sects, parties, churches, that is different denominations, BUT THEY ARE INDIVIDUAL DISCIPLES; each disciple a branch, and all branches (disciples) abiding in Christ, the vine. A very beautiful picture indeed, of the unity of all the disciples of Christ in ONE organism, represented in the imagery under consideration here, as a vine and its branches.

It is passing strange, isn't it, that people in their zeal to maintain and support the unscriptural practice of propagating division among the professed followers of Christ, should seize upon the very language used by Christ to condemn division, and wrest and pervert it in an effort to make it teach the very thing Christ would condemn! And to me, it is stranger still, that people will be deceived by such artless blundering as the above perversion of the fifteenth chapter of John. It can be explained only upon the basis of mere sentimentality and party prejudice, with no relation to either knowledge or conviction. Such a one does not read his Bible for himself, else he would surely be disillusioned.

Finally, as an illustration of the unscriptural use of words and phrases which are now current in the popular vernacular of religious people in general, I wish to give an example of a scriptural word, but which is unscripturally used.

One of the most common of these words is the word "PASTOR." Today this word is unscripturally used to designate the "evangelist" (Eph. 4:11), or the preacher (Rom. 10:14), who labors with a local congregation, and who is called "The Pastor of the Church."

This is general usage among denomi-
national people, and it is coming more and more to be heard among the newly converted, or perhaps I should say among the "never converted" among us in the church of Christ.

The word "pastor" means "shepherd" and is one of the terms used in the New Testament to designate a PLURALITY of specially qualified, older and therefore, more experienced men, who have been appointed by the congregation to serve them as "presbyters, or elders" (Acts 14:23), "bishops, or overseers" (Acts 20:28); "pastors, or shepherds." (1 Pet. 5:1-4.)

These words do not mean the same thing, as can be seen from the use that is made of them, but they are descriptive terms used to describe the multiformal services of a plurality. ALWAYS A PLURALITY OF MEN, who have been selected and appointed by a local church to perform the duties set out in the New Testament to be performed by these special servants in the local church. To seize upon one of these divine designations therefore, and apply it to ANOTHER AND DIFFERENT service in the church, is to PERVERT the divine order, and to change the organization of the church from the pattern given by its designer and head.

This is NOT an inconsequential matter: it is serious, and from it many evils have come. In fact, it was at the point of organization that the first great apostasy following the apostolic era took hold upon the church.

Surely, all who have thoughtfully read this series of brief articles should be able to see by this time, that a return to the "Pattern of Sound Words" in all things is needed, and that this requires not only a casting away of all unscriptural words and phrases of human origin, but also that we give to words their scriptural meaning and importance; that we use them exactly as the scriptures use them.

Youth Chorus

"We have a lady here in the church who has trained a group of young people to sing choral numbers and has them sing the numbers just following Bible study, and before the communion service followed by preaching. They are all trained and seem to stress harmony and voice training. To some it is sheer confusion. It would be good entertainment at the proper time and place. What I'm wondering, is it in the pattern? Was a choir used in the early church? or in the early restoration?

"One of the elders gets up following the choir singing and remarks, 'Thank you, young folks. I'm sure the Lord is pleased with such fine singing . . . .'

"All the singing on Lord's day at Christmas time was given over to Christmas carols. A great deal of practice was given to this." (E.M.M.)

I am unable to find anything in the Bible to indicate that choirs, quartets, or other such groups were trained to render songs before the church in apostolic times. It is as much the duty and privilege of one Christian to sing as another. (Eph. 5:18, 19; Col. 3:16.) When the church assembles for worship, what good reason is there for not allowing all to participate in the singing?

We often make the grave mistake
of supposing that God is pleased with what pleases the human ear and heart. I might be pleased with the beautiful singing of a trained soloist. Suppose we have that person to sing solos in worship while the rest of us sit back and listen. Would that mean the Lord is pleased? If so, we would do just as well to eliminate congregational singing and turn to professional vocalists. We know the Lord is pleased when all Christians worship in songs of praise and songs that teach and admonish. We can only \textit{suppose} that He is pleased with separate choirs, quartets, trios, solos, instrumental numbers, etc.

And since His ways and thoughts are not ours (Isa. 55:8,9), I have no right to suppose that God is pleased with what pleases men.

The arrangement described by the querist sounds like someone is trying to put entertainment and other unscriptural "junk" into the worship. "Christmas carols" have no more place in the songs used in worship than "Easter eggs" on the Lord's table! If it be claimed that all of this choral singing is between Bible classes and worship and is therefore no part of the worship, may I ask what makes it proper for the church to have entertainment in the meeting house between Bible study and worship? Does entertainment "set the pace" for spiritual acts? Would it be permissible for a group of old folks to play fiddles, or young ladies to play the organ during that period? How about killing a lamb between Bible study and communion to "set the pace" for commemorating the death of our Lord? The Bible sets the pace for worship by telling us what to do and how to do it. It does not teach us to use choirs, quartets, mechanical music, Christmas carols, Easter eggs, Palm leaves, holy water, ashes, and such like.

\section*{Catholicism Is Not the Answer}

When once a nation is shot through with Roman Catholicism, it then becomes ripe picking for the Communist conspiracy. In Italy where the state religion is Catholicism, 22.7\% of all registered voters are already Communists. And present-day Communism is comparatively new!

Yugoslavia (32\% Catholic) has gone to the Communists.

Rumania (60\% Catholic) has gone to the Communists.

Hungary (66\% Catholic) has gone to the Communists.

Czechoslovakia (75\% Catholic) has gone to the Communists.

Poland (84\% Catholic) has gone to the Communists.

Lithuania (85\% Catholic) has gone to the Communists.

Cuba (90\% Catholic) has gone to the Communists.

Therefore: Catholicism is not the answer to the Communist Conspiracy!

--Selected.

\textit{1 Pet. 3:21}

\textbf{KING JAMES VERSION}: "The like figure whereunto even 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."

\textbf{REVISED STANDARD VERSION}: "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

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Salvation by Faith Only

By Paul K. Williams, Columbus, Ohio

Denominations exist only because men have not been content to follow the Scriptures without addition or subtraction. Religious leaders have, instead, magnified their own opinions and bound their own doctrines, thereby making the word of God of none effect. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for doing this very thing in His day and told them, "Ye have made void the word of God because of your tradition." Then he quoted the prophet Isaiah who said, "But in vain do they worship me. Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Matt. 15:6-9.)

One of these precepts of men is the doctrine of salvation by faith only, and if believed and followed it will make the word of God void and our worship vain. It is a false doctrine, denying some plain commands of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Martin Luther was perhaps the first to popularize this doctrine, and today it is adhered to by most of the large Protestant denominations. It is a doctrine which denies the necessity of water baptism for salvation, and in some extreme forms, denies the necessity of any act of obedience, other than faith, for eternal salvation. This is clearly an unscriptural doctrine, as the notice of a few passages of scripture will show.

He That Believeth and is Baptized

For instance, Jesus said in Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The one who teaches salvation by faith only says, "He that believeth and is not baptized shall be saved." The unthinking person accepts the salvation by faith only theory usually because he can't see any reason why a person has to be baptized. But the fact the Jesus commanded it is reason enough!

But you say, "The denomination I belong to doesn't teach that!" Just think a minute, friend. Doesn't your denomination teach that a person is saved when he believes, and that he can be baptized if he wants to but that he will be saved without it? If you are not sure, ask your preacher. Ask him if your denomination teaches baptism is necessary to salvation. Jesus taught it. His inspired apostles taught it. But very few denominations teach it today.

No "Non-Essential" Commands

The truth of the matter is that there is not a non-essential command in the Bible. Everything commanded us must be obeyed if we are going to be saved. James wrote in James 2:14-26, "What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but have not works? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone...Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." This is the only mention of "faith only" in the Bible, and here it is plainly stated that we are not saved by faith only. Remember this verse—James 2:24.

Saving faith is obedient faith. Faith only is a dead faith. The Hebrew writer wrote in Hebrews 5:9, "And having been made perfect, he became unto..."
all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation." He is the author of eternal salvation ONLY to those who OBEY Him. Friend, you can't obey Christ and say a person can be saved by faith only without obedience. You can't be pleasing to Him by teaching a person doesn't have to be baptized to be saved, because that is one of Jesus' commands! And it is a command specifically connected with salvation.

Listen to the Apostle Peter. He said to some believing Jews, "Repent ye, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38.) Do you think those Jews could have received the remission of sins without repenting and being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ? Of course they could not, because that was the command of the Holy Spirit to them. And neither can a person today be saved apart from obedience to those same commands. All of this business of laying your hand on the radio and being saved, or raising your hand and being prayed for, or getting salvation at the mourner's bench or in some other experience, is man-made foolishness leading many people astray. One is not saved by faith only apart from baptism. One must believe, repent, confess and be baptized, and then continue obeying God's commands the rest of his life. His sins are not forgiven him until he is baptized, and his sins committed after that time will only be forgiven if he continues living in accord with God's will.

Saul of Tarsus

Let me give you another instance to show that a man cannot be saved by faith only. Saul of Tarsus was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians. On the way, a great light shone round about him and he heard the voice of Jesus say, "Saul, Saul, why persecut-est thou me." Saul answered, "Who art thou Lord?" and Jesus answered, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." Saul confessed the Lord in these words, "What wilt thou have me to do, Lord?" showing that he believed in Him at that instant. According to denominational doctrine, he should have been saved at that moment. But the Lord told him to go into Damascus and there it would be told him what he must do. There he fasted and prayed for three days and nights. Most denominations would have said to Saul, "That is all you have to do to be saved." But when the inspired man, Ananias, came to this believing, penitent Saul, he said, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (Acts 22:16.) The man who later became the Apostle Paul had to be baptized before his sins were washed away. And so do you and I.

Salvation by faith only is a man-made doctrine which denies the Bible and makes the saving power of the gospel of none effect. I plead with you, friend, to leave denominationalism with this false doctrine, and turn to the Lord without reservation. Repent of your sins, submit to New Testament baptism in water for the remission of your sins, and worship and serve the Lord in His church.

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The New Testament

As we enter the New Testament, the first division of books is what is popularly called the gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each of these books is a biography of Christ, and although there is overlap amongst them, each has material not found in the others. By putting them together, we get a good picture of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, as well as his trial, death and resurrection. We see His conflict with the Pharisees, Sadducees, and the scribes and the teaching for His coming kingdom, the church.

With the death of Christ on the cross, both the Jewish (Mosaical) and the Patriarchal ages came to an end, with Christ providing the way for unity amongst all people, Jew and Gentile alike, in one body, the church. The Gospel age ("Christian age") was thus begun and shall last until the end of time, when the Lord returns and the judgment day shall be before us.

The book of Acts by Luke stands alone as the history of the acts of the early Christians, relating the events from the time of the beginning of the Lord's church on Pentecost till the journey of Paul to Rome to be tried. This book is valuable in showing us the divine pattern set up by the Lord for his church—its worship, its autonomous organization, its spreading zeal. Also it has been referred to as the "book of conversions" as it indeed lists many such in the early church. By going to these examples, doing exactly as they did, we know we can become Christians and produce the same church today.

The next 21 books are epistles or letters, setting forth how we as Christians are to live, giving admonitions to defend the purity of our living and the gospel. Fourteen of these epistles were written by the apostle Paul, and include the following (to whom they were addressed has become their names): Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews. Many of Paul's writings were to defeat the attempts by some Jewish Christians to make the law of Moses a vital part of the gospel. He showed that it had indeed been abolished.

The remaining seven epistles are referred to as "general epistles" to distinguish them from the letters of Paul. Each of these bears the author's name and their messages are mixed. However, they are in full agreement with the rest of God's word, as all of it is inspired (though some attempt to make these a separate and different gospel than that preached by Paul). These include: James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1 and 2 and 3 John and Jude.

The last book of the New Testament is that of Revelation, a book of prophecy by John. Like Ezekiel in the Old Testament, it was written in figurative language so that the Christians could understand its message of God's overruling hand and promised deliverance, while the enemies (Romans) would fail to grasp the reassurings and promises therein, and thus would not take out additional hatred on the persecuted Christians. Being thus written,
it is hard book to understand without a knowledge of the times and style used by Ezekiel and others of such writings. Although it was written for the people of that time, it contains a rich lesson for us today to strengthen our faith in the face of persecutions and trial.

As this book draws to a close, so does the canon of the New Testament, which completes the Bible, the word of God, given to direct man throughout all ages. In this great book of God, we have His completed will (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3), and it needs no additions or subtractions, but rather we are to "give diligence" or "study" to present ourselves "approved unto God" and to be sure in all that we do that we are "handling aright the word of truth."

---

If sincerity alone, or acting according to one's own will, is enough to make a practice right in the sight of God, why did Jesus say, "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 who is in heaven"? (Matt. 7:21.)

If we enter Christ the moment we believe, why was not Agrippa a Christian? (Acts 26:27,28.) And why did Paul say, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ"? (Gal. 3:27.)

If baptism is not necessary for salvation, why did Jesus say, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"? (Mk. 16:16.)

If a person can be saved outside the Lord's church, why does the Lord "add to the church daily such as should be saved"? (Acts 2:47.) And why did the inspired writer say, "Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body"? (Eph. 5:23.)

If baptism is because of salvation, why was Saul told to "arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"? (Acts 22:16.) And why did the apostle Peter say, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. . ."? (Acts 2:38.)

If baptism is sprinkling, why did Paul, who was told to be baptized (Acts 22:16), say "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"? (Rom. 6:4.)

If we do not need to give scriptural authority for what we believe, why did the apostle Paul write, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good"? (1 Thess. 5:21.)

If it is wrong to "argue about religion," why does the Bible teach us to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"? (Jude 3.)

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What it Means to Be a Christian

By Carl Vernon, San Antonio, Texas

Part I

You may or may not know that the word CHRISTIAN occurs but three times in the word of God. You may be aware of the fact that the word is many times corrupted in the way it is used—people not knowing who a Christian is, or what it takes to become a Christian after the New Testament order. Many are evidently of the opinion that if a person lives a good moral life: if he pays his honest debts, is kind and considerate to his family and others, if he has a good reputation, and minds his own business, that surely he is a Christian. But is this what causes one to be a Christian—in the Bible sense of the word? Others seem to believe that a Christian is one who lives in these United States—as it is called "a Christian nation," but is this what makes one a Christian? And then, someone else might advance the explanation that a Christian is one who "believes in Christ." But is this the satisfactory answer to the important question WHO IS A CHRISTIAN? Does the fact that one believes in Christ, or has assent of mind that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the saviour of man, make one a Christian? We shall see.

Before we proceed, I would like to cite the three instances of the word Christian in the New Testament scriptures, and then we will go into a study of "WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN" in light of what is revealed in these passages.

Acts 11:25-26: "Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."


1 Peter 4:15-16: "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf." (K.J.Y.) The A.S.Y. gives it: "...but let him glorify God in this name"—that is, in the name "Christian."

We must recognize that there is no
other source to which one can go to read about the requirements of becoming and living a Christian except the Bible. And so, if we believe the Bible and want to know what it teaches on this subject, then we can come to know WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

Let's go back to the first passage we introduced. Acts 11:25-26 says that Paul and Barnabas went to the city of Antioch and assembled themselves with the church and taught much people. The passage goes on to say that these disciples were called Christians for the first time. Friends, there are things in this verse that some elementary reasoning will allow us to see — and when it is seen, it will cause us to know for sure and certain what, or WHO a Christian is. Here's what I mean: It says that Paul and Barnabas assembled for a year WITH THE CHURCH in this city, and that these disciples who made up the church were, or were called CHRISTIANS. This is another way of saying that the church consisted of the disciples of Christ in this city. Or, put in still another way, the CHRISTIANS, or DISCIPLES of Christ in this city were members of the Lord's church. I believe just a casual consideration of this matter will cause us to know that Christ's disciples are in His church, and they, as individuals, are Christians and should be called "Christians." At least, this is the way it was in New Testament times and we have no reason to think that it is different now. But, friends, I have heard people talk about there being Christians outside the Lord's church; that "you don't have to be a member of the church to be a Christian." Have you ever heard or said this?

There is a definite reason, a scriptural reason, why the disciples of Christ are members of the church: it is because the Lord places, or adds them to it when they obey His gospel—which saves and separates from sin. This is what happened on the first Pentecost after the Lord's resurrection when the apostles stood up and preached the gospel for the first time. They had been charged by the Lord just before His ascension, "Go...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." Peter and the other apostles were simply carrying out this particular commission from the Lord when they preached the gospel to the people gathered on the day of Pentecost. "But what does all of this have to do with people being in the church, and being Christians," you may be asking. Friends, that is a good question, and there is a Bible answer to it. This is the answer: when the people on this occasion heard the apostles preach "Christ and Him crucified" the Bible says that they were pricked in their hearts and asked, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37.) "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (vs. 38.) "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized" (Acts 2:41), and verse 47 says that THESE VERY PEOPLE WERE ADDED TO THE CHURCH!

We have related the account of the conversion of the people on Pentecost to show that there is certainly a connection between (1) having sins forgiven by obedience to the gospel, (2) being in the Lord's church, and (3) being a "Christian."

Well, the question comes: WHO IS A NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIAN? WHERE MAY WE FIND ONE? The answer: in the church! The church is
the family of God, or the house of God. (1 Tim. 3:15.) Disciples of Christ are those who have been born again—born into God's family by the birth of the water and the spirit. (John 3:5.) This new birth is exactly the same thing as "the forgiveness of sins," which comes only when one hears, believes, and is baptized as the Lord and His apostles taught in the Lord. These are the ones who constitute the church of Christ; these are the individuals who, according to the New Testament, are called CHRISTIANS.

We ask again: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN? I hope it is sufficiently clear, regarding Acts 11:25-26, that when it says: "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" that it means simply those who have obeyed the gospel as taught in the great commission of the Son of God, and have been added to the church by Him. I hope it can be clearly seen that true discipleship can not be disassociated from the Lord's church. All of the followers of the Lord are in His church: all of the children of God are in God's family, the church ... or, you will be forced to say that God has illegitimate children. This, of course, is not the case.

The Truth About Hell
By Frank Jamerson, Louisville, Kentucky

The subject of hell is one that is shunned by many modern preachers. It is considered a distasteful subject and some seem to think that if we ignore it, it will go away. False teachers try to evade the New Testament teaching on the subject and offer false consolation to those who obey God. Such doctrines as "hell is what we experience here on earth," and "hell is only temporary," would be full of comfort if they were true, but God's word does not teach these theories. Even some who claim to be Christians reveal a lack of conviction about the existence of an eternal hell by their preparations to go there. They with bold indifference treat God's word as though it were a fable and when warned about the direction in which they are headed, reveal their contempt for God, His word, and those who warn them by an expression like, "I will not be alone if I go." Anyone who can find consolation in such a statement and attitude does not believe what the Bible teaches about Hell.

Words Explained
Some of the confusion about hades and hell is attributable to translation. The Hebrew word sheol and the Greek word hades refer to the abiding place of spirits between death and the judgment. The King James Version translates the word hades as "hell." The spirit of Jesus was said to be in "hell." (Acts 2:25-27, KJV.) The word should be "hades." It is a quotation from Psalms 16:10 which uses the Hebrew word sheol. Hades, or sheol, is divided into two parts — paradise and torment. Jesus told the thief that he would be with him in paradise (Lk. 23:43), but Acts 2:25-27 declares that the soul of Jesus was in hades. The rich man was in "hades" but was being tormented, while the beggar was being comforted. (Lk. 16:19-30.)
The Greek word *geenna* (hell) refers to the final abiding place of the wicked after the judgment. The word is used "twelve times in the New Testament, eleven of which are in the Synoptists, in every instance as uttered by the Lord Himself." (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W. E. Vine.)

**Future Punishment—Future Existence**

Eternal punishment implies eternal existence. A thing that does not exist cannot be punished. But some say that since hell is called the "second death" (Rev. 20:14), this proves that it is not eternal. The truth is that death does not mean annihilation, or non-existence, but separation. Physical death is the separation of the soul from the body. (Jas. 2:26; Gen. 35:18.) Spiritual death is the separation of man's soul from God. (Gen. 2:17; Jno. 5:24-29; 1 Tim. 5:6.) "As spiritual life is 'conscious existence in communion with God,' so spiritual death is 'conscious existence in separation from God.'" (W. E. Vine.) The "second death" is the separation of man from God in eternity.

**Description**

Hell is described as a lake or furnace of fire. "And shall be cast into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 13:42.) "And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." (Rev. 20:14.) Men take precautions against loss due to physical fire. Fire may bring pain, destroy possessions or cause death, but the "furnace of fire" will cause torment eternally. Have you taken precaution against this fire?

Hell is also described as outer darkness. "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 25:20.) You may ask, How can it be fire and darkness at the same time? These descriptions show us that it will be a place of torment. It cannot be literally fire and darkness at the same time. Darkness with no light and fire with no deliverance vividly paint to our minds a place of severe torment which should be avoided at all costs.

Another fact that cannot be gainsaid is that hell is eternal. (Matt. 25:41, 46; 2 Thess. 1:9.) Hell will last as long as heaven; both are eternal. Accusing God of being unjust or harsh will not change the truth. God rewards eternally and punishes eternally. Man can do neither. Those who think they cannot accept this, cannot accept the teaching of God's word.

The question is often asked, "Will there be degrees of punishment." Luke 12:47,48 indicates that there will be, but even the "few stripes" is punishment and offers little consolation. Certainly, there is nothing in the Bible to make hell look appealing to anyone!

**Who Are Going?**

The knowledge that there will be a hell should cause us to want to know (See HEL... Page 70)

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Divisions Among Catholics in America

By Irvin Himmel, St. Louis, Missouri

Catholic propaganda in circulation in this country is designed to leave the impression that Catholics are firmly united while non-Catholics are hopelessly divided. This is a gross misrepresentation.

The Knights of Columbus have published thousands of copies of a book entitled *Father Smith Instructs Jackson*. "Father" Smith is represented as saying to Jackson, "Well now, Mr. Jackson, outside the Catholic Church, there is no united Christianity." (p. 42.) Jackson responds, "it is strange that this marvelous oneness of Catholics in belief and the lack of it among non-Catholic religions is not considered by learned Protestants, for it is surely the plainest argument in favor of the Catholic and against the other Churches." (p. 43.) Please note that this book exalts the "MARVELOUS ONENESS OF CATHOLICS."

I have just finished examining the 1963 edition of the *World Almanac and Book of Facts*, which lists all the religious groups in the United States, and I must confess that I am not at all impressed with the claim for "marvelous oneness of Catholics." If the lack of unity among non-Catholic religions deserves consideration by learned "Protestants," so does the lack of unity among Catholic religions deserve consideration by Catholics. The *World Almanac* lists **twenty-nine** different kinds of Catholic Churches in America. Here is the list with the total membership of each group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Name</th>
<th>Membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Apostolic Church</td>
<td>2,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Catholic Church</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Orthodox Churches:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanian Orthodox Diocese in America</td>
<td>16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am. Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am. Catholic Church (Syro-Antiochean)</td>
<td>4,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Holy Orthodox Catholic Apostolic Eastern Church</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostolic Episcopal Church</td>
<td>7,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assyrian Orthodox Church</td>
<td>3,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of the East and of the Assyrians</td>
<td>3,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Archdiocese of North and South America</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Orthodox Church in Am. (Eastern Catholic and Apostolic)</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church in Exile</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian Orthodox Episc. of America</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia</td>
<td>88,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America</td>
<td>850,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbian Eastern Orthodox Church</td>
<td>130,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian Antiochean Orthodox Church</td>
<td>110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch (Archdiocese of U. S. &amp; Canada)</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian Orthodox Church of America</td>
<td>40,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U. S. A</td>
<td>77,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(69)
Liberal Catholic Church ........................................................................           4,000

Old Catholic Churches:
  Am. Catholic Church, Archdiocese of N. Y.....................................          4,369
  North American Catholic Church ...................................................        26,235
  North American Old Roman Catholic Church ................................        84,565
  Old Catholic Archdiocese of America and Europe ..........................           7,100
  Reformed Catholic Church (Utrecht Confession) ................................  2,217

Polish National Catholic Church of America ......................................... 282,411

Roman Catholic Church ........................................................................ 42,876,665

Let the readers be impressed that the Roman Catholic Church is only one among several denominations calling themselves "Catholic." Look at the list again. Is this the "marvelous unity" among Catholics that is supposed to point up the fallacy of the "Bible only theory"? Is this "the plainest argument in favor of the Catholic and against the other Churches"? If the Catholic Church is right, which one? The Roman group has more in terms of numbers; the Orthodox groups claim to be more nearly like the apostolic church.

If divisions among non-Catholics prove that they are wrong, what do divisions among Catholics prove? I hope, dear readers, that you get the point and understand our purpose in publishing this list. We do not intend to allow Catholics to deceive people with their "marvelous oneness" claims. They have swept their own discord under the rug long enough!

HELL ...................... (Continued)

who will go there and how we can avoid that place.

In addition to the devil (Rev. 20: 10), and disobedient angels (2 Pet. 2:4), those who "know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ .... shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thess. 1:8,9.) "But the fearful, the unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev. 21:8.) Members of the church who have been unfaithful will be lost. (Matt. 13:41,42; Jno. 15:1-6.) "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15.) Those who thought they were doing "wonderful works" but were not following God's word will hear the words, "depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:21-23.)

Salvation

God has provided, through Christ, a way for men to be saved. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved . . ." (Mk. 16:16), and "I tell you Nay: but, except ye repent ye shall all in like manner perish." (Lk. 13:3.) When a person believes in Christ, repents of his sins and is baptized for the remission of sins, he is a new creature in Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:27.) Then he must study God's word (1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Tim. 2:15), walk in the light (1 Jno. 1:6,7) and ask God's forgiveness when he sins. Our "labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58); the crown of life will be given to those who love and serve God. (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:7,8.) "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 who is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.)

(70)
Paul wrote to the Hebrew Christians and exhorted them, "to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them...how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Heb. 2:1,3.)

The salvation preached by Christ and the apostles is great. It is great because it consists in delivering men from sin and giving to them the promised rest in that heavenly country. It justly merits the designation "great" because it is infinitely superior to the salvation wrought for the Israelites. Theirs consisted of deliverance from Egyptian bondage and the rest in the land of Canaan.

The great salvation provided by Christ and the gospel has the following characteristics. The great salvation is:

1. **Required by man.** Every responsible man is a sinner. Paul laid to the charge both of Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin. (Rom. 3:9.) This charge is proved by Old Testament prophecy. "There is none righteous, no, not one...all the world is brought under the judgement of God." (Rom. 3:11, 19.) Because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, the great salvation is required by man.

2. **Provided by grace.** "For by grace have ye been saved through faith..." (Eph. 2:8.) God's favor provided for man the great salvation. He loved the world and because of His great mercy the great salvation was bestowed upon us.

3. **Supplied in Christ.** The great salvation is in Christ Jesus. Eternal glory will be enjoyed by the faithful in Christ. If we die with Christ we shall also live with him: if we endure, we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2: 10-12.) There is no salvation from sin outside Christ Jesus.

4. **Secured in the church.** Christ is the head of the church, the saviour of the body. (Eph. 5:23.) The body is the church. (Eph. 1:23; Col. 1:18, 24.) There is one body. (Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:20.) There is one church, established by Christ, in this world. The great salvation is secured in His church. It cannot be secured in human religious organizations. Christ never founded such.

5. **Received by faith.** "For ye are all sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:26.) We are justified by faith but not faith only. By faith we have access into the grace of God. (Rom. 5:1-3.) By faith we stand in this grace.

6. **Obtained at obedience.** Men are saved by faith but not by faith only—at the point of faith. Men are sons of God by faith for they were baptized into Christ. (Gal. 3:26-27.) We are made free from sin by obeying from the heart the pattern of teaching revealed in the gospel, i.e., by dying to sin, being buried in baptism and being resurrected to walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:17-18; 3-4.)

7. **Retained by steadfastness.** "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." (Mat. 10:22.) "If we endure, we shall also reign with him." (2 Tim. 2:12.) The Lord has promised to save only the sheep that hears
his voice and faithfully follows him.

8. Delivered in heaven. Jesus is now reigning in heaven. He has gone to prepare a place for his brethren. (Jno 14: 1-3.) The kingdom will be delivered up to God the Father. The great salvation will be fulfilled in heaven.

9. Enjoyed for eternity. Christ is the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him. At the judgment Christ will invite those on his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:34.)

Have you obeyed the gospel of Christ? Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mk. 16:16.) You need salvation from sin. God provided salvation for you, supplying it in Christ Jesus. By your faith and baptism, salvation is secured in the church of Christ. Be steadfast in the gospel and you will enjoy the great salvation in God's presence for eternity. There is no escape if we neglect this great salvation!

Atheists, the Bible and You

Many people get upset when some atheist suggests that there is no God and that the Bible is a myth, but many of the same people do not know or care what the Bible teaches. Such a position seems to me to be inconsistent. If a person does not believe what the Bible teaches, why should he become concerned when someone suggests that it should not be believed?

The popular idea among religious people is that it does not matter what a person believes, just so he is sincere. The Bible does not teach such a theory and if it is true, the Bible is not necessary; each man is his own standard of authority in religion. But some who believe this theory get upset when someone suggests that the Bible should not be believed. The Bible claims to be the word of God and a complete guide for man. "And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." (1 John 2:3,4.)

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17.) "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the son." (2 Jno. 9.) If the Bible does not deserve to be followed, it should be rejected totally. It is impossible to believe it and reject it at the same time.

Do you believe that Bible authority is essential in every religious matter? If not, part of the Bible is rejected. (1 Thess. 5:21.) The atheist says it should all be rejected. Who is more consistent? Let us not give lip service to God's word. We either believe and accept it, or we reject it. Which is it with you?

—Frank J. Jamerson

"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." (Prov. 28:9.)

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. . ." (Psa. 14:1.)
"Holding the Pattern of Sound Words" (No. 5)

This will be the last of this series of brief articles on the above caption. The import of these words of Paul to Timothy is so basic and vital to our continuance in "The faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3) that it was felt imperatively necessary to give it all possible emphasis. And now, pursuant to what has been written, let all who are regular readers of these lines seriously examine yourselves, your religious practices and your affiliation. Ask yourself solemnly and gravely WHY you are what you are religiously, and WHY you are affiliated as you are?

Is it because of mere family tradition, sentimentality, or religious prejudice? Can it be that you have "joined some popular denomination" for merely social reasons? Or was it because, "well, everybody who claims to be respectable in the community is supposed to belong to the church, and so I joined"? And perhaps some would say, "Oh, I just happened to like Dr. Good Fellow; you know he's the pastor of our church, and he's such a cultured, refined, inoffensive and loveable man. So, I just joined HIS church"! All these reasons for church affiliation have been given to this writer personally, by people with whom he has conversed upon this grave consideration upon which, whether you have realized it or not, hangs eternal destiny. Jesus said, "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 who is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.)

Are you a member of a church the name of which, with its origin and order of worship you cannot read plainly in God's word? And because of which you are forced to adopt and avow submission to a human creed, a confession of faith, a Discipline written by MEN; a book other than God's word; and different from God's word, else it would not be needed? If you are so affiliated religiously, do you not see the necessity of renouncing all such, and returning to the BIBLE and to the Bible alone as the only rule of faith and practice, if ever we are to attain to the unity of the faith for which Jesus prayed (John 17:20-21) and which the apostles enjoined?

And Now, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. (Acts 21:32.)

The modern "social" gospel to be replaced with the ancient saving gospel proclaimed by the apostles.

MOVING? Please notify us in advance so you will not miss an issue.

(73)
Believe or Obey

In 1401 B.C. Cyrus left Sardis in Asia Minor and headed east with a large army to fight his brother Artaxerxes who was then ruler of Persia. Being in a foreign land he did not have as many Persian soldiers as he needed and therefore appealed to the Greeks for aid. The Greek soldier was noted for his valor and courage in battle, but he loved the sea. To induce these men to leave their coastland homes and follow him hundreds of miles inland to fight a foreign foe was no small task for Cyrus.

When it seemed that the time was right to march eastward toward Persia, Cyrus called many of the Greek military leaders and laid before them his promises. By a series of deceptions and his promise to them of their safe return he was able to engage several thousand Greek men-of-arms in his service. Among them was Xenophon, a Greek writer, who has left us an account of this campaign to Persia in his several volumes of the Anabasis.

In Book One and Chapter II, Xenophon tells of the Greek reaction to these promises of Cyrus. A literal translation of his words reads, "But gladly they were obeying him, for they were believing in him." The Greek term used to express "they were obeying" is a form of peitho. The word translated "they were believing" is a form of pisteuo. The Lexicon of Lidell and Scott which defines words of this period B.C. defines peitho, "to prevail upon, win over, talk over, persuade ... to listen to, person, obey, comply with." In English, as we think of it today, Xenophon is saying, "Because these soldiers believed in Cyrus they were obeying him; not out of fear nor of necessity, but because of a persuasion that he would keep his word in fulfilling his promises."

This brief look into ancient history and the Greek Language of the fourth century might be of little interest were it not for such scriptures as John 3:36. John wrote, "He that believeth (pisteuo) on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth (peitho) not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (King James Version.) Another version reads, "He that believeth (pisteuo) on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth (peitho) not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (American Standard Version.) These two words for "believe" and "obey" are identical to those used by Xenophon above.

In the Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, Vine defines peitho, "to persuade, to win over, in the Passive and Middle Voices, to be persuaded, to listen to, to obey." He then remarks, "The obedience suggested is not by submission to authority, but resulting from persuasion." Eternal life, then, is based upon a belief in Christ which results in obedience. Belief without obedience, or obedience not based on persuasion will not bring eternal life. If one escapes the "wrath of God" it will be because his pisteuo led him to peitho.

The following choice comments are
made in distinguishing these two words. With "peitho and pisteuo . . . the difference in meaning is that the former implies the obedience that is produced by the latter . . . Faith is of the heart, invisible to men; obedience is of the conduct and will be observed. When a man obeys God he gives the only possible evidence that in his heart he believes God . . . Peitho in the NT suggests an actual and outward result of the inward persuasion and consequent faith." (Notes on Thessalonians by Hogg and Vine as quoted in Vine's Expository Dictionary.)

When the Greek soldiers were persuaded to obey because of their belief in Cyrus, the next sentence records: "And taking the weapons they were present in Sardis." This example of action might well be considered and imitated by those attempting to gain eternal life by faith alone.

Baptist Doctrine Denied by Pastor

By Bill Crews, Ft. Worth, Texas

One of the most notable and distinctive doctrines of the Baptist churches is the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy. It is sometimes designated as the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints or the security of believers. Commonly and popularly stated: "once saved, always saved"; "once in grace, always in grace"; "a child of God cannot be lost." The doctrine was espoused, proclaimed and championed by John Calvin and is embraced by Presbyterian churches, but it was not embraced and taught by Christ and his apostles, nor was it accepted by the Lord's church in the first century. Gnostic teachers of the first and second centuries declared that after regeneration, the spirit of man could not sin, but the body of man could and would. They insisted that one could be righteous without doing righteousness. They taught that the sins of a child of God could not damn his spirit. The doctrine was abominable and false then and still is.

From 1 John we learn that one cannot have fellowship with God while walking in darkness (1:6); that a child of God who says that he has no sin or that he has not sinned deceives himself, makes God a liar, and does not have the truth of God's word in him (1:8,10); that to know God one must keep God's commandments and that he who says that he knows God while not keeping God's commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him (2:3-4); that one must do righteousness to be righteous and keep God's commandments to abide in him. (3:7,24.)

A child of God, if he chooses, can fall from grace (Gal. 5:4), fall away from God (Heb. 3:12), fall from his steadfastness (2 Peter 3:17), fall away from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1), fall into condemnation (James 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:6), perish (1 Cor. 8:11), become entangled again in the world (2 Pet. 2:20-22), come short of the heavenly rest (Heb. 4:1), make shipwreck of the faith (1 Tim. 1:19), develop an evil heart of unbelief (Heb. 3:12), have his faith overthrown (2 Tim. 2:18), be cut off (Rom. 11:22), turn aside after Satan (1 Tim. 5:15), die spiritually (Rom. 8:12-13), and err from the truth. (James 5:19,20.) These and many other passages show the fallacy of "once saved, always saved." Those of you who are members of a Baptist church need to give serious attention to this and other Baptist teachings contrary to the doctrine of Christ. Those who are open minded will investigate; those who

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are honest will change when they are wrong.

In the Fort Worth Star-Telegram of March 25, 1963, is an A.P. news release from Little Rock, Arkansas. The article states: "The Arkansas Supreme Court ordered removal of Elder A. Z. Dovers from the pulpit of Landmark Missionary Baptist Church at Traskwood, Ark., because he preached that a saved soul can fall from grace," and "Dovers was attacked by a minority of his congregation of 101 for preaching doctrines they considered heretical. According to the 'once saved, always saved' doctrine of the Missionary Baptists, one who has undergone true religious conversion can not sin and therefore can not fall from grace." Here we have a case of a Missionary Baptist preacher getting into trouble with his brethren because he preached the truth. I commend him in his conviction on this point of doctrine; it would be fine if he would go all the way and preach the truth on all points of doctrine. If he would preach and follow the truth, he would cease to be a Baptist and a member of a Baptist church; he would then be a Christian and a member of the Lord's church. I have no animosity in my heart toward those sincere religious people who are Baptists, but I would to God that they would see that they belong to a church which began centuries after Jesus lived and which is built upon doctrines not taught in God's word. I love them and would like to help them.

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Roman Catholics teach that there are seven "Sacraments" and many "Sacramentals." They say the "Sacraments" were instituted by Christ, but the "Sacramentals" are instituted by the Church. The former are supposed to cause or confer grace; the latter are supposed to bring grace only indirectly by increasing devotion. Bertrand Conway of the "Paulist Fathers" explains it as follows: "The seven Sacraments were all instituted by Christ, and the Church is powerless to change them; when worthily received, they infallibly confer grace of themselves. The sacramentals are rites instituted by the church, which can modify or abrogate them at will; they do not confer sanctifying grace of themselves, but depend for their efficacy upon the personal devotion of the faithful using them, and the intention of the Church, manifested by her official prayers." (The Question Box, p. 342.)

The "Sign of the Cross" is one of the many "Sacramentals" invented by the Roman Catholic Church. "The Sacramentals include: sign of the cross, cross, crucifix, holy water, vestments, stations of the cross, holy oils, candles, rosary, scapulars, agnus Dei, palms, incense, church bells, religious medals, and ashes." (The New Catholic Dictionary, p. 844.) Remember that according to Catholic doctrine all of these things "depend for their efficacy upon the personal devotion" of those using them. It is alleged that they "excite good thoughts," "increase devotions," and thus "remit venial sin."

The "Sign of the Cross" is said to be "the most important of the sacra-
mentals." "It consists in making a movement with the hands, or with some object, in the form of a cross. The ordinary method is to put the right hand to the forehead, and to the breast, and the left and the right shoulder, saying: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' . . . The sign of the cross is made at the beginning and end of public and private prayers, in the administration of all the sacraments, and in all Church's blessings, over the people, the person, or the objects. In Baptism it is made 14 times; in Extreme Unction, 17 times; in the blessing of holy water, 12 times; and in the Mass, in various ways, 51 times. An indulgence of 57 days is gained every time we make it properly. (The New Catholic Dictionary, pp. 889-890.)

In the Scriptures there is absolutely nothing about either "Sacraments" or "Sacramentals." Catholics sometimes cite Old Testament passages in which we find mention of water, oil and salt and similar items in connection with the Jewish ceremonies. Indeed, Catholicism has borrowed freely from Judaism in its ceremonies and rituals; notwithstanding, Christ took away the first covenant that he might establish the second. (Heb. 10:9.) The New Testament is our guide, and if we return to the Old Testament to find our authority, we thereby make Christ of no effect. (Gal. 5:1-4.)

In the book, Father Smith Instructs Jackson, Smith is asked if there is any "Biblical warrant" for these "Sacramentals." He refers to some Old Testament passages and then adds, "St. Paul says: Every creature ... is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.' " (1 Tim. 4:4,5.) This New Testament passage has nothing at all to say about "Sacramentals" nor anything akin to such! Paul is discussing how that some would rise up and forbid the eating of meats (like Roman Catholics do on certain days). But he declares that "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." Prayer sanctifies. Now where does this passage mention any "Sacramental" in connection with prayer? Paul did not say, "For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer accompanied by the sign of the cross." The very thing to be proved is assumed!

Gibbons admits that "Sacramentals" are "not commanded by a formal law of Scripture." He argues that "tradition teaches them, custom confirms them, faith observes them." (The Faith of Our Fathers, 110th ed., p. 3.) We agree that TRADITION teaches them—human tradition. And CUSTOM confirms them—the custom of doing whatever the Catholic Church suggests. And FAITH observes them—but not the faith based on God's word (Rom. 10:17)—rather faith in Roman Catholicism—blind faith that exalts the Roman Church above Christ and God's word!

—I. H.

Why I Was Baptized

1. To reach the death of Christ. (Rom. 6:3.)
2. To obtain forgiveness of sins. (Acts 2:38.)
3. To put on Christ. (Gal. 3:26, 27.)
4. To enter the body of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:13.)
5. To walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:4,5.)

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Did Luther Go Far Enough?

By Paul K. Williams, Columbus, Ohio

Martin Luther has been called "Father of the Reformation." It was he who led the successful break with the Roman Catholic Church which began modern Protestantism. It was he who protested against the corruption of the Catholic Church and led his followers to reject such doctrines as the worship of Mary, the veneration of the Pope, and the doctrine of indulgences. Out of his teaching and influence came the Lutheran Church, the largest Protestant body in the world. Thanks to his successful break with the Roman Catholic Church, other reformers were given courage to speak up, and other Protestant bodies were formed. Our present religious freedom in the United States had its beginnings in the Protestant Reformation.

We have much to thank Martin Luther for. But I wonder—Did he go far enough? A Lutheran Handbook, by Amos Traver, 1956, says on p. 18, "Luther was not a radical reformer. He had high respect for tradition and approved practices inherited from the Roman Church if the Word of God did not forbid them and if they were consistent with Reformation belief." (Emphasis mine, PKW) Thus Luther's goal was limited. It was truly a "reform" of the existing Roman Catholic Church. It was not a true restoration of the original, New Testament church. Martin Luther retained many things in his religion which are not authorized by the New Testament. Sprinkling for baptism, infant baptism, confession to the pastor, and a religious hierarchy are a few of these things. The Lutheran Church did not return to the pattern of the New Testament.

Luther did not go far enough. The new Testament is clear that every practice must be authorized by Jesus Christ. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Col. 3:17.) "Do all in the name of" means "do all by the authority of." Every religious practice which cannot be found authorized by the Lord Jesus in the New Testament is forbidden! Tradition and practices inherited from the Roman Church are not right "if the Word of God does not forbid them." They are forbidden unless authorized in the Word. Colossians 3:17 forbids them.

Who is to determine which traditions and practices of the Roman Church should be practiced and which dropped? The Lutheran Church says "These." and the Methodist Church says, "These others." And the divisions and subdivisions of Protestantism multiply on men's think-so's. All alike are wrong in thinking anything can be adopted solely because it is traditional. We must practice only what the Lord Jesus Christ has authorized.

Paul wrote "not to think of men above that which is written." (1 Cor. 4:6.) Whenever we take Luther, Wesley, tradition, or the word of any man as our authority in the absence of Bible authority, we are thinking of men above that which is written.

Go farther than Luther. Go back beyond the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. Go all the way back to the New Testament. In following it
without addition or subtraction you will find salvation, because then you will be truly pleasing your Heavenly Father.

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"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 Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor. 2:12,13.)

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## Apostolic Doctrine

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What It Means to Be a Christian

By Carl Vernon, San Antonio, Texas

Part II

The second passage we gave concerning the word Christian is Acts 26:27-28. As Paul stood before king Agrippa in defense of his own life, it is evident that he, Paul, thought more of the lost soul of this king than he did of his own life. Instead of pleading for his life to be spared, as he stood there bound before the king, he pled for this wicked king to become a Christian. I am afraid that we, who profess to know of the importance of being Christians, have never had enough concern for the lost condition of others to the extent that we will put their condition first! Paul did! Where we would have been pleading for mercy, Paul was forgetting himself and was busy telling this king about Jesus and the gospel. Paul relates to the king how it was that he, Paul, had been converted from hating the church of God to loving and defending it. Being a gospel preacher, Paul preached the gospel to this man. You may be saying, "Well, I never knew that!" Well, he did! He told this king "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets: I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." (Acts 26:23-29.)

Picture, if you will, this servant of Christ as he stands before this one in authority. Paul knew that God was no respecter of persons. Peter put it this way, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." (Acts 10:34.) Verse 35 continues, "But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Primarily, this passage is to show that the gospel is for the Gentile as well as the Jew, for Peter had to be taught...
this lesson, since he must have believed that the Gentile was not worthy of eternal life. But there is another way in which God is no respecter of persons and that is: He does not respect the one in high position and reject the lowly. The gospel of Christ is for Jew and Gentile; it is for the ones on the thrones as well as the man of common ancestry. Paul knew that the king would have to obey the gospel of Christ just the same as anyone else. The "elect" of God are not those of a certain race, or of a certain position, but those who have subscribed to the will of God. "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." (Matt. 7:21.) These are the words of Jesus and they clearly show that in order to enter the kingdom of heaven one must do the will of God, regardless of his race or position.

The message of Paul, the prisoner and preacher, must have had a very telling effect upon this king for he gave this reply: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Now, the fact that he was ALMOST PERSUADED does not mean that he was a Christian. The record does not reveal whether or not he became a Christian. The inference is that he did not—actually, we don't know. But Paul said, in answer to Agrippa's statement, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am." Since Paul did not correct Agrippa for saying that he was almost persuaded to be a CHRISTIAN, it indicates that this is exactly what Paul was—a CHRISTIAN! But, we are sure of this fact: Paul was a disciple of Christ in every detail; a Christian must be! Paul had obeyed Christ. He was a member of the church. He was a CHRISTIAN! And he said to Agrippa, in substance: I WANT YOU AND ALL WHO HEAR ME THIS DAY TO BE JUST WHAT I AM—AND NOT "ALMOST PERSUADED" TO BE A CHRISTIAN!

It is sad to see one come so very close to being a Christian, and still not become one. Almost is not enough. As the song puts it, "Almost cannot avail; almost is but to fail; Sad, sad, that bitter wail, Almost, but lost!"

There are too many today in the boat with king Agrippa: they know what God's will is, BUT THEY WILL NOT OBEY IT! Friend, you can't be a CHRISTIAN because your neighbor, your friend, or your companion is a Christian; YOU WILL HAVE TO BECOME ONE YOURSELF! You can receive the benefits of being a Christian only by becoming a Christian! And, as we have pointed out, this is accomplished by the intelligent process of knowing and doing the will of Christ. We will set it forth again:

1. Faith (John 8:24; Heb. 11:6.)
2. Repentance (Lk. 13:3.)
3. Confession (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10.)
4. Baptism (Acts 2:38; 8:38; Mk. 16:16.)

By way of contrast we might notice that the disciples at Antioch (Acts 11:25-26) were CHRISTIANS because they had actually been born into the family of God, and Agrippa apparently only looked longingly at what could be his as a Christian but did no more than that.

Now, let us consider another usage of the word CHRISTIAN, the third and last, as it is found in 1 Pet. 4:15-16: "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf." May I remind you that the American
Standard Version says, "...but let him glorify God in this name."

In this passage the apostle Peter is addressing those who are already the children of God. He is not trying to get them to become Christians; he is admonishing them as Christians—to live to the glory of God. All we have to do to know to whom Peter was writing is to go back to the beginning of the epistle and see that he addresses them as the "... elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit ..." I am engaging to point out that "the elect of God" are Christians! We can see this truth also in 1 Pet. 2:1-10: "But ye are a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

Peter affirms here that the ones to whom he writes are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, and a peculiar people. He says that their

(See CHRISTIAN .... Page 88)

Why I Am a Member of the Church of Christ
By Irvin Himmel, St. Louis, Missouri

People have offered a variety of reasons for their religious connections. I am here presenting my reasons for being a member of the church of Christ; but first, some negative thoughts:

1. Not because of wealth. The Roman Catholic Church is probably the wealthiest (in material worth) religious organization in the world. The Mormon Church ranks high in wealth among American churches. If I were interested in material values, I would not be a member of the church of Christ.

2. Not because of popularity. The Southern Baptist Denomination boasts of the largest membership of any "Protestant" body in the United States. If I wanted to be lined up with something big and popular, I would not be a member of the church of Christ.

3. Not because of social prestige. Most of the people in the church of Christ are plain, ordinary folks socially.

4. Not because of convenience. At times it would be much more convenient to belong to some denominational organization. One could remain in good standing with little effort and could be considerably more lax in his living without anyone attempting to correct him.

5. Not because of family connections. No one ever tried to get me into the church of Christ in order to maintain a family tradition. If he had done so, and I suppose such a thing may sometimes occur, he would have been using the wrong motive.

The Real Reason

The reason why I am a member of the church of Christ is really quite simple. I heard the gospel of Christ, believed it, and was baptized for the remission of my sins. The people who taught me the gospel were content to stop where it stops. They did not ask me to affiliate with any denomination. I
have never done so. Hence, I became a Christian and a Christian only, was added by the Lord to his church (Acts 2:47), and have since worked and worshiped with people who did the same thing.

I am a member of the church of Christ for the same reason that I am a Christian—obedience to the gospel of Christ never makes one anything else! The same Lord who saves people (making them Christians), adds them to His church (the church that He built).

If the Lord added to the Methodist Church such as should be saved, I would be a Methodist. If He added to the Lutheran Church such as should be saved, I would be a Lutheran. If He added to the Presbyterian Church such as should be saved, I would be a Presbyterian. But since He adds to His own church, that is where He put me and that is where I aim to stay.

Some men use the expression Church of Christ in that way. I disclaim affiliation with any "Church of Christ" denomination. When I speak of the church of Christ I have reference to Christ's church—the kingdom of God—the body of the saved. When I obeyed the gospel I could not help being made a member of God's house. My obedience was by my own choice; my church affiliation is the Lord's choice.

Someone may ask, "How could a local church exist in organized form without being a denomination?" I answer: in the same manner that churches of Christ existed in the first century. (Rom. 16:16.) The congregations at Jerusalem, Philippi, Antioch, and Thessalonica were "visible" local groups having no denominational connections. They performed the Lord's work satisfactorily without sectarian or partisan organizations. It can be done and is being done in many communities now.

Now, may I ask you what you are religiously and why? Why are you affiliated with the particular church that you are? Are your reasons Biblical ones? Think it over!

---

**Unused**

A bright little boy once took the Bible from the table and turned its pages and said, "Mother, is this God's Book?" "Certainly," was the mother's reply. "Well, I think we had better send it back to God, for we don't use it here," said the little fellow.

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**APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE**

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"My Mother and My Brethren"

By Paul K. Williams, Columbus, Ohio

"While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, 'Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.' But he answered and said unto him that told him, 'Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?' And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, 'Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.'" (Matt. 12:46-50.)

Mary Not Always a Virgin

There are three points I want us to notice about this passage. First of all, Matthew writes that Jesus had brothers. He wrote, "His mother and his brethren stood without." The religious doctrine that Mary was always a virgin is, therefore, not true. In fact, the New Testament takes pains to name the brothers of Jesus and to assert that He also had sisters. In the next chapter of Matthew, chapter thirteen, in verses 54-56 we read this: "And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son, is not his mother called Mary, and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?" Mark 6:3 records the same thing.

So Matthew, who takes pains to point out in chapter one that Mary was a virgin when she conceived of the Holy Ghost, and continued a virgin until after Jesus was born, just as plainly writes that she then became a normal wife and had other children by Joseph, her husband. There is no special holiness attached to virginity. The significance of the virgin birth is simply that Jesus had no earthly father—that His Father was God. There was no reason why Mary could not, after He was born, have other children in the normal manner. There would be no purpose served for her to remain a virgin, and it would, in fact, violate the plain commands of God to married women. God said to the first pair He created, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." (Genesis 1:28.) 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 speaks further of the duty of married people toward each other. It would have been wrong for Mary to have continued a virgin after the birth of Christ.

Mary Has No Special Influence on Jesus

The second point I want us to notice is that Jesus reverenced His mother no more than He did His disciples. Verses 48-49 say, "But he answered and said unto him that told him, who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!" What did Jesus mean by saying, "Behold my mother and my brethren?" Simply that His disciples meant as much to Him as His earthly mother and brothers and sisters.

This runs counter to another religious doctrine—the doctrine that Mary has
some sort of mysterious influence over Jesus that His other disciples do not have. Many people, therefore, pray to Mary, thinking that she will be able to ask Jesus and God to grant their requests and that they will be granted requests which would not be granted if they prayed to God without the aid of Mary. But this passage plainly shows that Jesus placed no more importance on a request from His mother than a request from one of His disciples. Mary was his earthly mother, but she has no spiritual authority over him.

Besides, other passages in the New Testament teach that Christians are to pray only through Jesus. 1 Timothy 2:5, for instance, reads, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Mary cannot be our mediator, nor can any man upon the earth. Jesus is the only mediator between God and men. Not only would it not avail us anything to pray through Mary, since Jesus will listen to us as quickly as He will to her, but we are actually told that there is only ONE mediator, thus being shown that we are not to pray through Mary or any other person. Our prayers are to be to God in the name of Jesus Christ.

**Jesus Loves His Disciples as Much as His Own Mother**

The third point I want us to notice is found in verse 50. Jesus says, "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Would you like to receive the same affection from Jesus as His mother, brothers, and sisters receive? He has promised that you can. What a wonderful promise. Think of it—Jesus' disciples are as precious to Him as His own mother!

I suppose some of the tenderest emotions man experiences are involved in his love for his mother. Jesus was not different. She had suckled Him at her breast. She had watched over Him and taught Him as He grew. It was she who looked for Him when she thought He was lost in Jerusalem when He was 12 years old. At the time Jesus uttered the statement found here in Matthew 12, Mary was a widow. He would be doubly solicitous concerning her welfare on that account. Still Jesus said that His disciples were as precious to Him as His mother and brothers. I think it impossible to fathom the depth of love involved in this statement.

How badly in need of His love is this world. Men and women are leading pointless, vain lives, always searching for something but never quite finding it. Suicides are being committed every day by people who think no one loves them. Teenagers turn to crime because they feel completely alone and uncared-for. Yet the tenderest love known to man can be theirs. The love of Jesus which He reserved for His own mother is extended to all those who will do the will of His Father in heaven.

Ah, but there's the rub. The promises of every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus, of answered prayer, of the Holy Spirit, of eternal salvation are only for those who do the will of the Father in heaven. He said, "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Matt. 13:50.)

Jesus did not promise these blessings to everyone who worships Him. He does not promise them to all religious people. He does not promise them to morally righteous people. It involves all of that and more. One can worship Jesus and worship wrong. Or one can worship God and have his worship rejected because his life is not right. One can be religious, but religiously wrong. One can be moral and still not believe in Jesus Christ. No—Jesus lays down the

(See MOTHER............ Page 95)
"Look into the Holy Scriptures, which are the true words of the Holy Ghost. Ye know that there is nothing unjust or counterfeit written in them." (Clement of Rome, written in the 1st century, A.D.)

"The true nourishment of our soul, is the reading of the Word of God. Let us nourish ourselves on the Gospels. Let us quench our thirst by the reading of the writings of the Apostles." (Origen, written in the 2nd century, A.D.)

"I am confident, that you are well exercised in the Holy Scriptures, and that no part of them is unknown to you." (Polycarp, a disciple of the Apostle John, written in the 2nd century, A.D.)

"If thou knowest how to search in Scripture for the succours that it offers, thou wilt not need either of me or of anyone." (Basil 'The Great', writing to a lady in the 4th century, A.D.)

"Holy Scripture edifies everybody. We speak to Christ when we pray; we listen to him when we read the Scriptures." (Ambrose, writing in the 4th century, A.D.)

"The heavenly oracles have been written for the whole human race. Even husbandmen are in a condition to learn there what it is fitting for them to know. The learned and the ignorant, children and women, may equally instruct themselves there." (Isodorus of Pelusium, writing in the 4th century, A.D.)

"What happens to our flesh when it takes nourishment only once in the course of several days, happens to our soul when it does not nourish itself frequently on the Word of God. Continue, then, to listen at church to the reading of Holy Scripture, and read it over again in your houses." (Augustine, writing in the 4th and early 5th century, A.D.)

"The Holy Ghost intrusted the composition of them (Scriptures, L.W.M.) expressly to illiterate men, in order that every one, even the least educated, might understand the Word, and profit by it."

"Let none offer me these wretched excuses: I must earn my bread; I must find food for my children. It is not for me to read the Scriptures, but for those who have renounced the world. Poor man! Is it then because thou art too much distracted with a thousand cares, that it does not belong to thee to read the Scriptures? But thou hast still more need of this than those who have withdrawn from the world in order to devote all their time to God." (Homily iii, on Lazarus, by John Chrysostom, 4th and early 5th century, A.D.)

JEROME, the translator of the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament into the Latin language, called the LATIN VULGATE, wrote AFTER the men quoted above. They had no Latin Vulgate to refer to when they wrote. Yet, their references to the Scriptures indicate that they used the Scriptures as members of the churches of Christ use them in this 20th Century. But... JEROME wrote: "It is for the
whole people that the Apostle wrote. The laity ought to abound in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures." (From Jerome's "On the Epistle to the Colossians."

"What I shall never cease to recommend to you, is to love the Scripture and to read it." (From a letter from Jerome to a lady; Jerome translated the Vulgate in about 410 to 420 A.D.)

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST STUDY THE BIBLE NOT BECAUSE THE ABOVE WRITERS SUGGESTED IT, BUT BECAUSE THE BIBLE ITSELF TEACHES GOD'S CHILDREN TO STUDY IT AND OBEY ITS INSTRUCTIONS. (See 2 Tim. 2:15 and 3:15-17.)

(CHRISTIAN............Continued)

purpose is to "shew forth the praises of him" who had called them out of the darkness of sin. Paul states in 2 Thess. 2:14, "Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." So, we are called out of sin by the gospel, and those who have made the transition are to live to the glory of God. Friends, have you thought about it like this: YOU CAN'T GLORIFY GOD UNLESS YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN—A MEMBER OF GOD'S FAMILY THE CHURCH! GOD IS GLORIFIED ONLY BY HIS CHILDREN! That is the reason Christ came into the world: to make it possible for the enmity between God and man to be removed. Man cannot be at peace with God while separated from Him by sin. However, man, when relieved of his burden of sin in obedience to the gospel, is added to the church of the Lord and becomes a fellow-participant of the hope that abides in all who are truly Christians.

It is no wonder that Peter wrote to these brethren and showed them the inconsistency of trying to be Christians at the same time of being murderers, thieves, evildoers, and busy-bodies in other men's matters. The two just don't go together. Peter says that there was the likelihood that they would be called upon to suffer simply because they were Christians! The devil is never asleep on the job of disturbing the children of God. He never ceases trying to render Christians unable to give glory to their God, for Satan is diametrically opposed to God and the things of God. Satan is unusually successful in getting Christians to renounce the faith. The desire of Satan is to make his way more and more attractive, and God's way less and less attractive. Peter says in 1 Pet. 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. . ."

As we conclude, let us summarize:

1. A person is not a Christian simply because he is a good moral person.
2. A person is not a Christian simply because he is a citizen of this "Christian nation," so-called.
3. A person is not a Christian simply because he has the mental assent of mind that Jesus is the Son of God and saviour of man.
4. Finally, a Christian is the responsible individual who, by faith, has obeyed the gospel of Christ, and in this new relationship is striving to live a life of acceptability unto God; and one who, by the instruction of the word, is not ashamed to suffer as he endeavours always to bring glory to God by his life as a simple child of God.  

SOUND DOCTRINE by C. R. Nichol and R. L. Whiteside. Lesson outlines suitable for classes or personal study. 5 volumes. Complete set, $10.00
Christ's Church (No. 1)

Volumes have been written upon the subject of the New Testament church; its constitution, its establishment, its identity, its organization and government, its mission, its function, etc. One would think that surely the subject must be highly involved and complex; that it must be very difficult indeed, to understand what the New Testament teaches with regard to the church. But, may I say, in spite of all this extended discussion, and notwithstanding all the confusion existing in the minds of the people in general, there is no subject in all the Bible which is treated with more singular simplicity.

When religious people come to consider the subject of "THE CHURCH," so much depends upon the state of mind with which we approach the study. And the first thing imperatively necessary to a profitable study of the question, is that we determine to be, as completely as it is possible for us to be, fair, impartial, unbiased and unprejudiced in our study.

This is said because, in such a study, we are carried immediately into a religious realm, a realm of thought where man feels perhaps, his tenderest emotions and his strongest prejudices. It is necessary therefore, in order to a most profitable study that one be cautioned to lay aside prejudice and to rise above the merely emotional point of view, and that he calmly and deliberately determine to accept whatever Christ and the apostles have had to say in the Sacred Writings. This, it may be said, is not an easy thing for one to do, yet it is IMPERATIVELY necessary for one to come to this very disposition of heart and attitude of mind, if he would learn the TRUTH, in the field of religion as in any other field of thought.

It is our intention to write a number of short articles upon the varying phases of the church and its work. These will appear in sequence during the next several months in this column.

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(89)
Among the fanatical, speculative theories of modern day visionaries, one will find the fanciful doctrine that there will be astronomical signs in the heavens and utterly chaotic disruption of the mighty forces of nature preceding the coming of the Lord. These are but a few of the so-called events that are said to usher in the great day of God's wrath. Over such programs as the WORLD TO-MORROW, and through publications such as those copyrighted by the Radio Church of God, one can view the powerful influence of such millennial teachers as Herbert Armstrong. Many unsuspecting, innocent beings are being "taken in" by that which makes God's teaching on the coming of Christ a babel of confusion. The people point to the blizzards, the rampaging floods, the droughts, and other completely unpredictable quirks of nature, as being one of the main body of signs pointing to the return of Jesus. Revelation 6, the opening of the sixth seal is said to be one of the prophesies pointing to the signs of the Lord's return. John said, "lo, there was a great earthquake; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." (Rev. 6:12-13.) Having already dogmatically assumed that the first five seals constitute in order: false prophets, climaxing world wars, famines, epidemic diseases, and finally the "Great Tribulation," we are told that the "signs of the sixth seal" will be followed by the coming of Jesus! Great play is made upon the fact that the so-called signs have begun, and the Lord's coming is near, preceded by the "Great Tribulation."

The Absurdity of the Position

Commenting on far-fetched positions as that illustrated above, Lenski says, "the whole school of interpreters has been irretrievably discredited, if not by the extravagance of paltriness of its explanations, at least by other hopeless divergence from and contradictions of one another." (Interpretations of St. John, p. 216.) Millennialists admit that there are gross disagreements among them, and the fact that such exists should cause one to think before giving adherence to their systems. The validity of their position stands in question by the very fact that division exists in the Millennial camp. If there is little agreement as to many details of the theory, and if premillennialists in general experience much difficulty in reconciling portions of their system, then certainly we have the right to question their doctrine. The worthlessness of the system is seen in the utter disrespect which they have for one another, and for the New Testament.

In the second place, most millennial positions fail to take into consideration the fact that the book of Revelation is symbolical. The book should be interpreted, therefore, according to the laws of symbolism. Such sections of Revelation, as chapter six, are viewed with a determination to sustain, or confirm certain speculative positions. This is a
serious blunder, and its results can be seen in the wild theories that have resulted from misapplication of such laws of interpretation. To paint a picture of earthquakes, stars falling like figs, buildings falling to the ground, people running in a terrified venture, falling headlong into yawning chasms, and then say, "this is a sign of the coming of the Son of God," is a stupendous falsehood! How the human mind could possibly imagine such idle vagary is hard to understand. All such literal interpretations are absurd! B. W. Johnson is right when he says, "such a state of mind totally unfit one for the intelligent study of the scriptures." (A Vision of the Ages.) It is no wonder that those who expect a literal fulfillment of figures used in the book of Revelation are horrified and filled with dread every time they read the book!

Another thought showing the absurdity of this application of the opening of the sixth seal, is the failure to give due consideration to the over-all circumstances of the book. Those who try to literalize the figures admit that it is symbolism, but try to present it as a mysterious cloak of prophecy to be uncovered for the 20th century. The shroud of mystery is to be lifted, and it is contended (as suggested above) that a part of the seals have already been fulfilled. The next signs that will rock the world to its foundations are said to be a mighty bomb that will turn cities and metropolises into huge craters filled with multitudes of mutilated bodies. This will usher in a national war followed by the "Great Tribulation." Then come the signs, and finally the coming of Jesus. Now, if we accept these conclusions and observations, of what value would the opening of the seals be to the first-century Christians? There would be no application to them at all. It would make this portion of the book useless to them. This would certainly contradict the fact that the Spirit promised a blessing to those who read, hear and keep the words of the book. (Rev. 1:3.) This verse implies that all in each generation can make an application of the things taught in the book of Revelation. "No matter when one lives his earthly life. Revelation makes his own time intelligible in view of the end." (Lenski.)

Finally, to say there will be signs ushering in the coming of the Lord is to take a position that flatly contradicts the teaching of Jesus. Read carefully Matthew 24, viewing the fact that a portion of it applies to the destruction of Jerusalem, and another to the second coming of Christ. In the section (verses 36-51) that applies to the coming of Christ, the Lord is reported to have said, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my father only." (Matt. 24:36.) Again, "but AS THE DAYS OF NOE were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Italics mine. J. T.) The antediluvians heeded not the warnings of God through the preaching of Noah. They were warned, but given no signs of the impending flood. Because they heeded not the preaching, the flood came upon them and destroyed them. We today have been warned of the impending judgment, and since the conditions at the judgment will be as those during the flood, we need not look for signs! The New Testament also teaches that the Lord will come as a thief. (1 Thess. 5:2, 4.) Does a thief give signs that he is coming? Certainly not! "But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." (Matt. 24:43-44.) One of the surprises of the
judgment day will be the realization that Jesus will come without warning, that he will not be preceded by signs in the heavens and earth. There is no basis, therefore, for predicting the "when" of the coming of the Lord.

Probable View of the Seals

The opening of the seals and the sounding of the trumpets are undoubtedly the most difficult figures to understand in the book of Revelation. For this reason I am using the expression "probable view" to stress the fact that I am not being dogmatic in my conclusions. Before arriving at a position on this matter, one should strive to achieve a proper attitude toward the interpretation of Revelation. The rule for such an interpretation is summed up in the following quotation.

"What did the book mean to the people of that day? Any interpretation that overlooks this point is useless. It involves: understanding the conditions of the day; and of the spiritual needs of the hour; encouragement. An understanding of the Old Testament prophets, and their use of symbols, especially Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah. There are over four hundred allusions to the Old Testament, but not a direct quotation from it." (Homer Hailey, Florida Christian College Lectures, 1962.)

Concerning the theme of the book, the same author says:

"The theme of the book is a conflict between God and Satan, between the church and Roman force and paganism. The message involves the triumph of divine forces, i.e., of truth and righteousness, and the defeat of Satan. The purpose of the book, to encourage faithfulness in the face of all opposition, for the cause of Christ."

Based upon this approach to the book, I conclude that the opening of the first five seals signify the conquering aspect of the gospel of Christ, and the consequences in the form of persecutions and judgments which follow the conflict between the forces of good and evil. The fifth seal does not portray a 3 1/2 year "great tribulation," but rather the crying of vengeance on the part of the souls of martyred saints. They seek vindication of the cause for which they died. The opening of the sixth seal shows that they will see this vindication, and thus a brief glimpse of the judgment is given. Later, a more graphic description of the judgment is presented. (Cf. Rev. 20-22.) Following this announcement of judgment, we are given a view of the redeemed in heaven. (Rev. 7:9.) The redeemed have come through the tribulations and trials of this life, and are pictured as standing victoriously before the throne of God. (Rev. 7:14-15.) Thus we view the church in conflict, the results of that conflict, and finally the glorious state of the church in eternity. At the same time we are given assurance that the wicked are doomed in eternity.

Conclusion

We know the Lord is coming in judgment. We have been warned of the severity of this judgment upon the wicked. In spite of the fact that those who are false teachers tell us that signs of his coming will precede the advent of the Lord, there will be no signs given! The Lord said he will come as thief and sudden destruction will come upon the ungodly. (1 Thess. 5:23.) When the voice of the angel is heard and the trump of God soundeth, then the Lord himself will descend. (1 Thess. 3:16.) Let no man deceive you with a "lo, here is a sign," and "there is a sign." No man will predict his coming. Men have tried in the past and failed. Prepare now so that the day will not overtake you as a thief.
There are two times in every year when a man's thoughts turn more than ordinarily to the passage of time. One of these occasions comes when the year ends, and a new year begins. We reflect then more solemnly than on other days concerning our brief span of years upon this earth—how swiftly and relentlessly and inexorably day follows day out of eternity, being born each morning shining and new, sinking each evening into the awful oblivion of eternal silence, carrying with it forever into history all the confused wreckage of everything it has witnessed and known.

The other occasion that brings reflection is a birthday. For on those days we measure, not the time of the world, but our own brief slice of eternity, counting off, one by one, the inevitable hours until we, too, are swallowed up in that frightening chasm, and the world and all things therein shall know us no more forever. It was Moses who said, "We bring our years to an end as a sigh. The days of our years are three-score years and ten. Or even by reason of strength four-score years; Yet is their pride but labor and sorrow; For it is soon gone and we fly away." At the grave of his brother, Robert Ingersoll paraphrased Sir Thomas Moore and said, "Life is but a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities." Out of one eternity we came; for a few fleeting years we live and move upon the face of the earth; then into another eternity we go—and there is no return. In a few short years it will all be over; all the dreams and ambitions, all the hopes and fears, all the confusion and chaos, the struggle and strife, the heartaches and happiness are swallowed up in the silence of the tomb. 'We bring our years to an end as a tale that is told," and let us hope that after "life's fitful fever" we shall sleep well.

The majority of mankind reflects all too little on the brevity of life and the certainty of death. Even amongst us who are Christians the tendency is strong to go the unthinking way of the world, to live each day as though life on this earth were eternal, to assume the attitude toward life held by the careless, the indifferent, and the agnostic. The pagan posture of the materialist is everywhere in evidence. One of our modern philosophers in a recent dissertation on the insignificance and total worthlessness of humanity said, "In the visible world the Milky Way is a tiny fragment. Within this fragment the solar system is an infinitesimal speck, and of this speck, our planet is a microscopic dot. On this dot tiny lumps of impure carbon and water crawl about a few years, until they dissolve into the elements of which they are compounded." What a picture of man! Was it for this that Christ died?

There are others, however, to whom life has a worth and a meaning far beyond the power of words to describe. They know that a day is coming on which our future upon this planet will not be counted in years, nor in months, nor even in days—but in hours and minutes. Then the solemn and inevitable change from this life into another. For that day and for that hour they are living. To them life is not a meaningless, bootless, worthless misadventure; man is not a mere bundle of atoms of "impure carbon and water"; but he is a child of God, a brother to Jesus Christ. He has infinite capabilities and possibilities. So great is his worth that God himself was willing to give his Son to die in order that this creature of his
might have the hope of eternal life.
If we are to make the most of our restless years, we must regard this life of ours as a sacred entrustment. We are the recipients of blessings far beyond our power to imagine or to understand. We cannot take this heritage of ours for granted. It is not that "life owes us a living," but rather God has entrusted us with high and holy blessings for the duration of our years, and we are to prove ourselves worthy of his love and mercy. Indeed, we are even indebted to the past generations for most of what we are and have. Our modern conveniences, the very homes in which we live, the vehicles in which we ride, the clothes we wear, all these and a thousand other things are possible for us only because of the work and skill and sacrifices of the past. Our cultural advantages, our educational system, our political liberty, our freedom from enslavement; — how much we owe to others! And how unthinking and ungrateful are the vast majority of men for these things.
Since our blessings are so great, and since God's provisions for us are so abundant, surely no thinking man can refuse or neglect to give God the honor and the reverence that are due to him. He has given us a revelation (the Bible) by which we may know him, and know his will for us. Dares any man to set that book aside? Where is the man who will not study it, who will not heed it, who selfishly and blindly pursues his course through life, unthinking, unheeding, and unthankful.
... There is no life worth the living outside of Christ; and there is no death that is worthy of fear in Christ.
—Fanning Yater Tant

The Life of a Christian

When one becomes a Christian there is a great transformation that takes place. Though his sins have been as scarlet, they are made as white as snow; though they have been red like crimson, they are made as wool. To become a child of God is to have full and complete forgiveness. He who obeys the gospel of Christ has all his sins washed away by the blood of Christ. All of God's children can say of Christ, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (Rev. 1:5,6.)

The Past

Every Christian needs a spiritual wastebasket. Success and happiness depend to a great extent on our ability to forget the past. What person has not done things of which he is ashamed? Saul of Tarsus persecuted the church of God and wasted it prior to his conversion. While it is doubtful that he ever erased this from his mind, he did not allow it to discourage him or hinder his efforts to serve Christ. Paul was humble as he recalled the tender mercies of the heavenly Father in forgiving his past, and this humility gave him compassion on others who were lost in sin. Some recollections of the past may be
helpful, but generally speaking the past should be forgotten.

The Present

Since we cannot re-live the past, our use of today is the all-important matter. Am I making the most of my present opportunities? Regardless of yesterday's blunders, am I doing my best to faithfully and loyally serve Christ today? Each day I should walk circumspectly, " Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (Eph. 5:15,16.)

The Future

What the future holds hinges on the use we make of the present. It is foolish to worry about tomorrow. I should concentrate on the tasks at hand and live one day at a time. No amount of worry can change things except to make bad matters worse. The Christian's goal is before him and he needs to keep his eye fixed thereon.

Paul wrote to the Philippians, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:13,14.) Yesterday is past, forget it; tomorrow is ahead, don't worry about it; today is here, use it!

— I. H.

(MOTHER............ Continued)

condition, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven."

And this is the one thing the world has little interest in. Oh, we are interested in being religious, in being a member of some church, of doing good to a reasonable degree. But there is an appalling lack of interest in doing the will of God, the Father. The existence of the hundreds of differing denominations is one evidence of this. The Father in Heaven has given us the Bible to lead us into unity in His church. It contains the strongest pleas for unity man could imagine. Yet men are blithely perpetuating religious division saying it is no more important than the fact that all women don't wear the same kind of hat! Respect for the will of God? Not in the man who will make such a statement. Disregard for the will of God is seen in the doctrines of many of these denominations. Teachings with no foundation in the word of God are made articles of faith. And men will cling to these even after they are shown that the Bible contradicts them.

Oh, friend, let me plead with you to want to DO the will of God—not the will of men or a denomination, or even your own will—but the will of God. Nothing less than complete obedience to His will will obtain salvation. The Hebrew writer said in Hebrews 5:9, "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." I am satisfied that you know the will of God better than you are living. You know, for instance, that the denominational baptism you submitted to was not New Testament baptism. Sprinkling or pouring is not found for baptism in the New Testament. A baptism "because of" remission of sins is not Bible baptism. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. "Buried with Him by baptism into death." This is New Testament baptism. (See Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:4.)

Many other illustrations could be given, but space will not permit. Salvation is only extended to the one who will DO the will of God. Are you doing that? Will you do it? It is my prayer that you will.
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Paul the apostle wrote in Ephesians 4:4, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling." The body is the church; so Paul affirmed that there is one church. There is one Holy Spirit animating this body. And those in the body have one hope. There are many sermons contained in this verse, and much that needs to be studied by the religious world. But I want to call your attention here to the last phrase, "one hope of your calling."

The hope of the faithful Christian is a beautiful thing. It sustains him in the hour of trial. It helps him bear his sorrow. When temptation strikes, the hope of eternal life with Christ Jesus strengthens him to resist. The Hebrew writer said in Hebrews 6:19, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast." Without this hope, a man's life is purposeless and futile. He is like a boat caught in a current with no anchor to hold him. The pressures of life cast him first one way and then another, finally to destroy him eternally. But with the one hope of our calling, the Christian can withstand all of the trials, sorrows, and temptations of this life, ever living true to His Lord, secured as with a strong anchor. Oh, that you had this hope today!

What is the Christian's hope? First, let me point out that this hope is conditioned on our faithful obedience to the Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ, writing to the members of the church in Smyrna, said in Revelation 2:10, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." He said in Revelation 2:7, "To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God." The living hope which Peter says we are begotten unto is only for those who are faithful even to the point of death. Halfhearted followers of Christ have no part of this hope. Those who have once been saved from their sins and then fall away — back into the paths of sin — have no right to the hope of eternal life. But those who humbly strive daily to obey their Lord in all things have this hope bright and clear to guide them and to keep them and sustain them every hour.

Ever Be With the Lord

Let us now read the New Testament description of the one hope. Let us
start with the beautiful passage found in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (American Standard Version.)

I never read this passage without a great longing welling up within me to be with Christ forever. And what a marvelous hope you can have, if you will but receive the words of the Lord. Notice in this passage what is said about our hope. When Jesus comes again we will join Him, whether we be dead or alive. The dead in Christ shall be raised and the ones still living upon the earth shall be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. THEN — WE SHALL EVER BE WITH THE LORD. O, happy thought! Do you long to be with Jesus forever? This can be your hope if you will become a Christian and live faithful unto death.

A New Body
When Jesus comes and we are caught up to join Him in the air, a marvelous change will come over our bodies. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:50-53, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery. We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." No more will we have to worry about pains and ills, thirst and tiredness. A new body — a spiritual body — will be given us in the resurrection. We shall be like our Saviour.

There are only two destinies for all the people of the earth. Matthew 25 describes them in the words of Jesus. Beginning with verse 31 and continuing to the end of the chapter, Jesus describes the judgment scene when the righteous and the wicked shall be separated. There are only two classes of people, only two destinies. These destinies are given in the last verse — Matthew 25:26. Jesus says, "And these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life." Thus all the righteous shall enjoy the same reward — eternal life.

In Heaven
But the New Testament is even more specific. It tells us where we will enjoy eternal life. Colossians 1:5 tells us in these words where our hope is: "because of the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens." And Peter writes in 1 Peter 1:3-4, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. Our inheritance, then, is not reserved upon the earth — it is reserved in heaven.
A life with Jesus . . . eternal life . . . in a spiritual, resurrected body ... in heaven — this is the hope of the faithful Christian, the hope given him by the word of God.

Only 144,000?

Let us read our text again. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling." (Eph. 4:4.) The great emphasis of this passage is on the oneness of each of these things — ONE body, ONE Spirit, ONE hope. Yet there are people who are teaching TWO or even more hopes. For instance, the Jehovah's Witnesses teach that only 144,000 can have the hope of heaven. They teach that the rest of those who have any hope at all must have only a hope of an eternal existence upon a renovated earth. Thus, part of their number entertain a hope of being with Christ in heaven, but the great majority of that group must content themselves with looking forward to living forever upon the earth. But it is impossible for both of these hopes to be true. The Apostle Paul wrote that there is ONE hope, not TWO. All those who are faithful Christians have the same hope.

A Figurative Number

Those who teach that only 144,000 will go to heaven base their teaching upon an obscure passage in Revelation 14. In so doing they violate a cardinal rule of Bible study. It is acknowledged by all who have ever studied the book, that the book of Revelation abounds in obscure, difficult, highly symbolic language. Since it is highly figurative, the commentator often admits his difficulty in telling what is the proper interpretation of certain passages. But there is one thing certain — the Bible does NOT contradict itself! Whatever the plain Passages teach in the New Testament will not be contradicted anywhere else in the Bible. Thus when the Bible student begins to study difficult, obscure passages, he knows that he cannot so interpret those passages that they will contradict the plain passages found elsewhere in the New Testament on the same subject. It is often easier to know what a passage in Revelation cannot teach than to know for sure what it does teach. Such is the case with the 144,000 mentioned in Revelation 14:1-3.

From our study so far, we know that the New Testament plainly teaches that the hope for all is a heavenly hope. No distinction is made between Jew and Gentile, bond or free, male or female. All have the same hope. Therefore when we come to Revelation 14 and are faced with a choice of several possible interpretations of its symbolic language, we can know from the start that it does NOT mean there in one hope for 144,000 and another hope for all the rest. Such an interpretation of the passage puts it in certain contradiction with the rest of the New Testament.

But to further show the absurdity of asserting that these 144,000 here mentioned are all who shall go to heaven, let us read the passage. "And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps; and they sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no man could learn the song save the hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that had been purchased out of the earth." (Rev. 14:1-3, American Standard Version.)

(See HOPE................. Page 112)
Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave and he was taken into Egypt. They hated him because he had brought the report of their evil to their father, he was loved by Jacob more than any of the others were, and he had related prophetic dreams in which his brothers bowed before him. These are the human reasons for Joseph's being sold as a slave. Looking at the story from the divine point of view, God had need for Joseph's being in Egypt at the proper time to save the family of Israel from famine. God's guiding hand was with Joseph. Providence turned evil into good.

It was a joyous occasion when the Israelites moved to Egypt. They were given the land of Goshen—Egypt's best. Israel's spirit revived when it was learned that Joseph was alive. After a few years in Egypt, Jacob died. Joseph's brethren became alarmed. They remembered the evil they had done him and feared that he would attempt to retaliate now that their father was dead. They begged his forgiveness. Joseph wept, and he said unto them, "Fear not: for am I in the place of God?" (Gen. 50:19.)

All who seek to avenge their enemies are putting themselves in a position that only God can justly fill. A vengeful attitude can wreck one's life. Jesus taught that we should do good to our enemies. (Matt. 5:43-45.) Paul wrote, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12:19, 20.)

There are many ways in which men may place themselves in a position that only God is entitled to occupy. Those religious leaders who wear titles that should be reserved for one possessing Deity should ask themselves, "Am I in the place of God?"

As Vengeance Seekers

Joseph realized that to seek to even the score with his brothers was not his right. He knew that they had meant to do evil, yet God had turned the whole episode into good. He would leave it to Jehovah to make any adjustments that were in order.

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Many preachers expect to be addressed as "Reverend." This word occurs one time in the commonly used English translation (King James Version) and it applies to God. "He hath sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name." (Psa. 111: 9.) Some ecclesiastics wear the title "Father." Jesus forbade this very thing in Matt. 23:9. No mortal man deserves to be called "His Holiness," "The Right Reverend," "Holy Father" or any similar thing. Jesus told the disciples, "all ye are brethren." (Matt. 23:8.) No matter what one's function in the kingdom of God, he has no right to be exalted by such titles as apply to God. Imagine a letter being addressed to "The Very Reverend Timothy"! Imagine the humble apostle Peter signing his epistles, "His Holiness Pope Peter"! Do you have that much imagination?

Creed Writers
A creed is an authoritative formula of religious belief. It is the Lord's prerogative to present us an official statement of belief—a book of rules and regulations—a uniform guide. That creed is the Bible. "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, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16,17.)

Every man who has ever had a part in the formation of a religious creed has virtually placed himself in the position of God. No man has the right to draw up rules and regulations to govern other men in religion. No man has the right to require that others subscribe to his creed or confession of faith. Apostolic preachers called upon people to confess Christ, but no human creed; to follow the doctrine of Christ, but no man-made disciplines.

Church Founders
The Bible reveals that the church came into existence that the manifold wisdom of God might be made known, "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. 3:10,11.) God planned the church long before it was established. Christ came into the world to execute the Father's plan. Our Lord had every right to build his church.

Since the church of Christ was established scores and scores of denominational organizations have sprung up. These "churches" were all founded by men. Because they do not coincide with what the Lord established, they are in competition with the Lord's body. What right does any human being have to start a religious organization to suit his own taste? Every man who thinks he can build a church that is better than the Lord's is saying, in effect, "Lord, I know more about this than you do."

Command Classifiers
God's word includes factual statements, promises, warnings, and commands. All of God's commandments are righteousness. (Psa. 119:172.) James wrote, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10.) It is not necessary to violate every command in order to be a law-breaker. To disregard one single command is to be guilty of violating God's law.

Some religionists sit in judgment on God's commands and classify them as "essential" and "non-essential." By what authority does any man say that anything God has commanded is non-essential? Can we put ourselves in the place of God? It is generally agreed that Christ commanded baptism. (Mk. 16:15,16; Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 10:48.) Howbeit, most preachers will tell you
that baptism is absolutely unnecessary. They seem to know more about God's will than God does.

**Membership Voters**

In like manner, we find some who think they can vote folks into or out of the church. This is true of man-made churches but not of Christ's church. The Lord adds the saved to his church. (Acts 2:47.) No one on earth can stop the Lord from doing this. He will keep on adding people to the church as long as his gospel is preached and men and women accept it.

If people actually think they can vote anyone into or out of Christ's church, they must think they are in the place of God. We cannot always determine who is saved and who is not, but the Lord knows the hearts of men. We should preach the gospel and leave the question of membership to the Lord. He won't fail to add a one that should be added, and he won't include anyone that should be excluded.

**Destiny Deciders**

Have you ever attended a funeral in which the preacher put someone right into heaven with the angels standing all around him singing the hallelujah chorus? And it might have been some person who led an obviously reprobate life! How does the preacher know so much about where that fellow has gone? Are we in the place of God to decide the destiny of the dead?

It is not man but the Lord, "Who will render to every man according to his deeds." (Rom. 2:6.) Only God knows the secret things in a man's life and these will be brought into judgment. (Eccl. 12:14.) We are not setting ourselves up as judges when we preach the Bible; we are merely announcing the Lord's revealed will. But we should leave it to the Lord to judge who has and who has not conformed to his will during life.

Happy are we when we learn our place and stay in it. We are not in the place of God.

**Things God Has Joined Together**

**CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.** Christ is the head of the church. (Eph. 5:23.) To be in Christ is to be in the church. (Acts 2:41,47; Gal. 3:26,27.) He purchased the church with his own blood (Acts 20:28) and will come to receive it as his bride.

**FAITH AND WORKS.** Faith without works is like the body without the spirit—dead. (Jas. 2:26.) The faith that avails is that which worketh by love. (Gal. 5:6.)

**BAPTISM AND SALVATION.** Salvation is offered to man on condition. Baptism is a part of the conditional arrangement. (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21.)

**HOLY SPIRIT AND THE WORD.** The Spirit is not identical to the word, but it is through the word that the Spirit operates. (Eph. 5:18,19; Col. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:22, 23.)

**SPECIAL ISSUE**

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Meditations From Revelation

"The Great Tribulation"

By Jimmy Tuten, Jr., St. Louis, Missouri

In the seventh chapter of the book of Revelation, we are given a glimpse of the redeemed in heaven. Their number is summed up under the term, "great multitude." One of the elders informed John that this "great multitude" has "come out of the great tribulation." (Rev. 7:15.) They are pictured as having come through a common experience. These had undergone tribulation in one form or another. The term translated "tribulation" denotes "a pressing, pressing together, oppression, affliction, distress." (Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon, p. 291.) Any form of affliction arising from oppression or persecution of any kind can be labeled "tribulation." Its primary meaning, however, is that of suffering. Throughout each generation, from time to time, God's people will suffer in varying degrees for the cause of Christ. Man is of few days, full of misery. To how few would life be worth living, were it not for the hope of a better one! Our Lord, during his earthly ministry told his disciples that "in the world ye shall have tribulation," even while he promised them life eternal. (Jno. 16:33.) The Apostle Paul gloried in the persecutions and tribulations which the Thessalonians had endured. (2 Thess. 1:4.) The church at Smyrna endured tribulation, and such was known to John who himself was a companion of such affliction. (Rev. 1:9; 2:9.) It is a known fact, therefore, that God's people will suffer trials and distresses. The rich and the poor meet together in this common lot of trouble. It is essential that we have the right attitude toward distresses, for through them the most joyous relationship can be enjoyed by the faithful child of God. When confronted with trials we should not think it strange. We should rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's suffering. (1 Pet. 4:12-13.) Those tribulations which befall us as a result of our profession of Christ accomplish much good! Paul says tribulation "worketh patience." (Rom. 5:3.) It is also a trial of our faith and is more precious than gold that perisheth. Through it, we shall be "found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 1:6-7.) Let us, therefore, faint not at the afflictions or sufferings we experience, but rather glory in them, knowing that He who suffered before us has overcome the world. (Eph. 3:13.) If we view tribulations as the Lord would have us view them, they will never separate us from the love of God. (Rom. 8:35.) We have been assured that in eternity the Lord will cover us as a tent, feed us as a shepherd, and guide us through fountains of living water. Tribulations are allowed to come upon us to prove us and sometimes to chasten us; sometimes they are the result of obedience to the gospel.

The "great tribulation" of Revelation 7:14, simply denotes all of the sufferings and hardships experienced by God's people prior to their glorified state with God in eternity. Paul and Barnabas taught that "we must through much tribulation enter into the
"Kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22.)

"Much tribulation" spreads out the great multitude of sufferings of all ages. The same is true concerning the "great tribulation." The trials and tribulations of the "great multitude" are pictured as being complete. Because they had washed their robes in the blood of the lamb, their rugged ways led to the throne of God.

The Premillennialists attach great significance to the phrase "great tribulation," always capitalizing the expression. To them, the "great tribulation" refers to a terrible time yet to come. W. E. Vine holds to the Millennial position, as indicated by his definition of THLIPSIS (tribulation). He says, "the tribulation, the great one, is not that in which all saints share; it indicates a definite period spoken of by the Lord in Matt. 24:21,29; Mk. 13:18, 24, where the time is mentioned as preceding his second Advent." (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, p. 157, Vol. 4.) In the same reference, he calls the "great tribulation" the "time of Jacob's trouble." (Jer. 30:7.) Many Premillennialists are "pretribulationist," i. e., they believe that the church will not pass through the "Great Tribulation." They maintain that it will and must be raptured before the "Great Tribulation." There are, however, those who take the "posttribulation" position. These maintain that there will be only one visible coming of the Lord, and this will be the judgment. Hence, according to them, the church will pass through the "Great Tribulation." Scofield is a Pretribulationist. He says, "the great tribulation is immediately followed by the return of Christ in glory, and the events associated therewith." Further, he says, "it involves the people of God who will have returned to Palestine in unbelief." (Scofield Reference Bible, p. 1336.) A clearer expression of this position is found in a booklet, "The Second Coming," by R. H. Boll, published in 1924. In this publication Boll says:

"I want to call your attention to this time of interval between the taking up of the church to meet Christ, and His coming down with her ... It is on the diagram marked "T," which stands for Great Tribulation . . . The Great Tribulation immediately precedes the coming of Jesus in glory with his saints . . . Now I want to give you three reasons why I think that the Church is not going to have to pass through that tribulation."

There are at least two points that demand our attention as we view the false positions on the "Tribulation." One is the belief that the tribulation is in the future, between the second and third comings of the Lord. The other is the belief that the church will not pass through the tribulation. As we saw from the Scriptures cited above, the "tribulation" takes place in the "church age," i. e., it is taking place during these last days. Besides detailed instructions concerning our attitude toward it, we are given examples of the church going through various afflictions. (1 Pet. 1:6-7; 4:12-13; Rev. 1:9; 2:9.) A careful study of Revelation, chapter seven, will reveal that the chapter is divided into two sections. The first section (Vv. 1-8) pictures the church on earth. The 144,000 does not denote the Jews as some maintain. This can be seen from the fact that only 12,000 are selected from each tribe, and a couple of the tribes are left out in the account of Revelation 7. The church of our Lord is spiritual Israel, and the 144,000 simply denotes the church or redeemed on earth as they militantly go

(See TRIBULATION . . . Page 111)
The importance of an open mind and an honest heart as a necessary antecedent condition to a profitable study of the teaching of the New Testament was emphasized last month. It is in order, however, to add even a further word in preparation for the lessons which are to follow.

It is well understood that every idea or proposition must be brought before the bar of one's own reason and rationality, and personally tried by him, in the light of the best knowledge he possesses or can obtain upon the subject under consideration, before he can, with sanity, either accept or reject it. But, it is a well grounded fear that, when it comes to religious considerations, the average person proceeds more upon the basis of mere sentiment and emotion than upon conviction and cool calculation; that in religion, MOTHER or FATHER is followed, with more devotion than Christ, and peace and harmony with husband or wife is sought more than conformity to the known will of Christ. And factionalism and sectarianism which have produced the Denominational System in religion find such hearts to be fruitful soil in which to perpetuate themselves. And the LOVE OF TRUTH finds itself completely supplanted by an unthinking and even irrational sentimentalism.

The ultimate seriousness of this attitude of mind, as can readily be seen, is that it very effectively displaces DIVINE REVELATION, the Bible which is the only possible source of spiritual truth as the factor by which alone, the validity and genuineness of one’s religion is to be determined. It dethrones reason and renders the individual impervious to further light or help from any one. He, being not a follower of divine truth, as that has been made known by Christ and the apostles in the New Testament, but blindly following the example of some loved one living or dead, shuts himself up to the destiny of those whom the Holy Spirit describes as perishing. “Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” (2 Thess. 2:10.)

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(105)
The Course to Pursue to Be Infallibly Safe

By Benjamin Franklin (1812-1878)

Part I

It is a circumstance not to be denied, that immense confusion exists in the public mind touching the way of salvation. No matter whether the cause of this confusion can be pointed out or not, the fact of its existence can not be denied. It is also a fact that many men of good character, fine intelligence and who are excellent citizens, are standing aloof from all connection with any church, or identification with religion in any form. No doubt, a main cause of this is that a large amount of the preaching is either insipid, lifeless, and powerless talk, and nothing more, or wholly unintelligible; so that, on one hand, there is not interest in it, and, on the other hand, they can not understand it. No matter whether the fact can be accounted for or not, it is a fact, and an indisputable fact, that darkness pervades the public mind on the very matter of the highest importance to man of all others—the way to eternal happiness and renow. It is useless to try to blur it over, to disguise or deny it. There stands the stumbling-block before the people. One teaches this way and another that; one says, lo here, and another, lo there. Many stand confounded, and know not which way to go.

Turning to the clear teaching of the Saviour, the command is found: "Enter you in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, which leadeth unto destruction, and many there be who 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 is a candid and solemn warning, and shows that the Lord saw the narrow way in which his followers would have to walk to gain everlasting life. A speculative man, more interested in some perplexing question than in regard to his own salvation, and, probably, desiring to procure some means of prejudicing the public mind against the Lord's teaching, came to the Saviour and said. "Lord, are there few that be saved?" The Lord gave him a more extended answer than he desired. He said: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are. Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from me. all ye workers of iniquity." (Luke 13:24-27.) The Lord warned the people to be on their guard: to be careful and not be deceived. You can not determine which is the right way by the multitude walking in a way, for many are walking in the broad road, leading to ruin. An important reason for being cautious that no mistake be made in finding the right way, is that each person is to make but one trip. If you were to travel the road many times after missing the way once, you might avoid the mistake next time. But we pass over the way but once, and if we miss it, the mistake can never be
corrected. All should make sure work
of it, and be certain not to miss the
way.

In the midst, then, of all the confu-
sion of these times, the different ways
held up to the people, as leading to
heaven, is there any possible course
that a human being can pursue that is
infallibly safe? The purpose of this
discourse is to give an affirmative an-
swer to this question—to show that
there is a course to pursue that is in-
fallibly safe. The labor of this discourse
will not be to refute those opposed to
the positions maintained, but to show
an honest and humble person what
course to pursue in the midst of all the
confusion of the times to be infallibly
safe. In order to this end, a few of the
most serious difficulties existing will be
handled and disposed of in such a way
as to show the safe course.

What, then, is the first difficulty to
be encountered? It is the difficulty
between the infidel and the Christian.
A man says: "I have read Hume, Vol-
taire, Volney, Gibbon, Paine, etc., and
you admit that some of these were,
at least, men of learning, extended
knowledge in antiquity, with vast li-
braries and time for reading; and they
maintain stoutly, and most determined-
ly, that the Bible is the work of man,
and nothing else; that they have no
confidence in it. On the other hand,
I have read Paley, Watson, Faber, Nel-
son, Barnes, etc., men of learning, vast
knowledge, antiquity, immense librar-
ies, with any amount of time for re-
search, and they say that the Bible
contains a revelation from God, and
that the man who does not believe it
will be condemned. Now, if these great
and learned men, on each side, can not
decide the matter, settle the question,
and put it beyond dispute, how am I
ever to decide the matter? If any means
were at command by which this dif-
ficulty could be made to appear more
difficult, such means should be employ-
ed, and the intention is to meet the dif-
ficulty itself, and not to demolish a man
of straw."

Now, do not forget the purpose had
in view—to show what course to pur-
sue to be infallibly safe. To what Han-
ger is the man exposed who believes the
Bible with his whole heart, and honestly
practices it, in any conceivable event?
To say the least, the man who believes
the Bible, and practices its teaching,
is as good as the unbeliever. He is cer-
tainly as happy. Beyond all dispute, he
does as much for his race as the un-
believer. So far as this world is con-
cerned, he is certainly infallibly safe
in any possible or conceivable event.
Nor does any man doubt that he is
infallibly safe so far as the world to
come is concerned. Conceive the idea,
if you please, that, in the final wind-
ing up of human affairs, it were possible
for every thing to turn out as the
skeptic has argued; the Bible to be
entirely of man—as Robert Owen
argued, all religion found in ignorance;
to what danger is the man who honestly
believed and obeyed the Bible exposed?
Conceive the possibility, if you please,
for every thing to turn out finally as
skeptics have argued, and the Christian
to have honestly believed the Bible
with his whole heart and practiced it
faithfully; to have preached it, written
it, published it, and advocated it with
all the power in him, through his entire
life, and to have opposed infidelity,
fought against and done every thing in
his power to put it down, to what dan-
ger will he stand exposed, living or
dying, in this world or that which is to
come? No danger of any sort. No man
living can show that he has lost any
thing that can in any way contribute to
greatness, goodness, or happiness in this
life, and the skeptic himself will not
claim that he has endangered himself
in reference to the life to come. No man

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of any sort, no matter where he stands, nor what he holds, maintains that any great danger can befall a man on account of his believing and practicing the Bible; that he is, on this account, in any sense, not safe for this world and that which is to come, even if all the skeptic claims could, by any conceivable event, prove true. If, in the end, he shall find that all he believed concerning God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, angels, and men—in one word, all he believed about the Bible—to be true, he will be an eternal gainer; he will have gained all things. But if you conceive the possibility of his being entirely mistaken, and the skeptic right in every particular, he is then as safe as any skeptic on earth, living and dying, in time and eternity. You may confidently defy any skeptic to show that he is not infallibly safe in any event.

But, now, turn round and look at the other side of the question. Let the skeptic prove mistaken, and look to the consequences of his mistake. He finds himself, in the end, standing in opposition to his merciful Creator, who has, in kindness and compassion, put forth his hand to save him; opposed to his gracious Redeemer, who died for him, and to the Bible, intended to guide him to happiness and eternal glory. He believed not the God who created him, and the Lord who gave himself for man. The sentence is, "He who believes not shall be condemned." "He who believes not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." He knows that his skepticism can not possibly make him any better in this life, any more happy; that it can not do the world any possible good, that it has nothing in it to elevate, enoble, and adorn humanity; that it can not possibly bring anything great and good to a single soul of the human race; that it can not civilize, educate, or enlighten mankind; in one word, that its whole tendency is to pull down morals, education, and enlightenment in general; and if all it claims could, by any conceivable event, prove true every believer in the Bible would be as safe in all respects as he for time and eternity! Skepticism is an awful experiment. It is simply taking the risk of losing every thing, without the possibility of gaining anything for this world or the world to come.

It is like this: A father tells his son that he has ten thousand dollars to set him out in business; to select a business and he will give him the money. The son goes out, looks around, and comes home delighted; he has found a grand speculation, and calls for the money. The father calls for an explanation of the speculation. The young man sets it forth with much eloquence and fluency. The father listens to him with deep interest, and, when he is through, calls his attention to a certain point in the speculation, and inquires what the result would be should he be mistaken at said point. The young man's countenance falls. He admits that he had not thought of that; that a mistake there would involve the loss of the whole ten thousand dollars. In a few minutes the father calls his attention to many points, at any one of which a single mistake would involve the loss of all his money. His father then turns to the other side and inquires for the result, in case there shall be no mistake, and finds that the best that can possibly be the result, in any event, will be to come out even with the amount with which he started in. "What!" says the father, "a speculation in which there are many chances to lose everything and no chance to gain anything! No, sir; you can not have the money." This is the speculation of skeptics. They not only have many chances to lose everything without any chance to gain any thing, but are certain to lose all, and have
Some New Testament Truths About Baptism

By Carl Vernon, San Antonio, Texas

There is much misunderstanding about baptism. There shouldn't be. The New Testament is the only source of true information concerning it, and the teaching therein is very plain. We note the following:

What Is Baptism?
Baptism is an act. (Mk. 16:16.) The element involved is water. (Acts 10:47; John 3:23.) Christ was baptized. (Matt. 3:5, 15-16.) Baptism is a burial of the body in water. (Col. 2:12.) It also involves the resurrection of the body. (Rom. 6:5; Col. 3:1.) It is accomplished by the candidate's coming to the water (Acts 8:36), instead of water being brought to the candidate—as in sprinkling.

Who Is to Be Baptized?
Baptism is for all who are "without Christ" (Eph. 2:12), in sin, and guilty in God's sight. The Bible teaches that "sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4.) Hence, if one is an infant, he hasn't transgressed God's law, is not guilty, and cannot be baptized in conformity with the scriptures. Those in Acts, chapter 2, were sinners. (Acts 2:37,38.) Saul of Tarsus was a sinner. (1 Tim. 1:15; Acts 22:16.)

The Corinthians were sinners. 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Acts 18:8.) The plan of God to save men from sin (Rom. 5:8) definitely includes baptism. (Matt. 28:18-20.) Baptism alone does not save. The same must be said about faith alone! (James 2:24.) Baptism, however, in its proper relation to other requirements of New Testament teaching consummates obedience to the gospel which puts one into the saved relationship.

Why, Then, Be Baptized?
It is in the plan of God to save. "... the like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us." (1 Pet. 3:21.) It is inconsistent to profess to honor God's teaching concerning baptism, while at the same time dishonoring the Bible reason for submitting to it. If baptism is not "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mk. 16:16), then it is foolish to be baptized.

You are living in the last dispensation (Heb. 1:1-2), and if you are saved it will be by obeying the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 14:6; Heb. 5:8,9; John 6:44, 45.) He taught his apostles to go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." (Mk. 16:15, 16.) As long as time shall stand, baptism will be the step (preceded, of course, by faith—Heb. 11:6) that "translates" sinners "out of darkness" (Col. 1:13) and INTO CHRIST. (Gal. 3:27.)
Creed Versus Creed
Creeds Versus Bible

In 1910, the Methodist Church made a radical change in one of its theological doctrines. Prior to 1910, their Discipline stated that children were born in sin. As men are accustomed to do, the Methodists changed their doctrine. Let us realize that they had every right to change it; it was a human doctrine anyway.

Infant baptism is taught in the Methodist Discipline, but not in the Scriptures. The Bible alone is an all-sufficient guide to lead men to heaven. (2 Tim. 3:16-17.) Man has no right to teach differently from the Bible. In fact, the curse of heaven rests upon the man that teaches a different gospel. (Gal. 1:6-8.) To go beyond the doctrine of Christ is to be without God and Christ. (2 John 9.) The baptism of infants is a human doctrine, not part of the gospel of Christ, and an example of going beyond the doctrine of Christ.

In the New Testament one may read of the baptism of mature people (Acts 8:12), but never of the baptism of infants. Belief in Christ, repentance of sins, and being baptized of one’s own accord can be found in the Scriptures (Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4—this states that baptism involves a burial; sprinkling won’t do). An infant cannot believe in Christ (Rom. 10:17), has no sins of which to repent, and is not baptized by consent; he simply has a little water sprinkled on him by an adult.

We have said this to emphasize that infant baptism is not practiced by the authority of God, but by the whim and fancy of man. Before 1910, it was practiced in the Methodist church because they believed that children were born in sin. In the 1894 Discipline, which I have before me, the following statement is made:

"Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ saith, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. . . ." (Sec. 439, p. 200, italics mine, F.J.)

This was suggested for part of the remarks made by the minister at "The ministration of baptism to infants." To show the contrast, the 1952 Methodist Discipline, also before me, reads this way:

"Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are heirs of life eternal and subjects of the saving grace of the Holy Spirit; and that our Saviour Christ saith, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. . . ." (Sec. 1910, p. 519, italics mine, F. J.)

According to this human instrument, the Methodist Discipline, if you were born prior to 1910 you were BORN IN SIN. If you were born after 1910, you are an HEIR OF LIFE ETERNAL without doing anything. When were you born?

This single illustration shows the folly of the creeds and dogmas of men. They change like the shifting sand of the desert and are as unstable as water. In contrast, the word of God is like a solid rock. The doctrines of men pass
away and are changed, but the "word of the Lord abideth for ever."

(TRIBULATION .... Continued) forth to conquer. (Rom. 9:6-8; Gal. 3:26-29.) The second section (Vv. 9-17) pictures the church as a "great multitude" standing "before the throne." The "great multitude" is taken from all nations and kindreds, and they stand before the throne in eternal blessedness. They do not need to be sealed because they have already passed beyond the need of protection. They have already passed through the "great tribulation." (Jno. 16:33; 2 Thess. 1:4.) The "great tribulation" is not in the future as a brief 3 1/2 year period between the second and third (?) coming of the Lord. It is going on now and will continue in the generations to come. God's faithful will not be exempt until the Lord comes in glory. Revelation 7:14 refers to all of the tribulations that the victorious church experienced while on earth. It looks backward and not forward! It says, "these are they which came out of the great tribulation." Men miss the point when they assign the tribulation in the text to the future, and argue that the church will not pass through it.

Futurists and Dispensationalists, in attempt to answer the foregoing application, argue that God promised that the church would not go through the tribulation in Luke 21:34-36 and Rev. 3:10. Please observe that the passage in Luke says absolutely nothing about "tribulation" as taking place during a 3 1/2 years period following the second return of Christ. The thing under consideration in the passage involves all people, for the Lord says, "for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of the earth." Reference is made to the second coming of Jesus! The warnings are applicable to our appearing before Jesus as he comes in judgment. In Rev. 3:10, the word translated "trial" is not the same as that translated "tribulation." Furthermore, they are not told that they would be KEPT from the "trial," but simply that they would have grace to sustain them in their temptation to fall away during the trial. If Philadelphia (church spoken to in Revelation 3:10) represents an exact foreview of the church in general, then the problems of harmonizing the so-called periods represented by other churches, will rule out applying the section of the "great tribulation" period. Remember, Philadelphia is the sixth church to receive the letter, not the seventh, or last church. It could not represent the final stage without overlapping with others.

Conclusion

The coming of the Lord will be the end of all things. There will be no "Great Tribulation" following this event. God's people who have not come through the tribulation in this world, prior to the Lord's coming, will be doomed in eternity because they have allowed these things to make shipwreck of their faith. (Jno. 16:33.) We do not desire afflictions, but when they come, we view them gladly, for through much tribulation we enter into the everlasting kingdom of God. We are not exempt from it. Through it the faithful unto death climb the steep ascent of heaven through peril, toil and pain. Through the trial of their faith, they will be found unto praise, honor and glory at the appearing of Christ. (1 Pet. 1:6-8.) If you are a subscriber to APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE or one who receives the paper regularly through the compliments of a friend, please notify us in advance of any changes in your address.

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Numbers are often symbolic in the book of Revelation—not to be taken literally. That this is the case here I think is apparent. Further, the next verse shows this absolutely the case. Verse 4 says, "These are they that were not defiled with women, for they are virgins." This would restrict the hundred and forty four thousand to men who have never been married if it were taken literally. But those who study Revelation are agreed that this language is figurative, meaning those who have been faithful unto the Lord and not defiled themselves with the religions of men. But if this is true, why can't the number 144,000 also be figurative? It not only can, but must—if the passage is to harmonize with the rest of the New Testament.

Friend don't be led astray by those who would take away your hope of heaven. Instead, read your New Testament carefully. Obey its commands and hold fast its hope. There will then be laid up for you a crown in Heaven in the last day.
The Rise of Catholicism

Jesus promised in Matt. 16:18, ... upon this rock I will build my church ... " Our Lord fulfilled that promise. His church was established in the city of Jerusalem on the first Pentecost following His resurrection, about 30 A. D. (Some chronologists give the date as 33 A. D.) The Holy Spirit came upon the apostles, moving them to speak, thus the gospel in its fulness was set forth and those who believed and obeyed were added together to make up the church. (Acts 2.) From that day forward "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

I. The Apostolic Church

By a careful reading of the Scriptures we may know what the structure, work, and organization of the church were in the time of the apostles. For the sake of clarity we refer to the church of the first century as the apostolic church.

A. ITS BIBLICAL DESIGNATIONS. The various descriptions of the church given in the Bible teach us its true identity—in relation to God, to Christ, to the world, to its work, to its members, etc. The term church (EK-KLESIA in Greek) means "called out." Christ adds to the church those people who are called out of the world through acceptance of the gospel. The early church knew no terms of admission except the terms of salvation, that is, belief in Christ, repentance, and baptism for the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 2:38-47; 8:35-39; 18:8; 1 Cor. 12:13.) The congregations of the apostolic age were designated "churches of God," "churches of Christ," "churches of the saints." (1 Thess. 2:14; Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 14:33.) The disciples of our Lord were called "Christians." (Acts 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16.)

B. ITS WORSHIP. The early disciples continued with regularity in the "apostles' doctrine"—the teaching of the apostles. They broke bread on the first day of the week. They prayed and sang " psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." (Read Acts 2:42. 20:7; Eph. 5:18,19; Col. 3:16.) The Lord's supper was a memorial of Christ's death, not a sacrifice. (1 Cor. 11:23-26.) There was no mechanical music and no "liturgy." The Christians contributed according to their ability. (1 Cor. 16:1, 2.) The worship was simple and without ritualism. Christ condemned formalism and vain repetitions. (Matt. 6:5-8.) He taught His followers to worship "in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24.)

C. ITS ORGANIZATION. The term church is used in two ways in the Scriptures—GENERALLY and LOCALLY. In the general or aggregate sense, the church is an absolute mon-archv. Christ is its head and has an authority. (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18; Matt.
The apostles were Christ's personal ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20) sent out to make known the terms of His will. They were eyewitnesses of the risen Lord. (Acts 1:22; 1 Cor. 9:1.) The prophets (1 Cor. 12:28) were the inspired teachers who assisted the apostles. The Bible says nothing about the apostles having "successors," nor does it give indication that the prophets were intended as a permanent office in the church.

In the local sense, each church was an independent, self-governing unit in the first century. There was no "hierarchy" and no "clergy-laity" distinction. The local churches had their "bishops and deacons." (Phil. 1:1.) Three terms were used in the original language of the New Testament to designate the bishops: (1) ἐπίσκοπος, translated "bishops" of "overseers" (Acts 20:28); (2) πρεσbyteros, translated "elders" (Acts 20:17) and sometimes rendered in English as "presbyters"; (3) ποιμέν, translated "pastors" (Eph. 4:11) and meaning the same as "shepherds." It is plain that these terms are used interchangeably in the Bible. (Read Acts 20:17-18; Titus 1:5-7.) These men were called "bishops" because they had the oversight of the flock; "elders" because they were selected from among mature Christians; "pastors" because they were spiritual shepherds. The deacons were Qualified servants who worked under the bishops. (1 Tim. 3: 8-13.) In addition, there were men who devoted their attention to the preaching of the gospel. These preachers were called "evangelists" (Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:2-5), and they were not pastors or overseers in the church.

It was the apostolic order that elders be appointed in "every church." (Acts 14:23.) We find no indication in the Bible that one man was ever appointed as THE bishop of a given church; there was always a plurality, and one elder did not have more authority or rank than the others. Each eldership was limited in its oversight to one flock. (1 Pet. 5: 2.) No group of elders or bishops had authority over a diocese or district of churches. No local church ever set itself up as the agency through which other congregations did their work or any part thereof. There were no denominational organizations, missionary societies, human boards, conclaves, synods, nor earthly headquarters. Every child of God was a priest and Christ was recognized as the one High Priest. (Rev. 1:6; Heb. 4:14.) All Christians were under the supreme headship of Christ in heaven. Hence Paul wrote, "our citizenship is in heaven." (Phil. 3:20, Am. Stand. Version.)

D. ITS PERSECUTIONS. Early in its history the church of Jesus Christ encountered stern opposition from the Jewish leaders. Since the first members were Jews and since it began in Jerusalem, we do not marvel that the Jews were soon stirred by the gains made by the church. Read the first several chapters of the book of Acts for an account of some of these persecutions. In time the Roman emperors who were pagans (heathens, idolaters) and the pagan priests brought the most cruel persecutions against the church. The rapid advances of Christianity posed a serious threat to paganism. The emperors coveted the loyalty which the Christians directed to Christ. Despite dungeon, fire, and sword, the church grew and many persons of rank became members of it.

II. The Apostate Church

The apostles of Christ warned that in time there would be departures from the truth. Paul told the bishops of Ephesus, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to
draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:30.) Peter warned, "But there were false prophets also among the people even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies..." (2 Pet. 2:1.) Paul said there would come "a falling away," and added, "the mystery of iniquity doth already work." (2 Thess. 2:3,7.) This general apostasy was gradual but in the end quite complete. "The most outstanding thing in church history is the great apostasy." (Lambert, O. C, Catholicism Against Itself, Vol. 1, p. 12.)

A. CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION. In the second century there developed the practice of elevating the elders into a sort of "clergy" class. The preaching of the word, the prayers in public worship, and the administration of the Lord's supper came to be recognized as the function solely of the elders. By 200 A. D. some of the elders were being called "priests." The terms priests and elders are never used interchangeably in the Bible; in fact, no Christian is any more a priest than any other; all members of the church are priests in that all sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:5,9.)

Simultaneously with the advance of the separate priesthood or "clergy" idea came another change. Certain elders began to be elevated above their fellow elders and given the title "bishop." "At the close of the apostolic age churches were independent one of another, each being governed by a board of pastors. Precedence was given to one who came to be called Bishop; the others, later, were called Presbyters. Gradually the jurisdiction of Bishop included neighboring towns." (Halley, Pocket Bible Handbook, p. 678.) In short, one elder became the "presiding elder," or "chief elder," and was given the title "bishop," while the others were called "presbyters," then in time "priests."

"The first change in the government of the church was an easy one to make. When difficulties arose in the small congregations the older congregations were called upon to assist in correcting such matters. Groups of elders would come together in solemn assembly to render a decision. One elder would be selected to preside over the meeting. He was called the bishop. His voice would be the deciding one in matters of discipline." (Brumback, History of the Church Through the Ages, p. 16.)

Once God's law is set aside on a given point, there is no place to stop. When a new office was created under the title "bishop," other changes followed. Some congregations dispensed with "elders" altogether, having one man as "the bishop." As time passed it was thought proper to have one bishop over all the churches in a given locality or district. Here the "diocese" enters. The diocesan bishops would meet to discuss various matters and soon the more prominent among them began to be elevated. The bishops in the larger cities came to be called "Metropolitans." "Later, the Bishops of the capitals of all the political Provinces were called Archbishops. . . . By 451 the Bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem were called Patriarchs . . . " (Mastrantonis, George. What Is the Eastern Orthodox Church? p. 34.)

B. OTHER INNOVATIONS. While an apostate form of organization was developing, the church was changing in other respects. Christianity continued to gain momentum despite the persecutions from pagan emperors and priests. As the "clergy" class developed, the "laity" became lax about learning and teaching God's word. As people of rank and influence entered the church, many unconverted people entered for the sake of aligning themselves with something popular. Pagan ideas and practices began to infiltrate Christianity. Other
practices were borrowed from Judaism. Most of the characteristics that distinguish the apostate church from apostolic church are traceable to either paganism or Judaism.

The first use of "Holy Water" dates to 120 A.D. "This grew out of the practice of the heathen's custom of dipping their hands in water and sprinkling it upon themselves as they entered the pagan temples." (Brumback, p. 19.)

Lent and Easter were first observed in about 140 A.D., though they were not generally accepted for another two hundred years.

Sprinkling for baptism began around 250 A.D. Such historians as Eusebius and Neander testify that sprinkling was first administered to people who were sick. At first a clear distinction was made between those who were sprinkled and those immersed. The former were "doubtful" as to the validity of their baptism. It was hundreds of years later before sprinkling and pouring came to be accepted as equally valid with immersion.

The Lord's supper was gradually changed into the sacrifice of Mass. Other doctrines slowly evolved—purgatory, adoration of saints and images, adoration of Mary, the "sacraments," and celibacy—to mention a few. Instrumental music was not introduced into the worship until the seventh century, then like other innovations, not generally accepted until long afterward. "The use of instrumental music was abolished by Pope Gregory in 1074, and Thomas Aquinas writing two hundred years later, said, 'The church does not use instrumental music, harps and psalteries to praise God that she may not seem to Judaize.'" (Brumback, p. 76.)

C. UNION OF CHURCH AND STATE. When the fourth century began the church was already marked with apostasy in many areas. But an event of that century was destined to step up the pace and make the apostasy more complete. In the year 313 Constantine, the new Roman emperor, issued his "Edict of Toleration" which officially put an end to the persecution of Christians. Later Christianity (already perverted) was made the official religion of the empire. Constantine himself professed Christianity. The sudden change in the relation of church and state had world-wide and far-reaching effects.

Church buildings were restored and many new ones built. Constantine set the pace by having large edifices patterned after the Roman court-room erected in prominent cities. Heathen temples were converted into "cathedrals." In time the heathen idols were replaced with images representing saints. The sacrifice of the Mass replaced the heathen sacrifice. The new order of "clergy" replaced the heathen priesthood. Church festivals replaced heathen festivals. The adoration of the Virgin Mary was substituted for the worship of Venus and Diana. The emperor directed the church and the state. The
church was used for political purposes and ecclesiastical offices were sold to men of wealth. "Everybody sought membership in the church and nearly everybody was received. . . . As a result of the church sitting in power, we do not see Christianity transforming the world to its own ideal, but the world was dominating the church." (Hurlbut, The Story of Christian Church, p. 79.)

D. A NEW DESIGNATION. In the centuries immediately following the apostolic era the church in general was changing. Small groups of people here and there held to views that were generally thought to be heretical. (Some of these so-called heretics may have been closer to the truth than the recognized church.) Most people shunned any doctrine or any group that might have been classed with schism, heresy, or a sect. It was for this reason that the name "Catholic" (meaning "universal") came into use. "The combination 'the Catholic Church' . . . is found for the first time in the letter of St. Ignatius to the Smyrneans, written about the year 110." Here it was used in a non-technical sense. "... the technical use seems to have been clearly established by the beginning of the third century." (Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. III, p. 449.)

The foregoing quotation proves that the name Catholic was not in use in the apostolic age in the sense that it later came to be applied. As a large segment of Christ's church became apostate, that segment became known as the "Catholic Church." Hence the rise of Catholicism was gradual. We cannot point to a specific time and place and say here is where the Catholic Church started. Catholicism is apostate Christianity.

E. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PAPACY. We have already noted how that the eldership evolved into the priesthood and the diocesan bishop arose. Then came the Metropolitans, Archbishops, and Patriarchs. "By the third century the church was everywhere divided into dioceses, with bishops holding the reins of government in firm hands." (Hurlbut, p. 67.) When the "Patriarchs" first emerged, they were equal in authority, each having his own "province." After the Roman Empire was divided into the East and West, the Patriarchs of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria slowly gave way to the leadership of Constantinople. It was inevitable that one among the Patriarchs be "top man."

When the capital of the empire was at Rome, the Roman Patriarch was given certain honorary precedence. When Constantine moved the capital to Byzantium (later called Constantinople; now called Istanbul) the Patriarch there was placed in a more favorable position. The political struggles between East and West brought mounted tensions. The Bishop of Rome was not content to be "patriarch" on equality with the Bishop of Constantinople; he began asserting his authority over all the church. When the political capital was moved from Rome, the influence of the Roman bishop or "Pope," as he had come to be called, was increased. Europe was accustomed to looking to Rome for leadership, so the Pope began to take the place of the emperor.

From the beginning the Patriarch of Constantinople resented the arrogant claims of the Patriarch of Rome. The eastern churches stood with him in that resentment, but the western churches willingly bowed to Rome's claim of leadership. The struggle between East and West became religious as well as political.

In 476 A.D. the Western Empire fell under invasion of northern tribesmen. That paved the way for the Pope of Rome to extend his influence to political affairs. In brief, with the passing of
years the Western Church (Roman Catholic) dominated the state. But the Eastern Church (Orthodox) was dominated by the state. The Eastern Empire did not fall until 1453, though it was greatly weakened by the Crusades of the thirteenth century.

The organization of the apostate church was patterned after the organization of the Roman Empire. The development of the papacy was the ultimate step in that organization.

The Great Schism of Catholicism

The greatest schism ever to develop in the ranks of the Catholic Church was the division between East and West. Other separations have occurred, later to be repaired, but this one has lasted more than 900 years. Out of this break emerged two distinct Catholic bodies, each claiming to be the true church, and they remain separate until this day—the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Causes

Three principal factors may be mentioned as contributing to this great schism:

1. CULTURAL DIFFERENCES. At one time the Greek language was spoken throughout the whole Roman Empire. The Western part of the empire was just as much under Grecian influence as any other. Latin slowly replaced the Greek language in the West, but the East continued to be under the influence of Grecian thought.

2. POLITICAL DIFFERENCES. After Constantine moved his capital to Constantinople, Rome in the West and Constantinople in the East became political rivals. The political division was final and complete by 395 A.D., though in theory the empire was united after that. The division in the church followed pretty much the same geographical lines as the political division.

3. THEORETICAL DIFFERENCES. The church in the West, sometimes called the Latin Church, had its theologians, like Augustine, who developed a rather distinct system in many respects. Jerome completed the Latin Vulgate in 405. It became the accepted translation of the Bible in the West, but not in the East. The Eastern churches had their own theologians, and to some extent developed a different system of theology from the West. But the greatest point of theological difference was over the papacy. The Bishop of Rome slowly but firmly established himself as "Universal Bishop." Innocent I was Bishop of Rome from 402 to 417; he asserted the right of supremacy in the Western churches. Leo I (440-461) felt entitled to exercise authority over all the bishops in the Western Empire. Gregory I (590-604) pressed his claims to universal authority over the whole Catholic Church. Boniface III (607) was recognized by Phocas, the Eastern Emperor, as head of all the churches. It is difficult to tell which one of these men was the first pope in the sense of "Universal Bishop." (The title Pope means "Papa" or "Father" and was worn by many bishops long before anyone was recognized as "Universal Bishop.")

The Separation

In 857 Photius became Patriarch of Constantinople in place of Ignatius. The Pope (Nicholas I) declared the election illegal, whereupon Photius declared that Nicholas had no authority to interfere in the election of the Patriarch of Constantinople. Both Nicholas and Photius excommunicated each other! The Western Church still regards Photius as the "chief author of the great schism.
between the East and West." (The New Catholic Dictionary, p. 718.) The Eastern Church regards Photius as "the unmovable rock against which all the heavy waves of slavery and domination have been broken." (Mastrantonis, What Is the Eastern Orthodox Church? p. 39.)

The official separation did not occur until the year 1054, but the two churches had been virtually separate for a long time before. The Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches have since gone their separate ways. Each blames the other for the schism. Rome claims the Eastern Church was guilty of heresy. Constantinople claims the Western Church abolished the brotherly relation by its assertion of supremacy. Rome wants the Eastern Church to "re-acknowledge allegiance to the Pope." The Eastern Church refuses to accept the Pope's claim of supremacy "because for hundreds of years the undivided Church never considered such a claim." There the matter stands.

The Bold Assertion of Roman Catholicism

Infallibility of the Church is the tap-root error of Roman Catholicism. As long as a Catholic believes in the authority of the Church, he is not impressed by our contrasting what Catholicism teaches with what the Bible teaches. In talking with Roman Catholics one might as well start with the doctrine of infallibility—he'll necessarily get to it sooner or later.

Meaning of Infallibility

What do Catholics mean by infallibility of the Church? They do not mean that every member of the Church is guarded against error. They do not mean that their "clergymen" cannot err in teaching. They do not mean that the Pope is above sin.

"By the infallibility of the Catholic Church is meant that the Church, by the special assistance of the Holy Ghost, cannot err when it teaches or believes a doctrine of faith or morals. . . The Church teaches infallibly when it defines, through the Pope alone, as the teacher of all Christians, or through the Pope and the bishops, a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by all the faithful." (A Catechism of Christian Doctrine, p. 31.)

Importance of Infallibility

How much importance do Catholics attach to the doctrine of infallibility of the Church? John B. Harney says in a booklet bearing the imprimatur of Cardinal Spellman, speaking of papal authority and infallibility, "The clear recognition and sincere acceptance of these two truths is absolutely necessary for the welfare of humanity . . . Those truths are integral, essential, strongly emphasized elements of that Gospel. And belief in that Gospel is an imperative condition of eternal life. 'He that believeth not shall be condemned' (Mark xvi. 16)." (The Popes: Infallible Teachers, p. 32.)

Source of Infallibility

What is the basis of the Roman Catholic teaching on infallibility? Harney answers, "This doctrine does not rest on the wishes, the claims, the assurances of any man or group of men. Its sole source is Jesus Christ, of Whose words, promises, and commissions it is but the clear comprehension, and the faithful echo." (Ibid., p. 13.) If its sole source is Jesus Christ, then where do we learn of Christ?

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The Scriptures

The *Catechism* says, "We derive our historical knowledge of Jesus Christ, His life and teachings, and of the Church He established chiefly from the books of the Bible, which can be proved to be reliable historical records." (p. 104.)

If Christ is the sole source of the doctrine of infallibility (as defined by Roman Catholics) and we learn of Christ in the Scriptures, then the Scriptures should furnish proof of that infallibility. Catholics contend that the Bible does furnish such proof, and they offer the Bible as a witness to testify in behalf of papal infallibility. "Holy Scripture furnishes abundant proof: (1) That Christ established His Church; (2) That He appointed Peter as its first head; (3) That He gave Peter's successors the same authority He had given Peter; (4) That He guaranteed Peter and his successors against error in the preservation and propagation of His truth." (Why Millions Call Him "Holy Father", p. 1.)

Divine Tradition

But Catholics tell us there is another source of truth besides the Bible. "Not all truths revealed for us by God are found in the Bible; some are found only in Divine Tradition ... By Divine Tradition is meant the revealed truths taught by Christ and His apostles, which were given to the Church only by word of mouth and not through the Bible, though they were put in writing by the Fathers of the Church." (A *Catechism of Christian Doctrine*, p. 105.)

From these quotations we conclude that, according to Catholicism, the sole source of their doctrine of infallibility is Jesus Christ, but we learn of Christ from two sources, the Bible and Divine Tradition, hence these are the two witnesses to testify in behalf of papal infallibility.

Dependent Witnesses

Before we listen to the testimony of any witness, we are entitled to know something of the character of that witness. Let us allow Roman Catholics to tell us about their first witness—the Bible.

"Any student of reliable history should know that the Catholic Church gave the Bible to the world; that only on her authority the world knows that this book contains inspired writing . . ." (Father Smith Instructs Jackson, p. 34.) "Well, prove to me that the contents of this book are inspired in any other manner than on the authority of the Catholic Church. Now, the Catholic Church either was infallible when she said so, or she was not. If she was not, she might have been mistaken; and in such case you do not know whether the book contains the Word of God or not." (Ibid., p. 52.) Conway says, "... the inspired and canonical character of the books of the Bible could be known only by the divine authority and tradition of the Catholic Church." (The Question Box, p. 66.) Again, he writes, "... without the intervention of a divine, infallible teaching apostolate distinct from the Bible, we could never know with divine certainty what books constitute the inspired Scriptures, or whether the copies we possess to-day agree with the originals . . . The Bible itself is but a dead letter calling for a divine interpreter . . ." (p. 76.) Gibbons says the Catholic Church "was sole Guardian of the Scriptures for fifteen hundred years." (The *Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 68.)

Now look at it! The Catholics call forth the Bible as their first witness in behalf of the infallibility of the Church, then they tell us: (1) The Church gave us the Bible. (2) It is only on the
authority of the Catholic Church that we know the Bible is inspired. (3) Without the infallible Church we would not know which books belong in the Bible. (4) Were it not for the infallible voice of the Church we could not believe the Bible. (5) We need the infallible Church to tell us what the Bible means. (6) The Bible itself is but a dead letter. THE CHURCH CALLS THE BIBLE TO BE ITS FIRST WITNESS IN BEHALF OF INFALLIBILITY, BUT WITHOUT THAT INFALLIBILITY THE WITNESS IS DEAD! The infallibility of the Church depends on a source that in turn depends on the infallibility of the Church!

Rome's other witness for infallibility, Divine Tradition, is likewise made to depend on infallibility. Catholics do not profess to accept all that might be classed as tradition. "Remember that the Tradition which we believe contains the word of God is Divine Tradition, not human." (Father Smith Instructs Jackson, p. 58.) How do we know which tradition is human and which is divine? The infallible Church tells us! "When the Church studies the ancient monuments of her faith she casts over the past the reflection of her living and present thought and by some sympathy of the truth to-day with that of yesterday she succeeds in recognizing through the obscurities and inaccuracies of ancient formulas the portions of traditional truth, even when they are mixed with error . . . Thus are explained both her respect for the writings of the Fathers of the Church and her supreme independence towards those writings; she judges them more than she is judged by them." (Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 15, p. 10.)

We must depend, according to Roman Catholicism, on the infallible Church to judge which traditions are divine, and more than that, to tell us what they mean. "We can know the true meaning of the doctrines contained in the Bible and Divine Tradition from the Catholic Church, which has been authorized by Jesus Christ to explain His doctrines, and which is preserved from error in its teachings by the special assistance of the Holy Ghost." (A Catechism of Christian Doctrine, pp. 105-106.)

**Circle Reasoning**

Since Catholicism's only two witnesses in behalf of infallibility are made to depend on infallibility, the argument runs in a circle. It is as if a man should call two witnesses to testify in his behalf in court, then he announces that what they say is by his authority, no one can really understand what they say except he interpret it, and their testimony would be worthless without his standing behind it! Let a man call his own witnesses, tell them what to say, and tell the jury that he alone can really understand their testimony, and what couldn't he prove?

Conway attempts to answer the charge of circular reasoning when he says, "We allow the words of Christ and His apostles to speak for themselves, without appealing to the authority of the Church." (The Question Box, p. 80.) But just four pages earlier he told us, "The Bible itself is but a dead letter calling for a divine interpreter." How can a dead letter speak for itself? Catholics invariably meet themselves coming back when they undertake to prove their doctrine of infallibility. If the words of Christ and His apostles can speak for themselves, the Bible is not a dead letter. If it is a dead letter calling for a divine interpreter, it cannot speak for itself. Either position is fatal to Romanism. Conway says, "When two independent witnesses confirm each other's evidence, the argument for the truthfulness of both is not circular, but cumulative." (Ibid., p. 80.)
But Catholicism's witnesses are not independent! That is why we charge that the argument for papal infallibility runs in a circle. The moment they allow the Bible to stand as an independent witness they concede that it can speak for itself, and in that case it needs no interpreter.

Grand Assertion

The whole Catholic system rests on the doctrine of the infallibility of the Church. That basic doctrine is a bold, unfounded, unproved assertion. A system that stands on a false premise is a false system. We plead with Roman Catholics to honestly investigate the ground on which they stand.

Holy Scripture Does Not Teach the Primacy of Peter

In their zeal to find Biblical evidence that Peter was the first Pope, Roman Catholics use a number of passages to uphold the primacy of Peter. Let us consider some of the scriptures upon which arguments are based.

**Matt. 16:18**

**ARGUMENT:** Christ promised to build his church on "this rock." The rock is Peter because his name had been changed to *Petro* or *Cephas* meaning "rock." (John 1:42.) "Indeed, all respectable Protestant commentators have now abandoned, and even ridicule, the absurdity of applying the word *rock* to anyone but to Peter; as the sentence can bear no other construction, unless our Lord's good grammar and common sense are called in question." (Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, 110th ed., p. 82.)

**ANSWER:** The New Testament was originally written in Greek. The Greek reads, "Thou art PETROS (masculine) and upon this PETRA (feminine) I will build my church." Two distinct words are used. While it is true that Simon had been given the name PETROS (Peter), pointing to his great strength as a disciple of Christ, no promise was made to build the church on PETROS. In contrast to the kind of rock Peter was, Christ said, "Upon this PETRA I will build my church." Why did our Lord use a feminine pronoun if he intended to refer to Peter as the foundation? And who was it that said something about "our Lord's GOOD GRAMMAR"?

The context of Matt. 16:18 points to our Lord's divinity, which Peter had just acknowledged, as the *rock* upon which the church was to be erected. The Catholic Confraternity translation renders the passage, "... for flesh and blood has not revealed *THIS* to thee, but my Father in heaven. And I say to thee, *THOU* art Peter, and upon *THIS* rock I will build my Church ..." (Emphasis added.) Note the contrast between *THIS* and *THOU*. Flesh and blood had not revealed *THIS* (what had just been confessed) to Peter; *THOU* (the one being addressed) art Peter; but upon *THIS* (rock—referring to the deity of Jesus just confessed by Peter) I will build my church.

Catholics sometimes counter that Jesus spoke in Aramaic and that in that language no distinction was made between the terms referred to above. What is their proof? Nothing! No copies of Matthew written in Aramaic are in existence, and this whole quibble is a clever way of avoiding evidence. The book of Matthew was written in Greek as the author was moved by the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit made an important distinction.

Other New Testament passages show that Christ, not Peter, is the founda-
tion. Read 1 Cor. 3:11. Conway says, "We may dismiss this text as irrelevant . . ." (The Question Box, p. 149.) Hold it, Mr. Conway! This text is not irrelevant. It is most relevant to the question of identifying the foundation of the church. Whatever the foundation is in Matt. 16:18, that is the foundation in 1 Cor. 3:11. The rock of Matt. 16:18 is the foundation upon which the church rests, and 1 Cor. 3:11 plainly states that there is no foundation other than Christ.

Math 16:19

ARGUMENT: Christ gave Peter special authority in the term "keys." "If the proprietor of a house, on leaving it for the summer, says to a friend: 'Here are the keys of my house,' would not this simple declaration, without a word of explanation, convey the idea, 'I give you full control of my house; you may admit or exclude whom you please; you represent me in my absence?' Let us now apply this interpretation to our Redeemer's words. When He says to Peter: 'I will give to thee the keys,' etc., He evidently means: I will give the supreme authority over My Church, which is the citadel of faith, My earthly Jerusalem. Thou and thy successors shall by My visible representatives to the end of time. And be it remembered that to Peter alone, and to no other Apostle, were these solemn words addressed." (Gibbons, p. 82.)

ANSWER: "Keys" symbolizes authority but the extent of the authority must be specified. For example, if your neighbor left the keys to his house with you, would you take charge of his house? To what extent? Would you feel free to go into the house and use the furnishings? Would you feel liberty to invite all your friends to that house for a party? Would you have the right to sell some of the furniture? Would you have authority to paint the walls and build extra partitions? Frankly, if one of my neighbors left me the keys to his house and didn't tell me what to do with them, I would not know what to do. Does he want me to have them in case of fire? Does he want me to open the house and air it out once in a while? Does he want me to keep his house clean?

If our Lord had not specified the extent of authority symbolized in the "keys" given to Peter, how would Peter have known what to do? Our Master did give explanation when he added, "whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The "keys" given to Peter were for binding and loosing. That is all the term signifies. Since the other apostles were likewise given power to bind and loose (Matt. 18:18), Peter was given no more authority than the others. Everything symbolized by "keys" in Matt. 16:18 was given to all the apostles in Matt. 18:18!

And there is absolutely nothing in either passage about the apostles having successors.

Lk. 22:31, 32

ARGUMENT: Christ recognized Peter's primacy in praying especially for him and authorizing him to confirm his brethren. "It is worthy of note that Jesus prays only for Peter. And why for Peter in particular? Because on his shoulders was to rest the burden of the church. Our Lord prays for two things: First—That the faith of Peter and of his successors might not fail. Second—That Peter would confirm his brethren in the faith, 'in order,' as St. Leo says, 'that the strength given by Christ to Peter should descend on the Apostles.'" (Gibbons, p. 103.)
ANSWER: If Peter were given pre-eminence merely because Jesus prayed for him in this passage, then all the apostles were given the same power in John 17:14, 15. To say that Christ prayed for Peter because he was head of the church is assuming the very point to be proved. To say that Christ prayed for Peter only, then to say for Peter and his successors, is contradictory.

"Strengthen thy brethren" gives no peculiar power to Peter. Paul could strengthen disciples, too. (Acts 18:23.) If Peter's having the power to strengthen disciples and confirm them means he was Pope, that would make Paul a Pope by the same reasoning!

**John 21:15-17**

ARGUMENT: Christ made Peter the Chief Pastor and Ruler over all the flock when He said, "feed my lambs" and "feed my sheep." These words were addressed by our Lord to Peter after His resurrection. The whole sheepfold of Christ is confided to him, without any exception or limitation. Peter had jurisdiction not only over the lambs—the weak and tender portion of the flock—by which are understood the faithful; but also over the sheep, i.e., the Pastors themselves, who hold the same relations to their congregations that the sheep hold to the lambs, because they bring forth unto Jesus Christ, and nourish the spiritual lambs of the fold. To other Pastors a certain portion of the flock is assigned; to Peter the entire fold; for, never did Jesus say to any other Apostle or Bishop what He said to Peter: Feed My whole flock." (Gibbons, p. 83.)

ANSWER: Note first that Gibbons makes the "sheep" and the "lambs" represent two classes — Pastors and people — in order to argue that the universal church is here committed to Peter's care. But another Roman Catholic authority says, "Feed my lambs—shepherd my sheep—feed my sheep mean the same thing, for there is no reason for the supposition that sheep and lambs means pastors and people." (A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture, p. 1017.) Here is an example of Catholic unity!

The command to "feed my sheep" does not necessarily mean "ALL my sheep." If so, "the brethren" in 1 Tim. 4:6 necessarily means "ALL the brethren," and that would give primacy to Timothy! Every argument used to prove the primacy of Peter can be used to prove the same thing about others who were Peter's contemporaries.

If Peter had to take charge of the sheep in order to teach them, why didn't the apostles have to take charge of the nations in order to teach them? (Read Matt. 28:19, 20.) Is it not true that every person who teaches the church is feeding the flock?

Christ did command Peter to feed His sheep. Now, how did Peter do that? Was it as Pope or as one among several shepherds? Peter tells us himself in 1 Pet. 5. He fed sheep as a "fellow-presbyter," not as Chief among presbyters. He identifies Christ as the "chief Shepherd." (1 Pet. 5:4.) Anyone who teaches, warns, and exercises care for disciples is feeding sheep — feeding lambs. Paul did this just as much as Peter. (1 Cor. 3:2.) No primacy for Peter here!

**Gal. 1:18**

ARGUMENT: "After his conversion and three years' residence in Arabia, Paul came to Jerusalem 'to see Peter.' Here the Apostle of the Gentiles clearly designates Peter as the authorized head of the Apostles and of the early Christian Church." (Catholic Encyclopedia, XI, 747.)

ANSWER: The logic of this argument is, A visits B, therefore B is
superior to A. If Paul's going to see 
Peter in Gal. 1:18 is a clear designa-
tion of Peter's headship of the apostles, 
then his going to see James in Acts 
21:18 would constitute a clear designa-
tion of James' headship of the apostles. If not, why not?

Other Passages
Roman Catholics frequently call at-
tention to numerous verses in which 
Peter is given some sort of prominence, 
reasoning that all this adds up to prim-
acy. Such points are mentioned as 
Peter's standing out in the first twelve 
chapters of Acts, his name appearing 
first in the lists of the apostles, prayers 
being offered for him when he was in 
prison, etc.

All of this can be answered in one 
statement: PROMINENCE DOES 
NOT MEAN SUPERIORITY OF 
AUTHORITY. If it does, we could 
make out a better case for Paul than 
for Peter. Here are some things we 
could use in behalf of the primacy of 
Paul:

1. Paul was not married (1 Cor. 7:7; 
9:5), but Peter was. (Mk. 1:30, 1 Cor. 
9:5.)

2. The book of Acts devotes more 
Space to Paul than any other apostle 
or disciple.

3. Paul was in nowise inferior to any 
other apostle. (2 Cor. 11:5; 12:11.)

4. Paul is the only apostle who 
exercised discipline on another apostle. 
(Gal. 2:11-14.)

5. Paul had the care of all the 
churches. (2 Cor. 11:28.)

6. Paul wrote three-fourths of the 

7. Peter appealed to Paul's writings 
and referred to him as "our most dear 
brother." (2 Pet. 3:15, Catholic Bible.)

8. Paul was caught up into the third 
heaven. (2 Cor. 12:1-6.)

9. Paul is the only apostle mentioned 
in the Bible as having been in Rome. 
(Acts 28.)

10. Even the enemies of the church 
recognized Paul as "ringleader." (Acts 
24:5.)

11. Paul said, "I labored more abund-
antly than they all." (1 Cor. 15:10.)

12. Paul ordained presbyters (Acts 
14:23), called presbyters to him (Acts 
20:17), gave charge to preachers (2 
Tim. 4:1), sent out brethren (Phil. 
2:19,25; Titus 3:12), commanded 
others to come to him (Acts 17:15), 
excommunicated Hymenaeus and Alex-
ander (1 Tim. 1:20), confirmed the 
churches (Acts 15:41), and charged 
that his epistles be read in the churches. 
(Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27.)

A much better case could be prepared 
in defense of the primacy of Paul than 
has been presented for the primacy of 
Peter.

Eastern Orthodox Church
The Eastern Orthodox Church, some-
times called the "Greek Orthodox Cath-
olic Church," has much in common 
with the Roman Catholic Church. Both 
churches claim to have originated with 
Christ and the apostles, and each as-
serts itself to be the true church of 
Christ. Both recognize Holy Scripture 
and Sacred Tradition as authoritative, 
thereby denying the Bible to be the 
final and complete source of doctrine. 
(Read 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:3.)
The Eastern church rejects all papal 
decrees and denies the real development 
of doctrine as taught by the Roman 
Church. Both accept the seven sacra-
ments, though Orthodox Catholics prefer 
the term "mysteries" to "sacra-
ments." Both have Patriarchs, Arch-
bishops, Bishops, priests, and Deacons, 
distinguishing between "clergy" and 
"laity." Both have their catechisms.

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Both have elaborate rituals, though their ceremonies differ considerably.

The Orthodox Church consists of what we might term a loose federation of several self-governing communions, whereas the Roman Church is a tightly-knit centralized organization. The Orthodox Church is represented in Europe and Asia by four very ancient patriarchates: (1) Constantinople, having jurisdiction over Turkey; (2) Alexandria, over Egypt; (3) Antioch, over Syria, excluding Palestine, Galatia, and Mesopotamia; (4) Jerusalem, over Palestine. Each of these patriarchates is autonomous. While the Patriarch of Constantinople bears the title "Ecumenical Patriarch," he is considered "the first among equals," each patriarch being as sovereign in his own jurisdiction as the Pope of Rome is in the entire Western Church. In addition to these ancient patriarchates there are numerous autocephalous national churches, such as those of Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Romania, Russia, and Yugoslavia. (Mayer, F. E., *The Religious Bodies of America*, p. 19.)

**Orthodox Groups**

The two largest Orthodox communions in America are the Greek and Russian. The "Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America" is headed by an archbishop who has his "see" (seat of power) at New York. This group is in full communion with the Ecumenical Patriarch. The "Russian Orthodox Church in America" asserted its autonomy at its general council in Detroit in 1924. Other groups in the United States are the following: "The Albanian Orthodox Church in America," organized in 1908 and self-governing under its bishop whose see is Boston; "The Bulgarian Orthodox Church in America," under a metropolitan whose see is New York with jurisdiction over this hemisphere and Australia; "The Carpatho-Russian Church in America," consisting of a single diocese under a bishop at Johnstown, Pa.; "The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America," an independent diocese with Detroit as its see; "The Serbian Orthodox Church of America," whose first bishop was consecrated by the Patriarch of Serbia in 1926, see being New York; "The Syrian Antiopolish Orthodox Church in America," having an archbishop at New York over all North America; "The United Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States of America," resulting from a merger in 1950 of two Ukrainian Orthodox churches under a metropolitan who resides at South Brook, N. J. And there are still others.

**Differences With Roman Church**

The chief difference between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Church is in what each believes about church government. George Mastrantonis, Pastor of a Greek Orthodox Church, sums it up as follows:

"The Bishop of Rome, even today in the 20th century, insists that he has a primacy of jurisdiction over all Churches, including the Patriarchs of the East. He claims they should be subject to him since 'he is not only Bishop of Rome and the Patriarch of the West but also the Vicar of Christ on Earth, the successor of St. Peter, and the Supreme Pontiff. Pope Pius XII in 1955 called upon the 'Uniat' Church to use its utmost to bring the Orthodox Churches to the 'fold'. The Eastern Orthodox is told that it would not be necessary to change any of the teachings or customs of the Orthodox Church but to submit himself under the Pope's jurisdiction; that is, to lose every right of freedom and independence. In other words, unconditional surrender under the Pope's yoke is asked. But the principles of the demo-
### EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH

- No infallibility claimed for any individual
- Rejects immaculate conception of Mary
- Bodily assumption accepted by some as "pious tradition"
- Priests permitted to marry
- Forgiveness after death doubtful
- Baptism is immersion
- Communion of two elements for laymen
- Rejects primacy of Peter
- Lists ten commandments as generally listed
- Chrismation (confirmation) immediately following baptism
- Highest authority is "Conscience of Church"—a common consent
- Accepts dogmas and canons of seven Ecumenical Synods
- No central organization
- Holy Unction primarily to heal

### ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

- Infallibility claimed for the Pope
- Immaculate conception of Mary a dogma
- Bodily assumption a dogma to be accepted by all
- Priests required to be celibate
- Forgiveness after death possible in some cases
- Baptism by sprinkling, pouring or immersion
- Communion of one element for laymen
- Claims primacy for Peter
- Combines first two commandments; splits the tenth
- Confirmation following baptism but not necessarily immediately
- Highest authority is Bishop of Rome—Supreme Pontiff
- Accepts dogmas and canons of twenty-one Ecumenical Councils
- Strong central organization
- Extreme Unction primarily to prepare for death

Old Catholics

When the Roman Catholic Vatican Council of 1870 adopted the doctrine of papal infallibility, there were priests in Germany, Holland, and Switzerland who refused to accept that dogma. One of the most prominent among them was Bishop Dollinger. (See APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE, Vol. 3, p. 95 for additional information on Dollinger.) The priests were excommunicated for "hersesy" for their failure to submit to the...
new dogma. They began calling themselves "Old" Catholics to reflect their contention that they were holding to the ancient beliefs of Catholicism.

Generally speaking, Old Catholic churches reject the immaculate conception of Mary, papal infallibility, the compulsory celibacy of the priesthood, and all attempts at union of church and state. They accept the first seven general church councils and encourage Bible reading. Instead of Latin they use national languages in their worship. Though separate and to some extent in competition with each other, Old Catholic churches have a common doctrinal basis. They are very similar to Eastern Orthodox in doctrine. The Old Catholic movement in the United States includes the following churches:

**American Catholic Church**

This group was founded in Chicago by Joseph Vilatte, a French priest ordained by Old Catholics in Switzerland, who later returned to the Roman Catholic Church. The group has twenty-nine churches, an archbishop, two auxiliary bishops, and a titular bishop.

**The Am. Cath. Church**

(Archdiocese of N. Y.)

This Old Catholic church was organized in 1927 by James Frances Augustine Lashley, its present archbishop. Its orders are derived from the Syrian church of Antioch.

**North American Catholic Church**

This represents the largest Old Catholic body in the United States. It was received into union with the Eastern Orthodox Church by the Archbishop of Beirut in 1911 and by Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria in 1912.

**The Old Catholic Church in America**

For the most part, this group represents Old Catholic churches of Poland, Lithuania, France, Morocco, Central America, and Yugoslavia.

**The Reformed Cath. Church**

(Utrecht Confession)

Province of North America

This group is a branch of an international group of Reformed Catholic churches. (Mead, Frank S., *Handbook of Denominations in the United States*, p. 167.)
Keep the Commandments

By Joe Neil Clayton, Huntsville, Alabama

In modern society, "discipline" has become a dirty word, a thing to be avoided. Lawlessness is characteristic with the latest generations. But this trait is not limited to secular society: it is also prominent in the field of religion.

Modern theology has so mutilated the Word of God that it is made to appear merely the product of human invention. Consequently, men say that it is no more worthy of consideration than the latest treatise of Karl Barth or Reinhold Neibuhr, two widely-read theologians. However, modern theologians are not the only men who have tried to make destructive inroads upon the authority of God's Word. Evidently, from the language of the Apostle John in his three short "letters" in the New Testament, men of his day were making similar attempts to reduce the authority of revelation.

Three passages from these letters tell us how much we lose if we do not accept in full authority and obey the commandments of God.

First of all, we lose the kinship we must possess with Christ and God, if we do not "keep the commandments." John says, "...if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation (placating and atoning sacrifice) for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the whole world, and hereby we know that we know him. if we keep his commandments. He that saith. I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him: but whoso keepeth his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected. Hereby we know that we are in him: he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked." (1 John 2:1-6.)

From this passage, we learn that in order to have Jesus as an advocate, or to claim knowledge of him, or to be in him, we must keep commandments. The word keep does not mean twist, nor does it mean merely to give "lip-service," but it means to observe, perform and maintain performance of commandments. Any man desiring connection with Christ must first respect the commandments, then keep them.

Next, John says, "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not (or, if we are (See COMMANDMENTS . . . Page 136)"
"That Old Serpent, Called the Devil"
By Irvin Himmel, St. Louis, Missouri

Evil surrounds us in this world. The origin of evil is a subject around which much speculation centers. The Bible attributes evil to the Devil. It was through his influence that sin entered the world. Obviously, evil existed in the Devil before it was introduced into the world, so the question is often asked, "How did the Devil originate?"

Whence Cometh Satan?

The belief is fairly general that the Devil is a fallen angel. It is frequently explained that certain angels in the heavenly regions rebelled against God, and that the leader in this rebellion, being of higher rank than the others, upon being cast out, as were the others, played the role of an adversary, becoming identified as Satan, the Devil. This explanation seems as plausible as any that might be offered, yet some of the passages used to support it are taken out of context. Frankly, I can present no better explanation of Satan's origin, but I seriously doubt that this view is any more than a theory.

Lucifer Fallen

Isa. 14:12 says, "How art thou fallen from heaven, o Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" This passage is many times cited to show that Satan is called Lucifer and that he fell from heaven.

Isaiah spoke of Jerusalem being ruined and Judah falling. (3:8.) The Babylonians were God's instrument of judgment against Judah. The prophet went on to foretell the ultimate destruction of Babylon. After God had used Babylon to punish His own people, He in turn used others to punish the Babylonians. In chapters 13 and 14 the fall of Babylon (the land of the Chaldees) is portrayed. "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." (13: 19.) It is promised that God will have mercy on Israel who will take up this proverb "against the king of Babylon" . . . "How hath the oppressor ceased!" (14:1-4.) The pomp of Babylon's king is represented as "brought down to the grave." Then the king is portrayed as Lucifer ("day star"). He had stood out above all the kings. The Babylonian ruler had exalted himself as high as heaven, shining like the day star. But now he is cut down to the ground. The name Lucifer applies here, not to the Devil, but to the king of Babylon. Study the whole chapter carefully.

Adam Clarke remarks: "And although the context speaks explicitly concerning Nebuchadnezzar, yet this has been, I know not why, applied to the chief of the fallen angels, who is most incongruously denominated Lucifer, (the bringer of light!) an epithet as common to him as those of Satan and Devil. That the Holy Spirit by his prophets should call this arch-enemy of God and man the light-bringer, would be strange indeed. But the truth is, the text speaks nothing at all concerning Satan nor his jail, nor the occasion of that fall ... 0 how necessary it is to understand the literal meaning of Scripture, that preposterous comments
Satan as Lightning

Lk. 10:18 is another passage used in support of the idea that Satan was expelled from heaven. Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Some take this to mean that Jesus observed Satan's fall when He was with the Father long before He became incarnate.

The context of the verse points to Satan's overthrow rather than his origin. The seventy had just returned and were rejoicing that they had been empowered to cast out demons. When they said, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name," He replied, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Jesus viewed what the seventy did as a part of the overthrow of Satan. As lightning falls from heaven, Satan was falling under the power of Christ. The disciples were rejoicing as if they had gained a personal victory; Christ mentions the deeper design of their mission.

J. W. McGarvey adds: "This may be translated, 'I was beholding Satan fallen as lightning falls from heaven.' The sense indicates that the words refer to the victories over the unclean spirits just reported by the seventy. In their success Jesus saw Satan falling from lofty heights with the swiftness of lightning. The overthrow of Satan was then in progress . . ." (The Fourfold Gospel, p. 473.)

Dragon Cast Out

Still another passage used to prove that Satan was originally an angel but was cast out of heaven is Rev. 12:7-9. This scripture speaks of war in heaven between Michael and his angels on the one hand, and the Devil and his angels on the other. The Devil could not prevail, so "he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

In the book of Revelation, John was shown things "which must shortly come to pass." Whatever the scene of chapter 12 means, it was to John a thing of the future, not of the past. If Satan was cast out of heaven because he, as an angel, rebelled against God, it must have occurred long before the time of John. The events of Rev. 12, being future to John on Patmos, could not apply to the origin of the Devil.

It is most likely that the whole picture of this passage is a symbolic representation of the conflict between the righteous and the wicked, showing the triumph of the former over the latter. When the cause of truth triumphs, Satan is cast down, that is, he loses his power to prevail. This view accords with the rest of the chapter and the general design of the book as a whole.

Lifted Up With Pride

In listing the qualifications for an elder, Paul said, "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil." (1 Tim. 3:6.) This seems to be a fairly strong implication that the Devil fell into condemnation as a consequence of pride. Paul is warning that if a novice (new convert) is selected to be a bishop, he may be lifted up with pride and fall into the same condemnation as did the Devil. We know from 2 Pet. 2:4 and Jude 6 that there were angels which sinned by not keeping their proper habitation or principality. Pride may very well have caused them to leave their first estate, thus God cast them down. And if Satan was one of them (perhaps an archangel), that would explain the origin of evil. Yet, the most we can say along this line is that 1 Tim. 3:6 presents a fair inference that the being called the Devil fell into condemnation through pride.
Origin of Evil in the World

The Bible is definite and clear in presenting how sin entered into the world. Paul wrote that "by one man sin entered into the world." (Rom. 5:12.) Gen. 3 presents the full story. Evil entered into the world when Satan influenced man to disobey the will of God. Regardless of when and how evil entered the universe, and no matter what might be the case about Satan's beginning, sin began in this world when man was enticed to transgress God's law.

In the garden of Eden, Satan's influence was exerted in the form of the serpent. He appeared as one having something good to offer, but he lied. Jesus said, speaking of Satan, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8:44.)

Satan's Devices

The Devil uses many tools and instruments. His methods and devices are varied. His ways are subtle and cunning. He transforms himself into an angel of light. (2 Cor. 11:14.) His servants appear as ministers of righteousness, in many cases. He blinds the minds of people to keep out the gospel. (2 Cor. 4:4.) He quotes scripture, applying it to his own advantage. (Matt. 4:6.) He seeks to take advantage of us. (2 Cor. 2:11.) We cannot afford to be ignorant of his clever devices.

Our Way of Escape

It is much more important that we know how to be freed from the Devil's power and influence than that we know about his origin. The purpose of the Bible is to show us Satan's dreadful dominion, man's wretched state under his rule, and how provision has been made for us to be liberated.

To state it briefly, Christ is the answer to the problem of evil. On earth Christ demonstrated power over the Devil by resisting him and by casting out unclean spirits. He openly triumphed over death (a consequence of evil), thereby proving His ability to remove sin, the consequences of sin, and the Devil himself. He has given us the gospel to accomplish our salvation. (Rom. 1:16.) Here we find our only avenue of escape from Satan and the pollutions of evil.

Ultimately, the Devil will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and tormented day and night for ever and ever. (Rev. 20:10.) Today, he goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. (1 Pet. 5:8.) If we resist him, he will flee from us. (Jas. 3:7.) Our ability to resist is supplied by Christ. Therefore let us submit to God, obey Christ and follow a life of vigilance.
Conversion

In our Bibles "convert" is a translation of the word *epistrepho* which is defined, "to turn to...to cause to return...to bring back." (Thayer.) An analysis of the different places it appears in the New Testament shows it is used in three different ways.

In the first place it is used of the physical turning of the body. Matthew wrote of the Lord, "But Jesus turned him about *(epistrepho)*, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter be of good comfort." (Matt. 9:22) It is also used to describe the same action of John. (Rev. 1:12.) In Acts 15:36 it is used differently in describing Paul's desire to return and visit the churches established on his first journey into Asia Minor. This still is a physical act.

Secondly, *epistrepho* describes the return of a spirit to a physically dead body. When Jesus raised a young girl from the dead (Lk. 8:55) it is recorded that, "...her spirit came again *(epistrepho)*, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat." (Matt. 9:22) It is also used to describe the same action of John. (Rev. 1:12.) In Acts 15:36 it is used differently in describing Paul's desire to return and visit the churches established on his first journey into Asia Minor. This still is a physical act.

Thirdly, God chose this word to describe the spiritual change when one is drawn to Him through the gospel or away from Him by the World. Only the context can determine whether the "conversion" is unto righteousness or unrighteousness, since it is used both ways in the Bible.

Christ instructed Paul that his apostleship to the Gentiles was, "...to open their eyes, and to turn *(epistrepho)* them from darkness to light, and from the 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 26:18.) A "conversion" unto righteousness requires always twofold action that is simultaneous. There must be a "turning from and a turning to," as is stated in the above scripture. He also reminded the Thessalonians that they had, "...turned to *(epistrepho)* God from idols to serve the living and true God." (1 Thess. 1:9.) Upon this condition God has promised salvation.

Nevertheless, because of the nature of people and the kingdom, there are those not satisfied with the Way of the Lord and turn again unto the world. Their miserable state is described by Peter as a conversion also, but in these words: "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from *(epistrepho)* the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to *(epistrepho)* his own vomit again; and, the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Pet. 2:21, 22.)

This makes it evident that at all times each of us is converted to someone or something: therefore, we need an answer to the all important question. "How can I know when I am converted to God?" The two following scriptures answer this question with the use of the very word we have under consideration.

"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. . "
(Acts 3:19.) These words were said in Jerusalem by Peter to a multitude that was lost. A few days before this statement was made, Peter was faced by a multitude in the same condition. To them he said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38.) By a simple comparison of these two statements it is easy to see when God considers a man converted to Him. "Repentance" and "conversion" precede the "blotting out of sins"; also it is said that "repentance" and "baptism" precede the "forgiveness of sin." God therefore, does not consider a man converted (epistrophhei) until he is baptized. That does not mean that turning to God is all summed up in baptism, but it does teach that a man has not turned to God until he has been baptized. This is the act of faith on the part of man to the promises of God, and is the step that puts one into Christ. (Gal. 3:27.) Baptism alone is worthless without repentance, and repentance is worthless without baptism. But, put them together in the life of a sincere believer in Christ as God's Son, and the man is converted; he has the forgiveness of sins and has completed his turn from Satan unto God.

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**Universal Praise**

*By Bettie Morton Lipscombe, Jacksonville, Florida*

The valleys and the mountains, The word of life he gave us
The woodlands and the plains, That we may live thereby.
The rivers and the fountains, That he might justly save us,
The sunshine and the rains, He sent his Son to die.
The stars that shine above us, To die in shame and anguish,
Flowers that deck the sod To die a sacrifice:
Proclaim aloud the glory of our God To save us from the death that never
Praises, true adoration! dies.
Praises to the God above! Praise him for full salvation!
Praises through the whole creation Praise him, praise him for his Son!
Sound aloud his greatness and his love! Praise him, every tribe and nation!

And shall the voice of nature Praise him for victories he has won!
Thus glorify its King; Then train your youthful voices
And man, the noble creature, To hymn his praise above.
No grateful tribute bring? For he who here rejoices
Shall mercy stress his pathway In Jesus, dying love,
And all the senses please: Around his throne in glory
And man withhold the sacrifice of Shall all his love proclaim
praise? And sing "the Song of Moses and the
Praise him who lives forever! "Lamb"
Praise him every heart and voice. Praise the eternal Father!
Praise him, the glorious Giver! Praise him, the eternal Son!
Praise him in your sorrows and your Praise him, praise the three together!
joys! Father, Son and Spirit, Three in One!

(134)
An extremely popular doctrine is that sinners can receive forgiveness of sins through prayer. Some church buildings have "mourners' benches" where sinners are exhorted to "pray through" to salvation. Many people claim to have been saved there, or in their living rooms, while praying to God.

Perhaps some of these have been misled by a misunderstanding of Romans 10:13 which says, "Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." We generally think that all we have to do to "call upon the name of the Lord" is to pray to Him. But this is not true. Jesus said, "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 who is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21.) If a man can be saved simply by praying to God, then Jesus' statement here is false. "Calling on the name of the Lord" must, therefore, mean something other than prayer.

A clear understanding of how men are to "call on the name of the Lord" is gained by a careful study of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. The three accounts of his conversion are found in Acts 9:1-19; 22:6-16; 26:12-18. By reading all three accounts of his conversion you will get a clear understanding of what took place. The story is this: Saul was going to Damascus to persecute Christians. On the road, Jesus appeared to him in a bright light. Saul, terrified, and believing at last, asked what he must do. Jesus sent him to Damascus where he would be told all things which were appointed for him to do. In Damascus he was three days without food and water, and he was praying. Ananias, a Christian, was commanded by the Lord to go to Saul. He did so, and told him, among other things, to "arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16.)

Notice—Saul had been praying, but he was not saved by his prayers. Ananias commanded him to be baptized in order to have his sins washed away. It was in baptism that he was "calling on the name of the Lord." To be saved, you must call on the name of the Lord by being baptized. Saul's prayers did not save him, nor will yours. You must "purify your soul in your obedience to the truth." (1 Pet. 1:22.)

Prayer is the privilege of the Christian, the one who has already been saved from his past sins by obedience to the gospel and has been added to the church by the Lord. (Acts 2:47.) He is the one who can address God as "Father" and have assurance that his prayers are heard. Forgiveness of sins comes to the Christian in answer to prayer when he repents of those sins. (Acts 8:22.) But the alien sinner—the one who is not yet a Christian—does not have this privilege. He must call upon the name of the Lord by confessing his faith in Christ (Acts 8:37), and by being baptized. Then, and only then, does he have the right to pray to God with assurance that his prayers will be granted.

Friend, don't depend upon man's word. Search the scriptures. You will not find one command for an alien sinner to pray for forgiveness. Come to
the Lord the way he commands. Obey the gospel and be saved.

(COMMANDMENTS .... Continued)

not self-condemned in sin), we have boldness toward God; and whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight." (1 John 3:21-22.) Keeping the commandments, then, gives one the assurance that he is maintaining a pleasing and gracious relationship with his Father in heaven. His Father is permissive, granting spiritual requests, and satisfying the petitioner. By keeping commandments, one can approach God in boldness.

Finally, John tells us that we fulfill the high standard of the precept of love if we keep the commandments. Christ, in his earthly ministry, had taught in answer to the question, "What commandment is first of all?" that we must "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." (Mk. 12:30-31.) This means that all duties to God and to men are summed up in the commandments to love both God and man.

John implements this teaching by saying, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God: and whosoever loveth him that begat (that is, whoever loves God) loveth him also that is begotten of him (or, Christ). Hereby we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and do his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:1-3.)

While modern theologians and denominational preachers are advocating disregard of the idea of "commandment keeping" these passages remain intact, and serve as indictments of such teaching. Our choice is plain. We must keep the commandments of God, and enjoy the blessings of union with him. or we may succumb to the human error of indifference to those commandments, and suffer the loss of those blessings.

The question must be asked here, "What profit comes from a religion that does not require men to keep the commandments of God?" The answer, obviously, is "there is no profit!" for in such religion man could not rise above himself and human standards. Why, then, do men continue to play with religion of this sort, if it holds no spiritual profit?

We must realize that men do this in rebellion against God's will, or in ignorance of that will. In either case, they have no excuse, for God has ordained that our will be subject to his, and we can give him evidence of this only by "keeping the commandments."

Unsolicited Comments
From Our Readers

"I enjoy Apostolic Doctrine. It is the best paper of its kind in the country. Keep up the good work." — Grover Stevens, Louisville, Kentucky.

"Your fine magazine has benefitted my understanding of the Bible immensely." — Gavin du Toit, Republic of South Africa.

"You are doing a good job with the paper. Success to you!" — Franklin T. Puckett, Dyersburg, Tennessee.

"I still enjoy the 'Apostolic Doctrine' and hope it enjoys a long, active, and useful life." — Robert Crawley, Lexington, Kentucky.

"I like your paper very much. It fills a great need at the present time." — G. E. Lawrence, Hants, England.
The Pattern of the Church

There is nothing about the church of Christ which is the result of mere contingency. Nor is it the result of the trial and error processes of the wisdom of men through the centuries. In fact, it is in no wise the product of MAN'S WISDOM. It did not have its beginning as a primitive institution adequate to the spiritual needs of man at that time, but intended of God to be improved upon, perfected and changed by man through the years as his needs changed or as he perceived its inadequacies. Primitively, i.e., as it is revealed in the New Testament, the church is constitutively PERFECT; thoroughly adequate to the spiritual needs of man for all time, and to the accomplishment of ALL the purposes and ends for which it was established in the world by Christ both in its organization and in its recorded functioning.

Absolutely nothing God has ever done has been less than perfect. And the very fact that some men think they perceive certain imperfections in his works only proves that SOME MEN think they are smarter than God! That they are able to sit in judgment upon what he has said and done, correct the mistakes, and perfect the inadequacies of his divine institutions. All such is infidelity and disbelief, no matter what the professions of such men may be.

The works of the apostles under the afflatus of the Holy Spirit in the establishment, organization and function of the church, as that divine organism is placed before us in the book of Acts of the Apostles, is but the unimpeachable record of the transfer of the divine pattern of the church from the MIND, or wisdom of God, to actual existence in the world. The Bible teaches that the pattern, constitution, of the church existed in the mind of God from the foundation of the world; that it is the culmination of Divine Wisdom from all time, and that in its constitution and function it is the marvel and the astonishment of the seraphic hosts of heaven itself.

Paul says, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ: and to make all men see what is the dispensation, of the mystery which for AGES HATH BEEN HID IN GOD who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known THROUGH THE CHURCH the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. 3:8-11.)

It follows therefore, that man has no right to change the divine arrangement of the church in either its organization, its function, or its mission. To do so would constitute a presumptuous modification of the very work of God.
Moreover, since the church, like all other works of God is perfect in its arrangement, whatever change was made would but mar it, and would render it to that extent, imperfect.

Neither does man have any right to add another and different organization, i.e., institution, to do the work God has assigned to the church to do. Such an addition on the part of man presupposes the imperfection and inadequacy of the church, and the superiority of human wisdom over divine wisdom, in that man thinks he can devise and set in order an institution more adapted to the function assigned to the church than the church itself, as God designed it and set it in order!

Design and organization poses the problem of FUNCTION. And since God knew what he had in mind to be accomplished by the church, it follows therefore, that he both knew how and did create the church after the pattern best suited to the accomplishment of the mission he assigned to it. How absurd and ridiculous therefore, for MAN to think that he can design and form an institution that will better accomplish the ends God had in mind when he designed the CHURCH and set it in order FOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THOSE SAME ENDS!

The Course to Pursue to Be Infallibly Safe

By Benjamin Franklin (1812-1878)

Part 2

Why is it that such a large proportion of skeptics, when near the close of their lives, or are in the immediate expectation of death, renounce and repudiate their skepticism? Why does their foundation fail them at the very time when they need support more than at any former period? Why is it that, at the gate of death, so many of them renounce what had been upon their lips for years? Why is it that the most impudent scoffers, bold and ridiculing unbelievers, in such large proportions, when they approach the change of worlds, repudiate, frequently with their last words, the unbelief that had dwelt upon their lips for years? Why does the meekest believer in the kingdom of God press his faith to his heart the more closely as he approaches death?

Why is it that not a man who claimed to believe the Bible, while in life and health, ever denied it when he approached death? The answer is, that the divine testimony is sufficient for all confidence, worthy of all acceptance; and the human soul, at the hour of dissolution, when it needs support, leans on that which is infallibly safe, as also infallibly correct.

It matters not, then whether you can remove all the difficulties skeptics can produce, answer all their questions, or understand all their subtleties or not; they can point the honest believer to no danger to which he is exposed, no serious consequences that can result from his faith in any conceivable event. To believe the Bible, then, and practice its teaching is infallibly safe for this world and the world to come.

Does some man reply that this is no refutation of skepticism? It does not propose to be, but shows you what course to pursue to be infallibly safe.
whether you can refute skepticism or not, or even whether you can understand it. It has nothing in it good for you in any conceivable event, whether true or false, and it is useless to trouble your mind about it.

"Well," says a man, "I supposed you could dispose of the difficulty so far as skepticism is concerned; but I have a difficulty beyond that. My difficulty is among the preachers. For instance, one man says he can prove, clear as holy writ, that all mankind will be finally made holy and happy; quotes Scripture; talks of Latin, Greek, Hebrew; of lexicons, concordances, and exegesis. Another man argues that 'the wicked shall be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God.' I find that there are men of learning and talent on both sides; men of reading and books; and if they cannot settle the question, and show who is right, I do not see how I am ever to settle it."

There is not much difficulty in that case. If the man was here who says he can prove so clearly that all will be saved, it would be well to ask him a few questions, such as the following: Do you not admit that all mankind ought to believe the Bible and honestly obey its teaching? He would reply, Certainly I do. Is not the man who believes and obeys the teaching of the Bible as happy as any one in this life? He will answer, Certainly he is the happiest man in this world. Very well; will he not be happy in the world to come? Undoubtedly he will, he will readily reply, for all will be saved in the world to come. Then, being yourself the judge, all who believe the Bible, and obey its teaching, are infallibly safe for this world and that world to come. He will reply, Certainly they are. But what if a man does not happen to believe the Bible and obey its teaching in this life? He is not safe, and no argument can make him safe. He stands on doubtful ground, while he might stand on safe ground. He takes a risk, while he might have a certainty. He admits that all who believe and honestly obey the Bible are safe—infailibly safe. This nobody denies. All men can then, believe the Bible and obey its teaching, and thus be infailibly safe. Conceive the idea, if you can, that it could possibly turn out that all men will be saved, the man who believes the Bible and obeys its teaching will be saved. Those who believe the Bible and obey it are infailibly safe in any conceivable event.

"But," says a man, "one preacher says 'God unchangeably foreordains whatever comes to pass,' and that the number of the elect is so definite that it can neither be increased nor diminished; and another says, 'Christ died for all, and that all can come to Christ and be saved.' Now, if those preachers themselves can not settle this matter, and show who is right, how can I ever decide it?" Suppose you never should decide that matter in this life, might you not still be happy for this world and that which is to come? Explaining these intricate matters, while it may be some satisfaction to the curious, will never save one human being. It would have been transcendently better for mankind if such subtleties had never been started. Men have gotten much credit from the people for starting, handling, and seeming to know much of such matters, as men of learning, depth of thought, and wonderful genius: but they have, to an alarming extent, confused the world thereby and obstructed the way of salvation. They have involved millions of our race in utter confusion. But now, what is to be done? Is there any clear course that can be pursued to avoid all this? There certainly is; and that course is not to try to settle these intricate questions nor even thoroughly to understand.
them. It is much shorter and easier than all that. It is obvious that the apostles preached the Gospel to all wherever they went. They approved those who believed and obeyed, and disapproved those who did not believe. The grounds of condemnation are various. Not more than two need be mentioned now. Unbelief is a ground of condemnation: "He who believes not shall be condemned." Disobedience is mentioned as a ground of condemnation: "The Lord will take vengeance on those who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Gospel is, then, the only thing to be preached. It is to be preached to all nations for the obedience of faith. It is infallibly safe to preach the Gospel to all men, for all men to believe it and obey it. In any event this is safe. If it could possibly turn out that "God did unchangeably ordain whatever comes to pass," and that the number of "the elect is so definite that it can neither be increased nor diminished," those who believe the Gospel with all their heart, and obey it, are certainly as safe as any body. It can not possibly make the matter any worse for them to have believed and obeyed the Gospel in any event. They are infallibly safe in their belief and obedience. Even if Calvinism should prove true, and they should turn out non-elect, their condition is by no means worsened by their belief and obedience. This is infallibly safe for all men: to make the best possible effort to know and to do the will of God. If this is not safe, there is no safety. We must live and die in uncertainty. But it is safe—infalllibly safe. The strongest Calvinist admits that it is right to preach the Gospel to all. It is right for all to believe the Gospel. It is right for all to obey the Gospel. There is nobody, who believes that the Bible came from God, that does not admit that it is right to believe and obey its teaching. This is infallibly right, as all admit. That which is infallibly right is, beyond all doubt, infallibly safe.

There are many things which Christians of the first century never saw. They never saw a parish priest, a diocesan bishop, an archbishop, a cardinal, a monk, a friar, an abbot, a nun, nor a pope. They never saw a papal bull, a congregation of rites, a sacred penitentiary, a requiem mass, low mass, nor high mass. They never saw a missal, a novena, holy water, prayers to Mary, nor a catechism. Above all, they never saw a Roman Catholic!

Early Christians never saw an infant baptized, a saint canonized, a heretic burned, a cemetery blessed, nor a pope elected. They never saw a parochial school, a monastery, a convent, nor a cathedral. They never saw a church-sponsored dance, a church fish fry, nor a church-related distillery. They never saw a Jesuit, a Dominican, a Franciscan, nor a Hospitaller. They never saw a group of their leaders putting pressure on Caesar to pay for the schooling of their children.

But it is misleading and prejudicial to say the early Christians never saw the Bible. The Old Testament was completed long before the establishment of Christianity. In fact, that part of the Bible was translated from Hebrew into Greek in the third century B.C. The early Christians had access to the Old Testament, and used those scriptures for encouragement, hope and instruction. The Bereans carefully com-
pared what Paul and Silas taught with what the scriptures taught. (Acts 17:11.) Timothy had been taught that part of the Bible (Old Testament scriptures) from his childhood. (2 Tim. 3:15.) The apostles frequently quoted from those scriptures and the people were not without means of checking their quotations. Jesus reprimanded the Jews for not accepting the testimony of the scriptures concerning His Messiaship. (John 5:39.)

While it is true that the New Testament was not completed until about the end of the first century, many of the early Christians saw portions of it before its completion. For example, Paul's letter to the Colossians (a part of the New Testament) was to be circulated among the neighboring Laodiceans (Col. 4:17); the first Thessalonian letter was to be read "unto all the holy brethren"; and, what John saw on Patmos was to be written in a book and sent unto the churches at Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. (Rev. 1:11.) These examples show that it was customary for the books of the New Testament to be given more than local circulation as soon as they were written. By the time Peter wrote his second epistle he complained that false teachers were wresting the epistles of Paul, "as they do also the other scriptures." (2 Pet. 3:16.) Here is evidence that Paul's letters were in circulation, not merely among the faithful, but among wicked men. Though printing was not invented until centuries later, many copies of the scriptures were made in the early years of Christianity. By the second century the New Testament was being translated into other languages. Uninspired writers of the latter part of the first century and of the second century frequently quote from New Testament books and call them "scripture."

A "Knights of Columbus" ad says, "Jesus, as all Christians know, wrote nothing. Nor did He instruct the Apostles to do so." The latter part of this statement is an outright falsehood. Jesus DID instruct the apostles to write. The apostle John said he heard a great voice saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia." (Rev. 1:11.) The One speaking identified himself as follows: "I am he that liveth, and was dead: and, behold, I am alive and for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." (This is definitely Jesus Christ; compare Rev. 1:18 and 2:18.) Christ says to John, "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter ..." (Rev. 1:19.) Catholics say Christ never instructed the apostles to write; the apostle John says Jesus told him to write. Which do you believe? And the apostle Paul said, "If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things I am writing to you are the Lord's commandments. If anyone ignores this, he shall be ignored." (1 Cor. 14:37,38, Catholic translation.)

We are not saying that anyone saw the Bible in its completed form before its completion. We are not saying the early Christians saw the Bible in printed form as we now have it. But we are saying that they had access to, and made proper use of, the sections of the Bible that were completed and in circulation at that time. We venture to say many of the first-century Christians saw and read and believed more Bible than many twentieth-century Catholics!

Catholic propaganda is calculated to deceive. The fact that Christ's church was established before the Bible was completed does not prove that the church has authority over the Bible.
The home was instituted before the church, but it would not be correct to conclude that the home has authority over the church. God's inspired word is our sole authority. That word was in inspired men at first; they left us the inspired book. That book owes its authority, not to the church, but the Holy Spirit. The church did not inspire the writers; the Spirit of God did it. As long as there were inspired men, it was not necessary that one have the inspired book to know the will of God; however, with the passing of the inspired men, the inspired book became the sole infallible guide. Hence, even if the early Christians had not seen any part of the Bible, that would prove nothing as to the position of the Bible today. —I.H.

Baptist Baptism Versus Bible Baptism

By Earl Fly, Orlando, Florida

"BAPTISM IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION. . ." So says the Standard Manual for Baptist Churches by Hiscox, page 20. This statement denies and contradicts many plain Bible passages. Notice the following contrast between Bible doctrine and Baptist doctrine.

**Bible** — "He that believeth and IS baptized shall be saved. . ." (Mk. 16:16.)

**Baptist** — "He that believeth and is NOT baptized shall be saved." (Acts 2:38.)

**Bible**—"Repent and be baptized . . . for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38.)

**Baptist**—"Remission of sins comes before baptism."

**Bible**—We are "baptized into Jesus Christ." (Rom. 6:3.)

**Baptist**—We are not baptized into Jesus Christ, for one is in Christ before baptism.

**Bible**—"Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins. . ." (Acts 22:16.)

**Baptist**—"Baptism has nothing to do with sins being washed away. One must arise, have his sins washed away first, then be baptized."

**Bible**—". . .Baptism doth also now save us. . ." (1 Pet. 3:21.)

**Baptist**—". . .Baptism doth also not save us. . ."

When men are pressed hard with scriptural arguments proving that baptism IS essential to salvation, they usually reply: "Why, we strongly believe in baptism. We baptize all our converts. So if baptism is essential to salvation, why we've been baptized." This sounds good to the untaught, soothes their troubled minds and keeps them satisfied to remain Baptists—until they learn more truth. THE ONLY baptism Baptists believe in and practice is Baptist baptism. THERE IS A GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BAPTIST BAPTISM AND BIBLE BAPTISM! Enough to render Baptist baptism unscriptural, null and void — completely unacceptable to God. Since our eternal salvation depends on having scriptural baptism we urge our Baptist friends to give earnest consideration to this important matter. Notice the differences between Baptist baptism and Bible baptism.

"But," someone asks, "Suppose I honestly thought I was being baptized right when I received Baptist baptism.
BIBLE BAPTISM
1. Puts one into Christ. (Rom. 6:3.)
2. Puts one into death of Christ where his blood was shed. (Rom. 6:3.)
3. Is for the remission of sins. (Acts 2:38.)
4. Is to have sins washed away. (Acts 22:16.)
5. Is to save. (1 Pet. 3:21; Mk. 16:16.)
6: Is a part of the new birth. (John 3:5.)
7. Confesses faith in Christ before baptism. (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10.)
8. Is commanded by God. (Acts 10:48.)
9. Performed by authority of Christ. (Matt. 28:18, 19.)

BAPTIST BAPTISM
1. Puts one into Baptist church.
2. Does NOT put one into Christ's death.
3. Is NOT for the remission of sins.
4. Is NOT to have sins washed away.
5. Is NOT to save.
7. Confesses "God for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins" before baptism.
8. Is NOT commanded by God.

and did it to obey God—will I have to be baptized again?" Most certainly so! In Acts 19:1-5 we read of some honest, sincere, conscientious religious people who thought they had obeyed God in their baptism. But they had to be baptized again! Why? Because their baptism was not right; it was different from the baptism commanded by Christ. They had John's baptism which had been superseded by Christ's baptism. Notice that though these were responsible people who honestly thought they had obeyed God in receiving John's baptism (which had once been commanded by God), their baptism was not acceptable to God. They had not been baptized by the Authority of Christ. They did not believe the right thing. They believed on the Lord who should come but Christ had already come.

This proves that one cannot be scripturally baptized if it's done by the Wrong authority, such as the Baptist church. It also proves that one must believe the right thing before baptism. Thus one who believes he is already saved and so confesses before baptism (as required by Baptists) cannot possibly be scripturally baptized.

Scriptural baptism must have the right subject (a believer who has repented and confessed faith in Christ—Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:37), the right element (water—Acts 8:36), the right action or mode (a burial—Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12), the right design or purpose (for the remission of sins—Acts 2:38), and the right authority (the authority of Christ—Matt. 28:18, 19). Candidates for Baptist baptism believe the wrong thing (that they are already saved), confess the wrong thing, are baptized for the wrong purpose (to get into the Baptist church) by the wrong authority. Even Baptists admit that baptism is invalidated by the wrong subject (babies) and/or the wrong mode.

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(sprinkling or pouring), and/or the wrong authority!

When those of Acts 19 learned that they had not been scripturally baptized they immediately were baptized again to fulfill the requirements for scriptural baptism. This is what all must do who have received Baptist baptism or be eternally lost.

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Is "Faith Only" a "Wholesome Doctrine"?

By Frank Jamerson, Louisville, Kentucky

The doctrine of "salvation by faith only" is believed by many people. To show this fact and to identify some who teach it, we will quote from four manuals or creed books.

"We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deserving. Wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only, is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of comfort." (The Book of Common Prayer, Used by the Protestant Episcopal Church, page 605, article XI; also in The Discipline of the Methodist Church, 1940 edition, page 41, article IX.)

"We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any work of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the redeemer's blood." (McConnell's Manual for Baptist Churches, page 18; also in The Standard Manual for Baptist Churches, by Edward T. Hiscox, page 62.)

Notice the statements, "faith only," and "solely through faith." Actually, none of these groups really believes the doctrine! The words "solely" and "only" would exclude everything else including repentance and baptism for the remission of sins. Many would like to exclude baptism, but most will agree that repentance is necessary. But if salvation is "solely through faith" or by "faith only," repentance is not necessary and a person is saved before and without repentance. Furthermore, the doctrine that all works are excluded will also exclude faith. Jesus said that faith or believing is a work. (Jno. 6:29.) Works of human merit and works of obedience are necessary. (Heb. 5:8,9.)

The Bible teaches salvation by faith, but it does not teach salvation by faith only. Following are five facts that contradict the doctrine of salvation by "faith only."

1. Faith only is dead faith. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. But wilt thou know O vain man, that faith without works is dead? . . .Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by
faith only. For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead." (James 2:17, 20, 24, 26.)

2. Faith gives one the right to become a son of God. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (Jno. 1:12.) There is a difference between having "power to become" a son of God and being a son of God. One cannot become a son of God without faith, but one does not become a son of God at the point of faith, or by "faith only."

3. Faith only excludes repentance, confession and baptism. If a person is saved at the moment he believes, or by faith only, he is saved without repenting of his sins (Lk. 13:3; Acts 2:38), without confessing the name of Christ (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10), or being baptized for the remission of sins. (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38.)

4. If a person is saved at the point of faith, he is saved in his sins. Saul believed in Jesus when he was on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-9), but three days later he was told to "arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16.) Saul was not saved on the road to Damascus, when he believed in Christ. He was saved when his sins were washed away when he obeyed what God told him to do—"arise and be baptized."

5. If a man is saved by faith only, he is saved without being in Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27.) An individual believes before he is baptized (Mk. 16:16), but he is not in Christ until he is baptized.

A sinner is saved, becomes a child of God, when he believes in Christ and obeys the teaching of Christ. (Heb. 5:8,9; Rom. 6:3-5, 17, 18.) The doctrine of "salvation by faith only" is NOT wholesome and gives FALSE comfort.

"After the Due Order"

An outstanding event in the reign of David was the return of the ark of God. For many years the ark had been in the house of Abinadab. The people had not enquired at it in the days of Saul. David did a commendable thing in arousing interest in returning the sacred vessel to its proper place.

Returning the ark was a good work, but good works must be performed in accordance with God's instructions. God specified that the ark was to be moved on the shoulders of the sons of Kohath. He gave wagons and oxen unto the sons of Gershon and Merari for certain uses, "But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none: because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was that they should bear upon their shoulders." (Num. 7:9.)

God's plan was ignored when the ark was taken from Abinadab's house. A new cart was prepared, the ark placed in it, and Uzzah and Ahio drove the cart. Perhaps the Israelites thought it would be good to use a cart because the Philistines had returned the ark on a cart. At any rate, they substituted the new cart for God's order.

When we leave the divine arrangement on one point, that calls for disobedience further along. When the Israelites came to Nachon's threshing-floor the oxen stumbled, Uzzah put forth his hand to hold the ark, thus violating the due order again, for God had said, "But they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die." (Num. 4:15.) Uzzah was smitten dead right there. (2 Sam. 6:1-7; 1 Chron. 13:1-10.) If the ark had been moved as God directed, it would have been carried by the staves fastened into the rings by the sides of the ark (Ex. 25:14) and there
would have been no occasion for its toppling from a cart.

God's smiting Uzzah dead put fear into the heart of David. The ark was taken to the house of Obed-edom and it was three months before the sacred vessel was placed in the tent prepared for it in Jerusalem. When it was finally brought to Jerusalem, David was careful to move it according to the divine order. David admitted that God made a breach upon them at first, "for that we sought him not after the due order." (1 Chron. 15:13.)

This Old Testament narrative illustrates the need for our seeking God today "after the due order." If God has spoken at all on a given subject, whatever he has revealed is "the due order." If we substitute our own plans, we are not following the "due order." We may be engaged in a good work, but if we are not doing as God instructs, our work is all in vain.

The "due order" of the New Testament calls for the local church as the only organization needed to accomplish the work God has given Christians to do. (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 11:30.) Missionary and benevolent societies are new carts. Those who do the Lord's work by the "new cart" organizations rather than the church itself, are not seeking God after the due order.

The New Testament tells Christians to sing. (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18,19.) "Playing" is a "new cart" kind of music. Mechanical music in worship is not after the due order.

The apostolic order or worship includes breaking of bread "upon the first day of the week." (Acts 20:7.) Monthly or quarterly communion is not the "due order." Breaking bread on Thursday or Tuesday is not the "due order."

Let us not act so that God will make a breach upon us. Let us follow the due order. —I. H.

Redemption

A portrait of our salvation is painted in the New Testament by three words: Redemption, Reconciliation, and Propitiation. These approach the central truth of our total salvation from three different positions and therefore what one word may lack in presenting the full picture, the others supplement and enlarge upon. These show our blighted condition before our restoration to God's favor and our quickened state afterwards. Foremost, they show the means by which this change was accomplished.

In the several words translated "redemption," there are but two separate thoughts. One, expressed in exagorazo, is defined, "to buy out. . .especially of purchasing a slave with a view to his freedom." The other, apolutrosis, means literally, "a releasing for a ransom." (Vine.) Trench emphasizes the importance of the ransom in this connection and says it "is not recall from captivity merely . . . but recall of captives from captivity through the payment of a ransom for them . . ." (Synonyms of the New Testament.)

The first term is distinguished from the second in its emphasis upon the action of the purchaser and his willing-
ness to provide the ransom. The second word refers to the deliverer of the captive and his willingness to grant the freedom. In our picture, since both refer to God, it was necessary for Him to provide a suitable price which He would be willing to accept and at the same time be just in receiving. Hebrews 9 sums up the answer. The writer emphasizes that it was not through the blood of animals, but Christ, "through his own blood...obtained eternal redemption." (Verse 12.) "For this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." (Verse 15.) By summation, it is easily seen that our redemption was obtained by the ransom price of death and the shed blood of Christ. The price was supreme but it was paid and by it freedom from the Law of Moses (Gal. 4:5), a defiled conscience (Heb. 9:12-13), a vain manner of life through traditions (I Pet. 1:18), and all iniquity (Titus 2:14) is available to all who desire it. Our redemption is obtained when through faith we die to our sins and, "...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." (Rom. 6:4.)

Through use of the word Redemption God has painted us as slaves and bond servants of sin, but through the price of death He broke those chains which made us the servants of sin and gave us freedom, a cessation from bondage.

With the blood of His Son, God wrote for the world His Emancipation Proclamation. This He called redemption

(In a later issue, "Reconciliation.")
Jehovah's Witnesses teach that only 144,000 of the saved will go to heaven. The rest, according to them, will spend eternity upon the earth. They base their doctrine upon some highly symbolic passages in the book of Revelation. Their false teaching on this subject makes it necessary for them to deny and twist many plain passages of scripture which teach that all the saved have the same hope, the hope of heaven. (See Eph. 4:4 and I Pet. 1:3-4.) They have fallen into the "ignorant and unstedfast" class described by Peter in II Pet. 3:15-16—"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, where-in are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unstedfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

No Distinction Between Christians

A wonderful thing about the religion of Christ, and one of the things which distinguishes it from Judaism, is that there is no distinction between Christians. Jew and Gentile alike must submit to the same commands in order to be saved. Bond or free, all Christians must follow the same rule. Male or female, every faithful follower of Christ has the same hope of eternity in heaven. Listen to Galatians 3:26-29: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise."

If the Jehovah's Witnesses are right, however, God would be a respecter of persons. For no other reason than that the 144,000 number had been filled up, thousands of faithful Christians would be denied the hope of eternal life in Heaven! How much more contradictory to plain Bible teaching can a false doctrine be? ! !

Revelation 7:1-10

In an article in the July issue of Apostolic Doctrine, we examined Revelation 14:1-4, where the 144,000 figure is mentioned. The only other passage in the Bible which mentions this number is Revelation 7:1-10. This is how it reads in the American Standard Version: "After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree. And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel: Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Gad..."
Of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Naphthalite twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand. After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb."

Notice here the two classes of people—the 144,000 from 12 of the 13 tribes of Israel and the great multitude whom no man could number from all the tribes and nations of the earth. The 144,000 were sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel, and the great multitude stood before the throne, and before the Lamb. It will take quite a bit of twisting for a man to make two different rewards for these two different groups of people; and when he does, he has let himself in for further difficulties.

The Number 144,000 a Figurative Number

First of all, the 144,000 are all Israelites—fleshly Jews—and 12,000 came from each tribe. However, there were 13 tribes of Israel. In this list the tribe of Dan is left out. Taking this passage literally, there will be only 144,000 Jews saved, exactly 12,000 from each tribe, except that there will be none saved from the tribe of Dan. Now in the first place this doesn't sound reasonable. In the second place, it is not what the passage teaches.

Remember that when you study the book of Revelation, you are studying a book which abounds in symbols, types, and figurative language. It would be just as reasonable to believe that there will be literal horses riding from the four corners of the earth as it is to believe that the number 144,000 is literally the number of all who are going to Heaven. In the book of Revelation, and throughout the Bible, certain numbers have a symbolic meaning.

The number 12 is one of these. 12 is a perfect number, being formed by multiplying 4 and 3. The square of 12 simply intensifies this perfection, and its being multiplied by 1000 shows a complete, large, but indefinite number. The fact that the tribe of Dan is left out shows that the figures are so arranged that they will convey this meaning—not a literal meaning that 144,000 and only 144,000 Jews will go to Heaven, but that a large, perfect, but indefinite number of the Jews shall be sealed.

The Great Multitude

What about the rest of the people in this passage? Verse 9 talks about a great multitude which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. Certainly they are standing in Heaven, because that is where the throne and the Lamb (Jesus) are. This numberless multitude are every bit as much in Heaven as the 144,000.

One cannot be positive as to what this language means, since it is figurative and symbolic. But there are at least two possibilities which seem most reasonable to me. Some think that this numberless multitude is but another description of the 144,000. They would take the 144,000 to be spiritual Israel—the church—and that this further description shows it is numberless. Others, and I incline to this view, think (See 144,000....................... Pa?e 159)
Another man says: "I have a difficulty beyond all you have mentioned, that I know not how to settle. It is this: One preacher maintains that baptism is essential to salvation; another, equally learned, denies it. If learned preachers, on each side of this question, can not settle it, and thus end the controversy, how am I to decide who is right?" That may appear puzzling to a man at first thought, but a little reflection will open a clear path to any man who is simply looking for a safe course to pursue. There is much in shaping questions. The teacher who desires to keep the public mind clear, states all his positions and questions with a view to that end. The man who desires to mystify, confuse and perplex the public mind, frames his question and takes his position with a view to that end. Now, why should any one discuss the question whether baptism is essential to salvation? Why not discuss the question whether prayer, the communion, or the contribution is essential to salvation? Why discuss the question whether any thing the Lord has commanded is essential? All such questions have their foundation in disloyalty to the divine government. There is a much easier method of investigation than this, and more satisfactory. There is no need of starting the question whether baptism is essential to salvation.

Do you inquire for the simpler and easier way of arriving at something satisfactory and safe? Then start with the inquiry, Is baptism a commandment of God? All parties of note respond, Certainly it is a commandment. About this there is no dispute of importance. It being admitted that baptism is a commandment of God, the next question is simply this: Is it right to obey the commandment of God? Here, again, there is but one answer. All admit that it is right. Then, the man who is a proper subject, and is baptized, obeys a commandment of God, and does right. Is there any man of any note that does not admit that? So far he is safe. But what if he is not baptized? He, then, does not obey this commandment, and is not thus far safe. But there is no necessity for this. If all agree, as all of any consequence do, that baptism is a commandment of God, it is infallibly right to be baptized; and, if infallibly right, beyond all doubt infallibly safe. This is all a conscientious man wants. He only wants to know what is right and safe, and this is right and infallibly safe.

"But many good people have died without being baptized, and must I believe that they will not be saved, simply because they were not baptized?" says one. No, sir; that is taking unnecessary trouble on yourself. No one says you must believe that. Belief is not negative, but affirmative. Belief is not that something will not be, but that something is, or will be. In certain cases you may lack the evidence that persons will be saved. Where you have not the evidence to believe, you do not believe. It is not the same not to have the evidence to prove that a person will be saved, as to have the evidence to prove that one will be lost. It is not the same not to believe a person will be saved, and believe one will be lost.
In the one case you tell what you do not believe. But the matter in hand is not to settle the question of being saved or lost, so as to say with certainty precisely who or how many will be saved or lost. The matter is to determine what is right and how to do it. The commandment is baptism, and it is right to obey it. Those who are baptized do right. Those who do right are safe.

But since so much is said about baptism being essential, it may be well to inquire how essential the popular churches in this country make it? The Episcopal Church makes it so essential, that you can not get into it without what it calls baptism. If the salvation of the Lord is in that church, no one can get that salvation without what the church calls baptism; for, without that, no one can get into the church at all. The same is true of the Presbyterian Church. No one can get into it at all without what it calls baptism. The same is true of the Methodist Church. There is no "full membership," as the Methodist friends phrase it, without what the church calls baptism. The same is true of the Baptist Church. There is no salvation for any body in the Baptist Church without baptism, for there is no admittance without it—no membership. If the salvation of the Lord is in the Baptist Church, no person can obtain it without baptism. Whatever salvation the Baptist Church has for the human race, or blessings of any sort, baptism is essential to all there is in it. No man can obtain present or future salvation, or any blessing from the Lord in the Baptist Church, without baptism. Baptism is essential to Baptist communion, and to every thing else in the Baptist Church.

How essential, then, is baptism in the kingdom of God! It is so essential that you can not get into the Kingdom of God without it. "Except a man be born of the water, and of the spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God," says the great Head of the Church. The kingdom of God, here, is the Church. "He who believes, and is immersed, shall be saved," says the Lord. "Repent, and be immersed, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." "Go, therefore, and disciple all nations, immersing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you." "We are all baptized into one body." Such is a sample of the expressions used in Scripture, sometimes connecting baptism with remission of sins; in one instance with induction "into one body," one "into the kingdom," "into Christ," "into one body," and "for the remission of sins," in substance, all amount to the same. If a man is in the name, he is in Christ, in the body, has the remission of sins, is in the Church, in the kingdom. So, if a man is in the kingdom, he is in the body, in Christ, in the name, and is pardoned.

There is not an intimation of any man being in the Church, in the time of the apostles, without baptism. Where is the ground, then, for disputing about baptism being essential? If it is the initiatory rite of the new institution, none were in the first Church without it and none are admitted into any church now, of any note, without what the church calls baptism, where is the ground for the dispute about its being essential? There is no ground for this skeptical dispute. All admit that it is a commandment of God, and that it is right to obey the commandment. Then, let all do what they admit to be right, and they will be safe so far as baptism is concerned.
The Word "Church" Used in Two Ways

The word "church" is used two ways in the New Testament. And in our study of the church, its mission, its organization, its function, etc. it is imperatively necessary that this be kept well in mind. Otherwise we can never learn correctly many of the most fundamental truths concerning the church.

The word "church" is first used by our Saviour in what we may call a GENERAL sense. That is, he speaks of the universal church, the church throughout the whole world. This is the sense in which he speaks of the church when he said to his disciples in the plains of Caesarea Philippi, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it." The word "church" is used in the New Testament in what we may call a LOCAL sense. That is, to represent the church in a particular place, or geographical location. For an instance, the writer tells us of the visit of Paul to Corinth and says, "Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." (Acts 18:8.) Later Paul wrote the same people a letter and addressed them as, "The church of God at Corinth." (I Cor. 1:1.) Paul here localizes his use of the word church with the phrase "at Corinth." Other instances of both these uses of the word "church" could be given from the New Testament, but this is sufficient to establish the point that the word is so used.

The importance of this affirmation lies in this fundamental and meaningful fact; a fact which has bearing not only upon the IDENTITY of the church of Christ in these days of many churches, but one which also limits and describes the FUNCTION of the church as well.

We affirm emphatically, that the church GENERAL, that is, the church when thought of in any sense larger than a LOCAL CONGREGATION, has no VISIBLE ORGANIZATION on the earth of any kind. The ONLY organization of the church known to the New Testament belongs strictly TO THE LOCAL CHURCH.

It follows therefore, with the certainty of day and night, that God did not intend the church GENERAL, the universal church, to function in any way. Had God laid upon the church GENERAL the obligation of FUNCTION, he would have given it an organization through which to become functional or operative.

God did provide the LOCAL church with organization. The LOCAL church therefore, and the LOCAL church ONLY, is the functional unit of collective action among God's people.

SOUND DOCTRINE by C. R. Nichol and R. L. Whiteside. Lesson outlines suitable for classes or personal study. 5 volumes. Complete set, $10.00
Beginning with chapter twelve of the book of Revelation, a great sign is seen in heaven by the writer. John tells us that he saw a radiant woman with a manchild in conflict with a blood-red dragon with seven heads. After attempts to destroy the manchild fail, the dragon leads forces of evil against the children of the woman. These forces are in coalition with Satan, ready to assist the devil in his war against God's people. The first is a beast of the sea (Rev. 13:1), and the second is a beast of the earth. (Rev. 13:11.) The beast of the earth exercises authority of the sea beast by making multitudes worship the first beast, by performing signs, by making an image of the sea beast, and by placing a MARK upon the right hand and forehead of the rich and poor, the small and the great. (Rev. 13:12-16.)

The MARK, commonly called the mark of the beast, has been the topic of much discussion. While the interpretations of the "mark" vary, depending upon the school of thought one takes toward the book of Revelation, this writing will concern itself with the position taken by the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. This group has an interpretation that is distinctive, possessing a peculiar appeal to many people. Interwoven throughout their interpretation of this figure of speech is a mixture of Millennialism and Judaism.

Statement of Their Position

The subsequent summary of the position taken by the Adventist Church in regards to the "mark of the beast" is taken from the following three copyrighted publications: *The Great Controversy*, by Ellen G. White; *The Prophecies of Daniel and Revelation*, by Uriah Smith; *Beyond Tomorrow*, a modern version of Seventh-Day Adventism (copyrighted 1963) by Raymond Cottrell. From these publications the following facts are gleaned: (1) Adventists hold that the sea beast of Revelation 13:1 is the CATHOLIC CHURCH, and that the land beast of Revelation 13:11 is the UNITED STATES. (*The Great Controversy*, p. 445.) Further, the United States will become a foremost agent of the papacy, and will resort to papal methods in order to enforce homage to Catholicism. (2) Their position further states that the Papacy changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and that they make this a sign or mark of allegiance. (*Beyond Tomorrow*, p. 283.) (3) Then it is argued that the observance of Sunday as a day of worship is an act of "homage" to the authority of the Papacy, hence devotion to Catholicism. (Ibid.) (4) The conclusion that the observance of Sunday IS THE MARK OF THE BEAST is the position taken by Adventists. (*The Prophecies of Daniel and Revelation*, p. 614-615.) (5) They then maintain that ALL WHO WORSHIP ON SUNDAY have received the mark of the beast! From the *Advent Review*, Vol. 1, no. 2, I lift the following statement: "the Sunday Sabbath is purely a child of the Papacy. It is the mark of the beast." The same charge is hurled against "Sundaykeep-

(6) After drawing the conclusion stated that IF WE ARE IGNORANT OF THE FACTS, and do not INTEND to worship the Papacy, then this constitutes sincere, but mistaken conviction, and such have not the "mark". In other words, if you are ignorant of God's Will in this respect, you are safe! Ignorance is not only an excuse, it is a blessing! I am wondering why they bother to teach those who are unlearned in this respect, any different? If what they say is true, Sundaykeepers would be better off in their ignorance!

**Refutation of This Position**

The heart and the core of the Adventist position lies in the claim that the Pope changed God's law of Sabbath to Sunday. A careful investigation of the facts of history on this matter shows the fallacy of such reasoning. They are either ignorant of the true facts, or intentionally wrest the Scriptures to fit their theory. The Catholic Church DID NOT change the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday! Even the claim of Catholicism concerning a change in this respect is not in the sense that the Adventists claim. The slogan of Seventh-Day Adventist, "Constantine Sunday Law" of the third century, is a ridiculous misrepresentation of facts. The keeping of Sunday as a day of worship was practiced by Christians long before Constantine was ever heard of, and long, long before the first Pope was crowned universal bishop. (Boniface III, 606 A.D.) One will notice that in quoting the Catholics who speak of the "Church" substituting Sunday for the Sabbath, Adventists do not tell us WHEN the Catholic Church claimed to have made this change. At this point they misrepresent the authority they quote! Here is the truth of the matter: Catholics do not claim a third century change of Sunday for the Sabbath. Their claim is that the Catholic Church is and was the "Holy Catholic Church," i.e., it is the New Testament Church founded by Christ on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 33. They then reason that the Apostles and all other Christians in the first century were Catholics. Peter was the first universal bishop, and whatever was done by the early Christians was done by the authority of the Catholic Church. They claim to have given us the Bible, and the observance of Sunday instead of Saturday (which began in the days of the Apostles) was by the Authority of the Apostles, HENCE THE CHURCH. This is what the Catholic Church means when it speaks of changing the Sabbath by the "authority of the Church." The Adventist Church is hard pressed to uphold a theory when they twist these facts.

In order to confirm the facts given above, I offer the following quotes: "the obligation (to observe the sabbath, JT) was to cease with the abrogation of Jewish worship, of which it formed a part; and it, therefore, was no longer obligatory after the death of Christ. . ." (The Catechism of the Council of Trent.) John Meiler, Rector of St. John's Church, Healdsburg, California, in a letter to D. M. Carpenter, comments on Adventists' claims by saying, "such assertions are wholly unfounded. Catholics claim no such thing; but maintain that the Apostles themselves established the observance of Sunday and that we received it by tradition from them. The Councils and Popes afterwards simply confirmed the keeping of the day received from the Apostles."

What do the Scriptures teach about, the Sabbath and the Lord's Day? Concerning the keeping of Sabbath as a day of worship, observance was not given until the giving of the Law of Moses. (Neb. 9:13-14.) It was given as a sign
between the Jewish nation and God. (Ex. 31:17; Ezek. 20:12, 20.) This covenant was to be taken away (Jer. 31:13), and this was done at the cross of Christ. (II Cor. 3:6-14; Col. 2:14.) The law was superseded by a new covenant (Heb. 8:6-13; 10:9) and as a result, Christians are not to have the Sabbath bound upon them. (Col. 2:16.)

Concerning the first day, many events are associated with it. Such events as the resurrection of Jesus (Mk. 16:1-9), the establishment of the Church (Acts 2:1-47), etc. Please observe that the early disciples worshipped "steadfastly" (Acts 2:42), or with regularity. Acts 20:7 establishes the fact that the disciples worshipped each Lord's Day, hence as regular as the day rolled around. The very construction of the verse, "upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread," demands this interpretation. Further, Christians were commanded to partake of the Lord's Supper WHEN they assembled (I Cor. 11:17-21, 33), and they assembled on THE FIRST DAY of the week. (I Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7.) Therefore, the Lord's Day assembly was by the authority of the Lord. We must remember that the commands of the Apostle Paul were the commands of Christ. (I Cor. 14:37.) Christians are to meet, not on Saturday, but on the Lord's Day. (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2.)

Historians confirm this conclusion that first-century Christians observed the first day of the week as a day of worship. From the "Epistles of Barnabas," (A.D. 120) we learn: "wherefore also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day, also, on which Jesus rose from the dead" (Ch. 15—"eighth day" referred to the first day, JT.) Bardesanes of Edessa, Syria, (A.D. 180) says, "on one day, the first day of the week, we assemble ourselves together."

Tertullian of Africa (A. D. 200) says, "We solemnize the day after Saturday in contradiction to those who call this day their sabbath." (Apology, Ch. 16.)

If space permitted, we could quote many other authorities to show that the observance of the Lord's Day was by Apostolic authority long before Constantine and the complete formation of the Catholic Church, or rise of the Papacy.

Conclusion

This evidence shows that the Papacy did not change the day of worship, the Lord changed it! This fact alone breaks down the claim of the Adventists. Those today who worship on the Lord's Day, do not do so by the authority of the Papacy any more than did the first-century Christians, and they do not do so as an act of devotion to the Catholic Church. Furthermore, the United States does not enforce the observance of Sunday. If the United States is the "earth" beast of Rev. 13:11, then the Adventists are obligated to demonstrate with conclusive evidence that the receiving of the "mark, of the beast" is a specific act which the United States is caused to be done! Will they meet the challenge? The Sundaykeepers (if they could be called such) need not doubt their worship on the Lord's Day. This does not constitute the "mark of the beast." The foundation of Seventh-Day Adventism crumbles. Their position on the "mark of the beast" is false. Study your Bibles, do not be deceived by the champion Scripture-breakers.

In my next article I will identify the Beasts of Revelation 13 and discuss the true meaning of the "mark of the beast.

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"Lutherans Believe ... In Infant Baptism"

By Carl Vernon, San Antonio, Texas

Introduction
1. From an article in the Southside Reporter, San Antonio, Texas, April, 1961. The brief article consisting of seven short paragraphs.
2. Our purpose: to review each paragraph in the interest of finding the truth!

Discussion
1. "And Lutherans believe it should be practiced because it reveals and emphasizes the grace of God." (Paragraph 1.)
   a. Reveal: "to make known; to disclose."
   b. Emphasize: "stress; to declare forcibly."
   c. Grace: "The divine favor of God."
   d. Titus 2:11 says: "The grace of God that bringeth salvation ..."
   e. John 1:17: "... grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."
      (1) How have this grace? Answer: Obey Christ!
      (2) Is infant capable of obeying Christ?
   f. Matters of salvation are revealed in the Word.
      (1) Titus 2:11: "... teaching us..."
      (2) Where is infant baptism taught?
   g. To assert does not mean that it is so!
2. "When a child is baptized in infancy, it comes at a time when the child isn't even aware of the act, at a time when the child can't appreciate the act, at a time when the child can't even say thank you." (Paragraph 2.)
   a. When a child is baptized!
      (1) It is without either command, example or necessary inference.
      (2) Same can be said of sprinkling.
   b. Note the condition of the child's mind at the time:
      (1) "... isn't aware of the act."
      (2) "... can't appreciate the act."
      (3) "... can't even say thank you."
         ... Simply not a believer!
         ... See Mark 16:16.
         ... Newspaper said: "Kennedy's baby (son) snoozed through baptism."
         ... BUT WHAT ABOUT AN ADULT — COULD HE SNOOZE WHILE BEING BAPTIZED?
3. "So, God comes to the child, at this point, and makes that child His child, giving to that child the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ." (Paragraph 3.)
   a. This paragraph summarized: In baptism,
      (1) God comes to the child.
      (2) Makes that child His child.
      (3) Gives the child the promise of eternal life through Christ.
   b. Conclusions reached: Before baptism,
      (1) God not with the child — Matt. 18:3.

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(3) Infant has no promise — Ezek. 18:20.
(4) If God does not come "at this point," the child is doomed! PREPOSTEROUS!

4. "Later in life the child becomes aware of faith in Jesus Christ. As he looks back, he realizes that something or someone led him to this act of faith." (Paragraph 4.)
   a. This paragraph restated:
      (1) Years after infancy, belief in Jesus Christ comes.
      (2) It is then that he realizes that infant baptism has had a part in bringing him to this ability to believe.
   b. Conclusions reached:
      (1) The admission that faith is not associated with the infant — true!
      (2) The admission to the belief that salvation is by baptism, with faith to follow!
      ... The New Testament teaches the reverse order of this; FAITH to precede BAPTISM! (Mark 16:16.)

5. "Finally, he comes to the conclusion that it all began back there in baptism when God came to him, asking for nothing." (Paragraph 5.)
   a. Paragraph 4 states that "someone led him to this act of faith."
   b. Paragraph 5 states that "God came to him, asking for nothing."
   c. "That it all began back there in baptism ... ."
   ... Where does God teach that ANYTHING begins with infant baptism?

6. "Thus, God comes before it's convenient for the receiver to do anything in return—and that's indicative of the person of God, who is always doing that sort of thing." (Paragraph 6.)
   a. Is it true that "God comes before it's convenient for the receiver to do anything in return"???
      (2) Apostles to "teach," "baptize," and then teach the ones baptized "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19,20.)
      (3) Converts in Acts 2 began immediately to worship: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42.) ... Could an infant do this?
   b. "Lutherans believe that God approaches man before man can ever approach God. Infant baptism is but one significant expression of this wooing of God." (Paragraph 7.)
   a. If "God approaches man before man can ever approach God" — then, 
      (1) God is reconciled to man —... but see 2 Cor. 5:20: "... we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."
      (2) Why did Christ implore. "COME unto me all ye that labor"? (Matt. 11:28.)
      (3) Why preach the gospel? (Rom. 1:16.)
      (4) What happens if the infant is not subjected to baptism? Will God still approach him?
   b. This "wooing" is predicated upon the faith of parents, guardians, etc., and not upon the faith of the candidate. But notice these
passages: John 6:44, 45; 8:24; Heb. 11:6; Acts 8:36-38.

Conclusion
1. You will notice that not one passage of scripture is so much as hinted at for justification of the practice.
2. Scripture can be cited for anything that is scriptural!
3. Just another teaching from false prophets. (1 John 4:1.)
4. Beware! (2 John 9-11.)

(144,000.........................Continued)

that the 144,000 intends to convey that a large number of the Jews will be converted, and that the numberless multitude shows that a much greater multitude of Gentiles will be saved. Either interpretation does no violence to the scriptures. Either is possible and will accord with the text here and other passages in the Bible.

Why, then, pay attention to someone who puts a far-fetched interpretation on this passage which actually contradicts other plain passages in the New Testament? Why listen to one who arbitrarily takes a position which will deny you of your heavenly hope, hopelessly contradict the fact that there is one hope, and violate good common sense as well—when there are other, much more plausible explanations, which do no violence to the scriptures and do not take away your heavenly hope?

A Curse Upon Those Who Change the Gospel

A terrible condemnation rests upon the one who changes the gospel of Christ. Paul wrote in Galatians 1:8-9, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again,

If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema." The word "anathema" means "cursed." "Let him be damned," is what Paul is saying. And this curse of God rests upon all those who carelessly or viciously preach another gospel from the one divinely revealed in the New Testament.

It is my prayer that you will investigate when a strange teaching reaches your ears. Get your Bible down, run the chain references, look up the words in a concordance to find the other passages on the same subject, check carefully the setting of each passage, and so study as to know and follow the truth.

Again I say, with Paul the apostle, "There is one hope." And with Peter, "It is laid up in heaven" for the faithful.

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Is One as Good as Another?

Many people say that they believe that one church is just as good as another. If you do not agree with them, you are considered narrow minded and bigoted. We would like to suggest three possibilities for those who believe this doctrine. If it is true, one of three things must be true.

1. Christ is the builder of all churches. If Christ is the builder of all churches, one is as good as another. This would include the churches that do not believe that Christ is the Son of God, those who do not believe that He was born of a virgin and do not believe that He arose from the dead. If He built those churches, why not also those that do not believe in Jehovah? All "religious" organizations were built by Christ.

2. Christ built no church. If Christ built no church, all are of human origin and one is as good as another. If this is true, Christ did not tell the truth when He said, "I will build my church." (Matt. 16:18.)

3. Churches built by men are as good as the one built by Christ. If Christ built one church as He said He would do, but one church is as good as another, then the ones built by men are as good as the one built by Christ! Which of these three things do you believe?

We agree that one church is as good as another when churches started and governed by men are under consideration, but we do not believe that any church of human origin is as good as the one built and governed by Christ. You can identify the church built by Christ by examining the pattern—the New Testament. (Heb. 8:5.) Find the church that follows the pattern and you have found the one that is better than any church of human origin.

—F. Jamerson

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Purifying the Soul

By Irvin Himmel, St. Louis, Missouri

The Bible teaches that every man has a soul. It is more profitable to save that soul than, to gain the whole world. Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26.)

In infancy we are pure. Jesus said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 19:14.) Again, to the disciples He said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18:3.) The souls of little children are without contamination. But as we grow older, due to the evil influences of the world and the temptations set before us by Satan, we find our souls becoming corrupted. That which defiles the soul is sin.

The need for purification extends as far as the reach of sin. No responsible person is beyond the possibility of sin, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23.) Sin produces death — separation from God. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18:20.) "For the wages of sin is death . . ." (Rom. 6:23.) 

Every soul that is polluted by sin needs to be purified, cleansed, purged, or freed from guilt and blemish. Nothing that defiles will enter heaven (Rev. 21:27), hence without purification we cannot go to heaven. Let us study a section of scripture which shows how the soul is purified.

In 1 Pet. 1:22-25 an apostle addresses people who have purified their souls and reminds them of how it was done. Turn in your Bible to this place, read the text carefully, then note the following.

Those Purified Did Something

"Seeing ye have purified your souls . . ." Although many passages attribute salvation to God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the word, there is the human side that men sometimes overlook. Truly, God saves us (2 Tim. 1:9), and salvation is his gift through Jesus Christ. (Rom. 6:23.) Without the blood of Christ we could not be purified (Heb. 9:22), and we are washed, sanctified, and justified by the Spirit. (1
Cor. 6:11.) We would not for a moment leave the impression that man can devise his own plan or save himself independently of God. Without the mercy and grace of the loving heavenly Father there would be no purification for any of us.

But that which is richly and freely provided by God's grace and made possible through Christ's death must be accepted by man. The action required in order that man might accept and appropriate to himself what is provided by grace is the human part. On Pentecost, the day the apostles preached to the multitudes in Jerusalem, Peter outlined man's part. The people asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter did not tell them there was nothing they could do. He told them to, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins . . ." (Acts 2:37-40.) Verse 41 indicates that those who gladly received Peter's preaching did something—they were baptized.

James recognized that sinners can and must do something to be purified. He said, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." (James 4:8.) Man must obey God to be purified. Christ saves those who obey him. (Heb. 5:8,9.)

They Obeyed the Truth
"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth . . ." What they did was to obey. What they obeyed was the truth. Our Lord plainly identified the truth that sanctifies and cleanses in his prayer in John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32.) The apostles were promised that they would be guided into ALL truth. (John 16:13.) When men obey the word preached by the apostles, they obey the truth, thereby purifying their souls.

Those who hear the word but do not obey it are deceiving themselves. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." (James 1:22.) The man who hears but does not obey is like one who looks into a mirror, sees dirt on his face, but goes his way without washing. Or, to use the Lord's own illustration, he is like the man who builds his house on the sand. (Matt. 7:21-27.) The truth will set men free from sin, but not unless they are willing to receive that truth into their hearts and submit to it in their actions.

"Through the Spirit"
"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit . . ." It is impossible to separate the Spirit from the truth in the work of purifying the soul, for it was through the Spirit that the truth was revealed. Moreover, it is the influence of the Spirit, operating through the word, which moves men to obey. To resist the truth is to resist the Spirit. Those who resisted the preaching of Stephen were charged with resisting the Spirit. (Acts 7:51.) Those who are led by the word of God are led by the Holy Spirit. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14.)

After we have obeyed the truth, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8:16.) Note that the Spirit bears witness WITH, not TO, our spirit. The Spirit of God bears witness by means of the truth. (John 15:25, 26; 16:13.) The Spirit reveals in that truth what I am to do to become a
child of God. If I have done that, my own spirit can testify that I have. Thus, God's Spirit bears witness WITH my own spirit to the effect that I am a child of God.

**They Were Born Again**

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit . . . Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." These people who had purified their souls in obeying the truth were born again. Consider the figure of a birth for a moment.

A birth is always preceded by a begetting. This is true in the spiritual realm. We are begotten by the Spirit when the seed (God's word) enters the heart and begins to produce new life. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth," James said. (1:18.)

There is no such thing as one's being born again until the gospel is preached to that person. "Being born again (begotten again, ASV) . . . by the word of God . . . And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He explained this being "born again" as follows: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:3,5.) Since the Spirit is the begetter, his part is clear; but what about water? What does water have to do with this new birth?

Note the parallel passages of scripture on the chart. A careful comparison of these scriptures will show that baptism is the only act involving water that has bearing upon one's entering the kingdom. It is in baptism that Christ's blood washes away our sins. (Acts 22:16.) One is not born of water until he is buried in baptism and raised to newness of life. (Rom. 6:3-5.) Baptism is a command that must be obeyed. (Acts 10:48.)

**Need for Keeping Pure**

All who have purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, being born again, must daily strive to keep themselves pure. "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (1 John 3:3.) To keep ourselves pure we must walk in the light (1 John 1:7), confess our sins (1 John 1:9), and approach God through Jesus who is our advocate. (1 John 2:2.)

No man can be purified by doing nothing. No one can be purified by obeying the doctrines and commandments of men. Have you obeyed the truth? Have you thus been to Jesus for his cleansing power? "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. 1:18.)

| JOHN 3:5 Born of Water .................. And of the Spirit................ Enter Kingdom |
| TITUS 3:5 Washing of Regeneration .Renewing of Holy Spirit .................. Saved |
| EPH. 5:26 Washing of Water .......... By the Word.........................Cleansed |
| 1 PET. 1:22 Obeyed ..................Through the Spirit .................. Purified |
| COL. 2:12, 13 Buried in Baptism ..........Operation of God .................. Forgiven |
| 1 COR. 12:13 Baptized ...............By one Spirit.................Enter one Body |

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Are They Few That Are Saved?
By Paul K. Williams, Indianapolis, Indiana

"And he went on his way through cities and villages, teaching, and journeying on unto Jerusalem. And one said unto him, Lord, are they few that are saved? And He said unto them, Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." (Lk. 13:22-24.) "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it." (Mt. 7:13-14.)

This is an unpleasant truth, isn't it? We naturally recoil from the thought that the majority of people shall fail of finding and pursuing the way which leads to eternal life. But if the Bible is true, and there is no sense in quoting it unless it is, only a few are going to make it to Heaven.

Why Only a Few?
There are millions of religious people—yet only a few will be saved. Jesus tells us why in these verses. There are two characteristics of the way which leads to Heaven that make it sure that only a few will enter. The gate is narrow and the way is difficult.

The Narrow Gate
In this age when to be broadminded is a virtue extolled on every hand, for Jesus to proclaim that the gate is narrow seems out of place. But if you stop to think, you will realize that all truth is narrow. The religion of God is no different from any other realm of truth. Two plus two always makes four in the realm of mathematics. The rule of truth is too narrow to allow an answer of five or three. Just so in the revealed religion of Christ there is only one entrance into the one way which leads to Heaven. This is logical if "truth" is to characterize the religion of God. When men say, "You believe your way, I'll believe mine—and we'll both get to heaven," they are removing religion from the realm of truth.

But the fact is, "truth" was the word Jesus used to describe that which will make men free. He said in John 8:32, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." It is the truth, not error, which saves. And truth is narrow.

Just as surely as we all don't believe alike, some of us are believing that
which is not the truth. We can't all be believing the truth when we believe the opposite. The Lord knew this would be so, and He inspired the apostle Paul to write in 2 Thess. 2:10-12, "with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the TRUTH, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Not only did the Lord know there would be many who would believe a lie in religion, He said that those who do will be damned.

The gate to the way which leads to Heaven is as narrow as truth itself. There is no room for human opinion or for tampering in any way with the will of God. When Jesus says, as He does in Mk. 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," the gate to salvation is exactly that narrow. One who tries to broaden that gate to admit all of those who believe but are not baptized is trying the impossible. He is, instead, leading men to go the broad way which leads to destruction.

When the apostle Peter said in Acts 2:38, "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit," he was preaching the narrow truth one must obey to enter the way which leads to eternal life. One who refuses to repent, or is not baptized for the remission of his sins, has failed to obey the truth; and if he thinks he can be saved without obeying those commands, he is believing a lie which will ultimately damn his soul.

**The Difficult Way**

Jesus also said, however, that we must strive to enter in by the narrow door. It is not enough to have a degree of love for the truth. There must be an active searching of the scriptures and an active effort to bring our lives into conformity to God's word before we will be able to enter that door. One who has some love of the truth, but doesn't have enough to search the scriptures and work to conform his life to that Word, will not enter. No man will get to Heaven by accident. You must take upon yourself the task of searching the Scriptures, proving the spirit, and following the truth.

Then, after one has found and entered the way, he will find it a difficult way. We are not used to the old-fashioned word "straitened." This means "difficult, hard." The Christian life is not an easy way. It involves sacrifice and work and devotion — a daily self-denial and willing shouldering of the cross. There is a very real possibility that even after we become Christians we may fall from that way and perish eternally. Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 10:12, "Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

It is easy to see, therefore, why Jesus said there will be few saved. People do not look for the difficult, narrow way. Most want an easy religion and shop for a church as they shop for a car — looking for the one which pleases them most. Stopping to examine the Bible carefully and then looking for the church which pleases God is too difficult and time-consuming. So the majority today, like the majority in every age, are missing the narrow gate and the difficult way. They are taking the broad way which leads to destruction.

Friend, let Jesus' words be a warning to you. Do not follow the majority to Hell. Study the Bible. Work to understand...
Meditations From Revelation—

The Beasts and the "Mark" of Revelation Thirteen

By Jimmy Tuten, Jr., St. Louis, Missouri

In the last issue of Apostolic Doctrine, I stated the position of the Adventists on the "mark of the beast" (Rev. 13:16), documenting this position from their own publications. Briefly restated, their teaching is that the sea beast of Revelation thirteen is the Catholic Church; that the land beast is the United States; that the papacy changed the worship from the Sabbath to Sunday; that two worship on Sunday is the "mark of the beast," and that all who worship on Sunday have received this mark.

Laboring under the conviction that their position is predicated upon the assumption that the Catholic Church changed the day of worship in the third century (thereby calling this "The Constantine Sunday Law"), I sought to show the error of this basic point in their system, thus, refuting the position itself. By reviewing this former article, one will note my reference to the fact that the Catholic Church does not claim to have changed the day of worship in the third century. Adventists misrepresent the Catholic Church in this respect. It was also noted that the Scriptures teach that the "first day" (Sunday) of the week is the day of worship for the New Testament dispensation, and that this is by the authority of Christ. I also illustrated from the Scriptures that the Sabbath was abolished and went out with the Law of Moses. (Col. 2:14,16.) Appeal was made to Catholic and non-Catholic authorities to sustain what the New Testament teaches, though the New Testament needs no corroboration. The New Testament teaches that worship on the first day of the week was established by the apostles with the establishment of the church in the first century. This was several centuries before the crowning of the first pope of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church did not change the day of worship. It was changed from Sabbath to the Lord's day by the authority of the Lord Himself.

What is Symbolized by the Beasts?

In order to answer the question, "what is the mark of the beast," it will be necessary to identify the two beasts of Revelation thirteen. This chapter shows the instruments or agents used by Satan in this war against God's people, the church. In view of the need of those in the first century when the book of Revelation was written, and in view of the promise of a blessing to all who read and hear and keep those things written therein, obviously referring to the generations that follow from John's day to the present (Rev. 1:3), whatever interpretation is taken must be one that can be applied to each generation of the church. Both beasts oppose the church throughout the entire Christian dispensation, even though they are described in the form they assumed in the first century. The interpretation of the Adventists is meaningless and comfortless to the people in John's day and other generations before the formation of the Roman Catholic Church. The interpretation that had
meaning for John and the disciples in his day and one that can be applied in our generation as well, is the interpretation which says that the first beast (beast of the sea) "represents the persecuting power of Satan operating in and through the nations of this world and their governments." (Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, p. 175.) The beast of the earth symbolizes "false religions and philosophies" of each generation. (Ibid.) The beast of the sea, therefore, symbolizes anti-Christian persecution resting in rulers and their governments (cf. Dan. 7:2-8), or any other power of similar nature that opposes the church of the Lord. To narrow the interpretation of this beast down to one government in one given generation is too limited to meet the needs of the context. Thus, not only would Rome in John's day be symbolized by the figure, but the anti-Christian governments and powers in each generation of the church. I believe the most plausible explanation is to apply the sea beast to more than just one political power. On this R. C. Linski says, "the wild beast, the whole anti-Christian power set in motion by Satan as the prince of this world." (Interpretation of Revelation, p. 394. He concludes his discussion of the sea beast by saying, "consider again the immensity of the anti-Christian power here depicted, take an inventory of the great features as they are present all over the world since the days of Christ; then these significant statements of verses 9-10 will be quite clear." (Ibid., pp. 402-403.) The sea beast is not the Roman Catholic Church. I do not know of a single commentary except those published by the Adventists that claims the sea beast is the Catholic Church.

The land beast does not symbolize the United States. Concurring with Hendriksen in interpreting this second beast as anti-Christian religions and philosophies, Linski says, "this second beast—the whole anti-Christian propaganda, in the whole world. Both beasts are personifications, the one of the ferocious power, the other of the deceptive activity. He uses pulpits, cathedrals, the pope's cathedral, but far more, he speaks like a dragon and in deceit through all mediums, newspapers, magazines, books, schools," etc., etc. (Ibid., p. 413.) This conclusion is based upon the fact that the land beast had religious appearance—two horns like a lamb; he spoke with the authority of Satan; he exercised authority of the first beast, and he worked to bring about devotion to anti-Christian forces. This beast is identified as a "false prophet." (Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10.) It masquerades as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14), is dressed as truth, but in reality is the symbolization of that which is false in the form of religions and philosophies in every age of this last dispensation. These two beasts work together. They are Satan's products and his agents.

The Mark of the Beast

In chapter 7:2-17, we learn that God seals the children of God on their "foreheads." Those sealed belonged to Christ, therefore the sealing denoted ownership and allegiance. In the days of John, it was common for slaves to be branded or marked, indicating that the slave thus marked served someone. Perhaps this is that to which the apostle Paul had reference when he said, "I bear in my body the mark of the Lord Jesus." (Gal. 6:17.) The marking by the beast is the counterpart of Satan to Christ's sealing. The difference: one is sealed, the other is only marked. The mark of the beast denotes allegiance to the beast, hence to Satan. It is therefore a symbol of worship (Rev. 14:11), and ownership. (Rev. 20:4.) The "forehead" symbolizes the whole
of the mind or thoughts of a person, while the "right hand" indicates one's actions or deeds. In thought and deed those thus marked serve Satan. If any external identification is intended by the figure, then it would involve only the character of the individual marked, excluding qualities not in accordance with Satanic principles. (Cf. p. 1185, The New Bible Commentary.)

Adventists err in interpreting this mark as a single outward sign, appearing at one particular moment in history. Since the beast persecutes the church in each generation until the church is glorified (Rev. 21:1f), and we cannot separate the sign from the beasts, wherever the beast appears, the sign appears likewise.

**Conclusion**

There is little hope in the scheme of Satan waging war against the church and his use of the powerful forces at his disposal in this battle. But, beginning with chapter fourteen, another scene fills God's people with assurance and comfort. God also uses agents, the Lamb and His Judgments, and the outcome is certain. God's people will triumph! "Fear God, and give glory to him . . . and worship him that made the heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Rev. 14:7.) Amen!

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**What a Difference Faith Makes**

Mr. Clarence Darrow was a great American criminal lawyer, an opponent of Christianity, and defender of evolution in the "Monkey Trial" in Dayton, Tennessee. He is one of the many examples of the failure of an "intellectual" non-Christian belief.

When Mr. Darrow was in his 76th year, he was reported by the newspapers to have said, "If I were a young man with my life ahead of me, I think I'd chuck it all, the way things are now." He also said, "I certainly have no encouragement for young bloods that are just starting out looking for jobs. The sooner they jump out of windows, the sooner they will find peace."

How different this is from Paul's statement, "I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

Why the difference? In one case an aged and determined warrior against Christ tells young men to "chuck it all." In the other, an old soldier of the Lord tells a young man to fight the good fight for the worthwhile prize of the crown of righteousness. Why such a diversity of opinion? The answer lies in one simple word — **faith**!

—Caprock (Lubbock, Tex.) Bulletin

(FEW................. Continued)

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The Organization of Churches of Christ

(No. 1)

It is not true, as many among us have come to believe and some boldly affirm, that the organization of the church is a matter of little importance. We shall see before we have finished the subject, that the organization of the church poses the problem of FUNCTION of the church. Indeed, the problem of FUNCTION is inseparably connected with the organization of the church, and herein lies the real importance of the matter.

Please keep in mind that the church general or universal, which is made up of individual Christians, NOT of congregations, has no prescribed, visible organization upon the earth. The local church and the local church ONLY has a prescribed organization in the Scriptures. Moreover, the overseers of any given local church have obligation and jurisdiction over the affairs, the work and interests, of that local church ONLY where they serve as the specially appointed administrators and superintendents, and of nothing else.

Further, it will readily be perceived, that since these administrators and superintendents exist in every Scripturally organized local church, and that they have neither obligation nor jurisdiction in any other, that local churches of Christ are autonomous, self-governing under God in the light of his word, IS INSURED.

What God's reasons were for instituting the church on this fashion, and whether it seems to MAN to be the best arrangement in order to the accomplishment of all the duties and tasks God has assigned to the church, are not matters that have been left for MAN to decide; God has already decided them and has ruled that these tasks and duties are to be accomplished BY EACH LOCAL CHURCH, acting independent of every other local church and under the direction of its own Scripturally appointed overseers.

Many are concerned about how, on the basis of these premises, local churches of Christ acting independent of each other can co-operate with each other. But all such forget that co-operation does not necessitate combination. If that were the case, then truly, in this instance there could be no co-operation. But the co-operation of the churches of Christ as taught in the New Testament consists, and is exhausted by, the simultaneous but independent action of local churches, as they function in harmony with the will of Christ.

The simplicity of the organization of churches of Christ is the point at which men have wondered, and being astonished, have staggered. It is inconceivable to MAN that so great an institution, with so great a mission to accomplish, should be so simple and elemental in organization and function. But, are not all of God's works, of which the
church of Christ is certainly the greatest, both astonishing and wonderful? Paul said, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be made known THROUGH THE CHURCH the manifold wisdom of God." (Eph. 3:8-10.) The CHURCH therefore, in its structure, organization, mission, and in its function, is the amazement of the ages, and through it as it is designed and constituted, is made known the WISDOM of the God who made it.

So simple is the organization of churches of Christ, that it extends no further than the LOCAL church. There is simply no organization revealed in the New Testament that is larger than A LOCAL CHURCH.

Consider this postulate. I affirm it is true, and have therefore stated it this way. No corporate body can become collectively operative except it have its duly appointed overseers, superintendents, or administrators, whose administrative tasks are plainly set out in the constitution of the corporation, and whose administrative authority is allowed by the same constitution.

Seeing that this is true, and that MEN, from the great apostasy to the present time, have desired to activate the church GENERAL, they have CREATED of their own invention, ecclesiastical offices and officials, of whose designations and functions God's word is as silent as the grave!

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3:15) in the right way. We are taught to let our "speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one." (Col. 4:6.)

How is it with you? When problems and controversies arise do you make up your mind and give the "answer" without a knowledge of the facts and proper study? Or do you seek all the information that can be obtained, and then after diligent study of the Word of God give the answer?

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**They Did Not Give It**

"Did the Roman Catholic Church give us the Bible?" No. God, through inspired men, gave us the Bible more than 500 years before there was a Roman Catholic Church. If the Catholic Church had given us the Bible, it would have been a different kind of book — a book that would make Roman Catholics. If reading the Bible ever made any man, woman, or child want to become a Catholic, I never heard of it. The Roman Catholic Church makes many claims, but there is one claim it does not make and never did make. It never made the claim that a study of the Bible would cause one to want to be a Roman Catholic. The Bible is not a Catholic book; not one doctrine, peculiarly Catholic, is mentioned in it, except to condemn it.

—Cecil B. Douthitt

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**APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE**
Part 4

"I have another difficulty about baptism," says a man. "One preacher says nothing but immersion is baptism; another says sprinkling or pouring will do as well — that he would as soon have sprinkling as any thing. I find that there are strong, talented, and learned men on both sides of this question, and if the preachers can not settle it and decide which is right, how am I to determine what to do?" There need be but little dispute about that. Who denies that immersion is valid as the initiatory rite? The whole Romish Church admits not only the validity of immersion, but that it was the original practice. The Greek Church has practiced immersion from the beginning. The Episcopalian Church admits that immersion was the original practice. The Methodist Church has indorsed immersion in its creed, its standard works, and its occasional practice, from the commencement of its existence. The great historians, John L. Mosheim, Neander, and Wall, admit the validity of immersion, and that it was the original practice. There is not a better authenticated fact in history than that immersion was the invariable practice for the first two centuries, and, from the commencement of sprinkling or pouring in the third century, the invariable practice for the first thirteen hundred years among all Christians, except clinks, or persons supposed to be too weak to bear immersion; but, in these cases, they were never permitted to hold an office in the Church, because their baptism was not considered regular.

Luther, Calvin, Wesley, and more than three hundred others, whose names appear in the quotations from the learned authorities on this subject, of the most distinguished religious teachers that have appeared in the past three centuries; reformers, critics, commentators, historians, and translators, in one form or other, have committed to writing, and left the testimony, that immersion was the original practice and valid. You will inquire, then why so many of them sprinkled? They did it, not on the ground that there was any authority in the Bible for sprinkling or pouring, but on the ground that a change in the form would not vitiate the ordinance if they retained the substance. They admitted the change from the original practice — immersion to sprinkling or pouring — to accommodate the ordinance to supposed cases that might occur in cold countries, or where water would be difficult to obtain, and cases of weakness where they could not bear immersion, arguing only the law of expediency for it, but claiming no divine authority for the change. This has been the ground all the time taken by all who practiced sprinkling or pouring at all, till within the past fifty or seventy-five years. More recently a class of men have arisen, less enlightened and far less scrupulous, who talk about proving sprinkling or pouring by Scripture, and talk of different modes of baptism. A few religious adventurers are now found who care nothing for the authority of history, critics, commentators, lexicographers, translators — and, probably, many of them know as little as they care about these authorities — who
deny immersion outright as having any authority in the Bible or anywhere, and utterly refuse to immerse at all. But these are no guide to any weight of authority or argument. They are what they are, because they are, and intend to be. These irresponsible men are the only exception to the universal proposition, that immersion has been received as valid by all Christians; that it has never been in doubt or dispute. Up to this time there has not been a debate on the simple question, Is immersion baptism? On this question the friends of immersion are ready and willing to affirm all the time. But no man of learning and reputation is willing to deny this in discussion.

The validity of immersion remains unquestioned by any thing deserving the name of authority, and is sanctioned by the weight of all the historians, critics, commentators, lexicographers, translators. No matter what you may think of sprinkling or pouring, there is no question about immersion. It has never been in dispute nor doubt. It remains unquestioned and unquestionable, so far as men of learning and reputation are concerned. Those who receive immersion are satisfied, living and dying. Their minds are at rest about the ordinance. They never hear any preaching that unsettles their minds. Their conscience is at rest so far as baptism is concerned. This is not the case with those who have received sprinkling or pouring for baptism. Their conscience is not at rest. Many of them live in continual doubt and perplexity about their baptism. They are continually hearing, or reading books or tracts, such as unsettle their minds and fill them with doubts and confusion. Their preacher visits them, prays with them, talks with them, brings them tracts and books to read, and preaches on baptism. In this way he occasionally pacifies them for the time being, but again they hear some one quoting the admissions of learned authorities, that immersion was the invariable practice of the original Church; and that "buried in baptism" (Col. 2:12) and "buried by baptism" (Rom. 6:4) — and immersion comes into the mind in spite of all efforts to keep it out. The mind is again unsettled more than ever. The minds of many of this class are unsettled in death, and they go thus unsettled and in doubts into the presence of God.

What, then, is the safe course to pursue. Undoubtedly, to practice that which never was in doubt; that which never was in dispute among great, good, and pious men. "Go," according to the Scriptures, "to a certain water," where there is "much water," go "down into the water," be "buried in baptism," come "up out of the water," and the controversy is ended so far as you are concerned. Touching this institution, your soul is at rest. This is infallibly safe. No matter what they can prove about sprinkling or pouring, your baptism stands unquestioned and your conscience is at rest. It may be illustrated in this way: You owe a man fifty dollars, and show him a fifty-dollar bill on some private bank, admitting that many to whom you have showed it say it is counterfeit, but you add that you have shown it to others, who say it is good, and they would as soon have it as any. You show him another bill, making similar admissions, at the same time asserting that you would as soon have either as a ten-dollar greenback, and lay tins last-named along-side of the others, proposing to the man to take his choice. Do you suppose you would find a man in fifty miles around green enough to take either of the doubtful hills when one about which there is no doubt is offered? No, sir;
in matters of this kind you take nothing doubtful when you can get that which never was in doubt. What would you give for a farm with a doubtful title? No matter if three-fourths of the attorneys in your acquaintance would declare the title good, and only one-fourth declare it doubtful, you would not have it. Use the same good sense in your acts of obedience to God. Do nothing that is doubtful as an act of obedience to the Lord, when you can do that which was never doubtful. If you are aiming to please God, be certain and do that which all of any note admit to be valid, and leave the doubtful. This is infallibly safe. Be immersed on a confession of your faith, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and you will have no more trouble about baptism.

"But there is a difficulty about the operation of the Spirit. The preachers do not agree on this subject; and, if the preachers can not settle this question, how am I ever to decide who is right?" says some one. Could you not be a Christian and be saved if you never do settle that question, or if you never can determine who is right? The operation of the Spirit, whatever it may be and however it may be, is something which you are not to perform yourself. What ever men may say about it, there is one thing about which there is no dispute, and that is, whatever influence God may please to exercise is from himself and not from man, and he will exercise it, and that, too, whether men understand how he does it or not. No matter whether men understand how the Lord raises the water into the atmosphere, and causes the rain to descend or not, the Lord sends the rain. No theorizing about it, on the part of men, hinders or accelerates the rain. In the same way, no theorizing of men hinders or accelerates the influence of the Spirit. What men must do they, of course, must know how to do it. That which the Lord does himself, he knows how to do it, and will do it, in his own way, whether men theorize correctly about it or not. Preaching theories about the influence of the Spirit, or the operation of the Spirit, may sound religious to those who do not understand the matter, but there is nothing in it to save a single human being. The thing for man to do is to listen to the word of the Lord, believe it with the whole heart, and do what the Lord commands. This is the best man can do. It is all that he can do. If he believes all the Lord has said, and makes every effort in his power to do all the Lord requires, the Lord will do everything right on his part. The matter for man to do is to exercise faith in God that he will do his part, in all things, faithfully, whether man can understand how he will do it or not. All should come to God in full assurance of faith, all confidence that he is able and willing to do all things well — to do all for man that he needs — to save his soul. The Lord will do his part whether man understand how he will do it or not. It is faith men need — confidence in God that he is able and willing to do for man more than he asks or thinks, whether he understand how the Lord does it or not. It is not theories about the influence of the Spirit that man needs, but faith and obedience to the commandments of God. There is no threat against any man because he does not understand any theory about the Spirit, but there are terrible threats against the disobedient and unbelieving.

"Some preachers say that justification is by faith only, and others say it is not by faith only. I know not how to decide," says one. What if you never do decide? You know that it is commanded to "believe on the Lord Jesus
Christ." Then it is clearly right to believe. So far, there is no difficulty. You know that God has commanded all men everywhere to repent. Then, it is right to repent. So far, the way is clear. Baptism is commanded: "Then Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Then, it is right to be baptized. So far, the way is clear. It is always safe to do what you know to be right. You know it is right to believe with all your heart. You know it is right to repent. You know it is right to be baptized. Do what you know to be right, and you are safe so far as these matters are concerned. Then, if it should turn out that justification is by "faith only," you are safe, for you have the faith. There will be no disappointment, only that you were justified a little sooner than you thought you were. You will certainly not regret that you obeyed the commands to repent and be baptized. But if you should stop at faith, and find that justification is not "by faith only," you would find yourself still not justified. It is, then, infallibly safe to believe, repent, and be immersed. So far, there is no difficulty where the desire is simply to do right — to be safe.

Why Religious Division?

By James P. Needham, Louisville, Kentucky

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED why our society is divided religiously? Did you ever stop and try to determine the one basic cause of religious division?

RELIGIOUS DIVISION WAS BORN of and is promoted by rebellion against God's law — man's desire to have his own way instead of God's. Men exalt their uninspired opinions above divine law by formulating them into doctrinal systems and make their acceptance a condition of entrance into their denominations. The basic cause of all religious division is not man's inability to understand what the Bible says, but his unwillingness to abide by what he understands it to say. One illustration of this should convince the honest hearted of its truthfulness.

THE ACTION OF BAPTISM: Twice Paul says baptism is a burial. (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12.) There has never been any difficulty understanding the meaning of the word burial, and the leading scholars of all denominations admit that immersion or burial was the action of baptism in apostolic days. But, while admitting this, they contend that sprinkling and pouring are just as acceptable to God. Did they read this in the Bible? A thousand times NO! At no time in all the Bible was water and water only sprinkled or poured on any person for any thing. So we can easily see that we are all agreed upon what the Bible says about the action of baptism. Division comes when men try to bind something upon us which even they admit cannot be found in the Bible.

WHEN ALL MEN BECOME SATISFIED to do what the Bible commands — nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else — then and only then will religious unity prevail. We are commanded to "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11), and "speak the same thing." (1 Cor. 1:10.) We are forbidden to "go beyond the doctrine of Christ" (2 John 9-11), or stop short of that which is written. (Deut. 4:2; Rev. 22:19.) Whenever all religious people decide to obey these passages, we will have religious unity — disobedience of them is the one basic cause of division.
Lost in Plain Sight

In November of 1957 the Denver Post carried a little piece about a woman who had lost the deed to her property. She had been searching for it for TWENTY YEARS, but all in vain. Then one day she just "happened" to open the family Bible and, of all things, there was her long lost deed!

Lost in plain sight! Yes, on many a table or shelf the Bible lies a lost book. Not that it cannot be found, but it is untouched, unused and undisturbed except to be dusted like a piece of furniture. Its gracious message could hardly be in our heart, or its directions in control of lives when it lies a lost book like this.

When our Bible is thus lost we are lost! I suspect you know where your deeds and abstracts and bonds, etc., all are. Do you know where your hope and your promise and your spiritual security are? Likely you know exactly how much every piece of property cost you. Do you know what it costs to go to heaven?

Know your deeds, but don’t lose your Bible. Keep it written in your heart.

—Kenny Marrs

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Will Christ Reign on Earth One Thousand Years?

By Frank Jamerson, Louisville, Kentucky

The doctrine that Christ will reign on earth for one thousand years before the final resurrection and judgment is known as PREMILLENNIALISM. "Pre" means before, and "millennium" means one thousand years. This is a popular theory among religious people. It is based primarily upon one chapter in the book of Revelation, which we will discuss later in this study.

First, we will present several objections to the theory for your consideration.

Jews to Palestine

One of the basic fallacies of the theory is that it denies that God fulfilled His promise to Abraham. It teaches that God must restore the Jews to Palestine and that this will happen when Christ comes to establish His Kingdom. This contradicts God's word. "And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein: . . . There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." (Josh. 21:43,45; See also Gen. 12:1-4; 15:18-21; Josh. 23:15,16; 1 Kings 4:21 and Neh. 9:7,8.)

God kept His word with Israel, but Israel departed from God and He used their enemies to take them from the promised land as He had said He would do. (Deut. 30:1-10.) After they repented, God restored a remnant to Palestine. (Neh. 1:3; Ezra 9:13-15; Haggai 2:2.) A Second Remnant is mentioned in Isaiah 11:10, 11. The New Testament shows that a "remnant according to the election of grace" now exists, with Christ "the root of Jesse" ruling over it. (Rom. 11:5; 15:12.) There is no scriptural basis for anyone expecting Christ to come again to restore the Jews to Palestine.

Christ Now Ruling

The theory denies that Christ is NOW ruling as king on David's throne. Some argue that Christ is reigning on Jehovah's throne, but must return to Jerusalem to rule on David's throne. The Bible does not teach such a distinction. Solomon is said to have "sat upon the throne of David his father." (1 Kings 2:12.) Also, Solomon "sat in the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father." (1 Chron. 29:23.) The New Testament teaches that Christ is sitting upon the throne of His Father.
Rev. 3:21), and He is sitting on the throne of David. (Acts 2:29-36.) Premillennialists tell us that Christ could not sit on David's throne because the Jews rejected and killed him. Peter, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said that David foretold the fact that Christ would be resurrected to sit on his (David's) throne. (Acts 2:29-31.)

Christ arose from the dead and is now sitting on David's or Jehovah's throne and will continue to reign until the end of time. (See 1 Cor. 15:24-26.)

Kingdom Exists

This theory denies that the Kingdom of Old Testament prophecy is in existence today. Advocates of the theory say that we are in the "church age" and that the kingdom will be established when Christ comes again.

From the second chapters of Isaiah, Daniel and Joel, we learn that the kingdom was to be established in the "last days," its beginning place would be Jerusalem and the Holy Spirit would be given on this occasion. The second chapter of Acts clearly shows that these prophecies were fulfilled on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem. This was the beginning of the "last days," and was a fulfillment of these prophecies. Ephesians chapter two shows that the message of "peace" had been preached to Jew and Gentile. This was to be the nature of the kingdom of Christ, for it is a "kingdom not of this world." (Jno. 18:36.)

Church an Afterthought

According to this doctrine, the church was not in God's plan when He sent His Son, but it was an afterthought. The Jews rejected Jesus, therefore he could not establish the kingdom, so He established the church instead. This is the same mistake the Jews made — they expected an earthly king and kingdom and Jesus did not fulfill their expectations. Many people even today expect Christ to become earthly king and rule over an earthly kingdom. Jesus said "my kingdom is not of this world." (Jno. 18:36.) The church was in the "eternal purpose" of God. (Eph. 3:8-12.) It was not an afterthought. Indeed, it was in God's plan and is the kingdom.

Denies Salvation to Gentiles

From the Prophet Amos, we read: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this." (Amos 9:11,12.) Premillennialists say that this is to be fulfilled at the Second Coming of Christ; that the "tabernacle of David" has not been rebuilt. The truth about this passage is given by inspiration and is found in Acts 15:13-17. Here, James is talking about the Gentiles being admitted into the church and quotes from the prophet Amos. He said, "And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, after this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord who doeth these things." James quotes the prophet Amos and shows that the prophecy is fulfilled and that Gentiles are doing the proper thing when they "seek after the Lord." If the "tabernacle of David" has not been rebuilt, the Gentiles cannot "seek after the Lord" and there is no purpose in preaching to them!
The Second Coming

According to this theory, when the Lord comes again, the righteous will be raised and Christ will reign on earth for one thousand years. Then the wicked will be raised and all will be judged. The Bible teaches that at the coming of Christ "ALL that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28,29.) When "the Son of man shall come in his glory" all nations shall be gathered before him. (Matt. 25:31,32.) Those who are alive will be changed. (1 Thess. 4:13-18.) This passage is often misused to try to prove two separate resurrections. It does not teach such. Under consideration are the righteous dead and righteous living. Paul said that the living would not precede, or go before the dead, but that the living would be changed and the dead raised and "caught up together" to meet the Lord in the air. The wicked are not mentioned in this passage. The present world will end. (2 Pet. 3:9-10; Rev. 21:1.) The kingdom or church will be delivered up to the Father (1 Cor. 15:24), and the wicked will be cast into Hell. (Matt. 25:31-46.) Some say that "nations" in verse 32 means "Gentiles," not all people. This interpretation is without warrant. The gospel was to be preached to "all nations." (Matt. 28:19; Lk. 24:47.) If "all nations" simply means "Gentiles," then the gospel is not to be preached to Jews. Thus, the gospel of Christ is nullified!

Revelation 20

The twentieth chapter of Revelation is the so-called "proof text" of premillennialism. We would like for you to observe a few facts about this chapter. This chapter DOES NOT MENTION the second coming of Christ, a bodily resurrection, a reign on earth, Christ on earth, a literal throne, Jerusalem or Palestine, nor does it mention us. Premillennialists take the "one thousand years" from the passage and presume everything else essential to the theory. This chapter does not teach that Christ will reign on earth for one thousand years with the saints.

The book of Revelation is filled with symbolism and we must be careful about our use of it. We should never interpret a figurative passage in such a way as to contradict plain teaching in other passages. Lest someone say that we have no conception of the passage unless we believe the theory of premillennialism, we offer these thoughts. (1) In chapter 6 we read of the souls of martyrs under the altar, 'crying for judgment against their "enemies. The scene is one of defeat. (2) In chapter 20, the "souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus" are represented as being on thrones. This pictures triumph or victory and is called a "resurrection." (3) Satan is then loosed in the period of Gog and Magog. The scene could (and we believe does) paint a picture of persecution and triumph. A resurrection of the CAUSE OF THE MARTYRS is given to those who were being persecuted in order to encourage endurance. This view can be harmonized with the Book of Revelation and does not contradict other passages of Scripture. The premillennial interpretation is pure presumption and is at variance with the teaching of many passages in the Bible.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we ask — Are you in the kingdom of God? Jesus said, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (Jno. 3:5.) "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature . . ." (2 Cor. 5:17.) "For as many of you
as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27.) Those who enter the kingdom must be "born again." Those in Christ are "new creatures" (New born). They have been "baptized into Christ." Those baptized for the remission of sins are added to the church. (Acts 2:38, 41, 47; 1 Cor. 12:13.) If you have not been "born again" or "baptized into Christ" you have not been delivered from "the power of darkness," and "translated into the kingdom" of Christ. (Col. 1:13.) In the Lord's kingdom or church, you must serve God faithfully in order to enjoy the "new heavens and new earth" — the eternal abiding place of the righteous — heaven. (Rev. 21:1-4.)

New Testament Evangelism

By Irvin Himmel, St. Louis, Missouri

The term *evangelism* refers to the "preaching or promulgation of the gospel." If there is no divine plan or pattern to follow in the doing of this work, there would be no right way to evangelize; hence, if all congregations came to recognize a central organization (like the Roman Catholic Church has) as the means of evangelizing, there would be nothing wrong with it. On the other hand, if the Bible sets forth any sort of plan for evangelization, that plan should be followed and all human schemes, no matter how plausible they seem, should be scrapped.

Is There a Pattern?

Does the New Testament reveal a pattern for congregations to follow in the great work of preaching the gospel? In the same manner that it reveals a plan (the plan, in fact) for salvation, for worship, and for financing the church in its work, it sets forth the blueprint for evangelism. We do not find the divine pattern of worship in one passage; we find it by taking the sum of all the passages dealing with worship. No one verse of scripture outlines in detail the whole plan of salvation; we must consult all the verses dealing with that subject, then by adding them together we have the complete plan before us. Similarly, we do not find the pattern for evangelism in one verse, but rather we must study all that the Bible says on that subject.

Is the Pattern Exclusive?

Whatever the Bible has to say about worship, that is God's pattern. If it does not exclude all else that might be
done as worship, then there would be no wrong way to worship. In like manner, whatever the New Testament teaches about evangelism, whether it suits us or not, that is God's pattern. If the Bible plan of evangelism is not exclusive, then how could we conclude that the Bible plan of salvation is exclusive? Obviously, God's will is both inclusive and exclusive — it includes all that pleases Him and excludes all else.

**Examples**

The simplest way to learn the plan of salvation is by studying the cases of conversion recorded in the New Testament. We learn when the Lord's supper is to be eaten by the examples of Acts 20:7 and 1 Cor. 11:20-34 coupled with 1 Cor. 16:2. We learn how the church is to finance its work by example. In the same manner, we learn God's plan for evangelism by studying carefully the examples of churches doing that work. Many passages deal with individuals preaching the gospel, but we shall concern ourselves in this study with evangelism as it relates to the collective body, the church. How did churches of Christ evangelize in the first century?

1. **Jerusalem**

   The church in Jerusalem preached the gospel through its individual members. Also, in Acts 11:22 we learn of those brethren acting as a unit in sending forth a capable teacher. Certain individuals had introduced the gospel in Antioch. The Jerusalem brethren learned about it and were convinced, evidently, that here was a splendid opportunity. "Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch." By reading further in Acts 11, we learn that Barnabas spent considerable time in Antioch with the result that many people were taught. This example teaches us that a church may send a preacher to another place as a means of evangelizing.

2. **Antioch**

   After Barnabas was sent to Antioch by the church in Jerusalem, Saul (later called Paul) came to work with him, so in time the Antioch congregation was strengthened and had in its number several prophets and teachers. The Holy Spirit gave instruction that Barnabas and Saul were to be separated from the rest for a work "whereunto I have called them." The brethren then fasted, prayed, laid their hands on them, and sent them away. The two preachers went to several cities on the island of Cyprus and in Asia Minor. When they completed their evangelistic tour, they returned to Antioch, gathered the church together, and rehearsed all that God had done with them. Read Acts, chapters 13 and 14. From this example we learn that the brethren at a given place may send out more preachers than just one, and those sent out may go to more places than just one.

3. **Philippi**

   When Paul wrote to the church at Philippi he praised them for having fellowship with him in preaching the gospel. There is no evidence that Philippi sent Paul out, as Jerusalem had earlier sent forth Barnabas, but when he went to other places they helped by supporting him. When he was at Thessalonica, the Philippian church "sent once and again" unto his necessity. (Phil. 4:14-16.) This example teaches that a church may evangelize by sending time and again to the necessities of those who are preaching.

4. **Macedonian Churches**

   At Corinth, Paul was supported by more churches than one. He later wrote to the Corinthians, "I robbed other
churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you and wanted, I was chargeable to no man; for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you . . . " (2 Cor. 11:8,9.) This example teaches that a plurality of churches may send support to a preacher. At one time only Philippi supported Paul (Phil. 4:15), but at Corinth more congregations than one were sending to his necessity.

5. Thessalonica
Writing to the church at Thessalonica, Paul expressed thanksgiving for their work of faith, their labor of love, and their patience of hope, "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward Godward is spread abroad . . . " (1 Thess. 1:8.) The evangelistic fervor of this congregation made itself felt not only in the city but also in the surrounding areas. The example teaches us that a church should make every effort to sound out God's word.

Some Observations
These passages show the following: (1) a church may send out a preacher; (2) a church may contribute to the needs of a preacher who has already gone out; (3) a church may send more preachers than one; (4) more churches than one may support a preacher; and, (5) it is right for churches to evangelize abroad as well as at home.

Some things are conspicuous by their absence in these Bible cases of evangelism. For instance, the New Testament plan gives no hint of churches setting up any kind of missionary society through which to function in preaching the gospel. The divine plan never suggests that one church should act as an agency through which other churches may send out preachers, conduct "campaigns," or circulate gospel messages. In the New Testament there was always a direct relationship between churches and preachers, never a supervising church standing between the supporting congregations and the work itself. One congregation has just as much responsibility, proportionate to its ability, as does another in evangelizing the world. God has given us no indication that he wants larger churches to plan and supervise evangelistic work in behalf of smaller churches. A local church that sets itself to the task of performing a work that requires the collection and administration of funds pooled by other churches is a humanly-devised congregational missionary society.

Multiplied thousands of local churches have worked efficiently and effectively according to the New Testament plan. In the first century, without separate missionary organizations and without congregational super societies, the churches fulfilled their God-ordained task of preaching the gospel throughout the world. The Lord's plan is no less effective today. We do not need new plans and more organizations; we need more men and women with faith in God's wisdom and willingness to work.

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False Teachers

By Arvid K. McGuire, Huntsville, Alabama

The New Testament warns repeatedly against false teachers. The word *false* is translated as "false," "falsehood," "liars," and "lie." A false brother is one who professes to be a Christian, but is destitute of Christian knowledge and piety. (2 Cor. 11:26; Gal. 2:4.) A false prophet is one who falsely claims to be an ambassador of Christ. (2 Cor. 11:13.) A false prophet is one who, acting the part of a divinely inspired prophet, utters falsehoods under the name of divine prophecies. (Matt. 7:15.) The following is offered that we might further identify false teachers.

What Are False Teachers?

False apostles divided the church at Corinth and sought to destroy Paul's character and influence. These men were deceitful workers. Deception is the tool of a false teacher. They sought to give the appearance of apostles of Christ when in reality they were ministers of Satan. (2 Cor. 11:13-15.)

False teachers are scoffers. (2 Pet. 3:3.) These men mock, ridicule, and make the second coming and judgment a subject for jesting. Such men have willfully forgotten the power of the word of God that created the worlds, brought the flood and is now holding in store both the heavens and the earth for fire.

False teachers have claimed to be apostles of Christ. (Rev. 2:2.) The church at Ephesus was praised by Christ for her intolerance toward false apostles. They tried them and found them to be liars.

False teachers are ravening wolves disguised in sheep's clothing. (Matt. 7:15.)

Who and Where Are False Teachers?

False teachers are men, not angels. Neither are they disembodied spirits floating around. They are men who seduce from the faith by teaching the doctrines of demons. (1 Tim. 4:1-2.)

False teachers are in the world. John warned to believe not every spirit but to prove the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1.) Paul warned that grievous wolves would enter in among you and would not spare the flock. (Acts 20:29.) Even among the elders men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves. (Acts 20:30.)

How False Teachers Work

Deception is their tool. A wolf does not appear as a wolf but as a sheep. The appearance is that of an innocent lamb, but in reality the disposition is that of a ravening wolf set on destroying the flock.

False teaching causes division and occasions of stumbling. The false teacher is to be marked and avoided. His speech is smooth and fair for his intention is to beguile the hearts of the innocent. (Rom. 16:17-18.)

Their speech is contrary to the sound doctrine. What they teach is twisted and perverted. (Gal. 1:6-9.)

When False Teachers Attack

Usually their attack is made in the absence of a person capable of defend-
What False Teachers Will Do

Jesus taught that following men, their commandments and traditions, is vain. Their teaching is perverted, their worship is vain and their "religious plants" will be uprooted. Following a false teacher is the blind leading the blind. Both shall fall into the ditch. (Matt. 15:1-14.) They bring upon themselves swift destruction. (2 Pet. 2:1.)

God's Love

When I look across the rolling hills and view the green forests, I see the love of God. In the babbling brooks, the sweet-scented flowers, the lovely meadows, and freshly plowed earth I am reminded of the love of God. When I stand in the gentle breeze and fill my lungs with fresh air — when I look above to the starry heavens and reflect upon the vastness of this universe, I must acknowledge the love of God. All about me in this world of nature are evidences of God's goodness. My food, my clothing, my shelter, my family, my friends — all these things give proof of God's marvelous affection.

But the greatest exhibition of God's love is revealed in the Bible. This great book tells the story of how that God loved fallen man so much that He sent His own Son into the world to die for us. John exclaimed, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God ..." (1 John 3:1.) What manner of love, indeed. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:7,8.)

God shows no partiality. He does not will that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (2 Pet. 3:9.) His love is extended to men of all races, all nations, and all stations in life. "But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." (Acts 10:35.)

Reader, what does this divine love mean to you? Does it lead you to repentance? Would you want to be without it? What response does it bring forth in your life? If you reject the gospel and live in disrespect for God's will, his marvelous love is all in vain as far as you are concerned. Is that the way you want it?

—I. H.
The Organization of Churches of Christ

(No. 2)

We have learned that, among churches of Christ as they are described on the pages of the New Testament, the only unit of collective action, or function, is the local church. It is necessary therefore, that the local church be provided with an administrative organization through which to become collectively active. So, we are not surprised to find that organization provided and revealed, AND NO OTHER.

It is admitted of course, that at the first, when the churches were established, the apostles themselves administered their affairs. But later, as these local churches under apostolic teaching matured, there was need for their distinctive and autonomous organization, and it was provided.

There are three words used in the New Testament to point out and to describe this organization. A group, always a plurality, of well matured men of certain qualifications, which are named, were to be appointed in every church, and these were charged with the administrative leadership of the congregation. (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 14:23.) It shall be our purpose now, to discuss these three terms and their implications.

The Bible first calls this group of specially appointed workers in each local church “elders.” The English word elder is translated from a Greek word which means, according to the lexicographers, OLDER MEN. The plain implication therefore, is that a group of older men of every congregation possessing certain qualifications (characteristics), were to be appointed by the congregation to direct, i.e. administer, its affairs. The word signifies primarily age, wisdom, maturity in spiritual affairs.

This same group of older men who, in every congregation, had been appointed to this special service, were also called “BISHOPS.” This is a word that means that they were to serve as overseers or superintendents of the work of the congregation. (Acts 20:28.)

But, we find this same group of special servants of the local church referred to as its "PASTORS." The English word pastor is translated from a Greek word which means "shepherd," and indicates that these men were also the shepherds of the flock (church). The imagery being taken from the tender care exercised by the shepherd of a flock of sheep. (1 Pet. 5.)

Thus we see the churches of the New Testament organized after this simple pattern. And there is NO OTHER CHURCH ORGANIZATION known to the New Testament.

Local churches of Christ, under the administrative leadership of their elders, bishops, pastors (always plural), as-(See ORGANIZATION . . . Page 190)
Part 5

"But there are so many creeds, all claiming to be right, that I should not know which to take. They were all made by learned men, and if they can not agree on the kind of a creed, how am I to decide which is right?" says one. It is a matter of great moment and of much belief that, aside from all these conflicting, clashing, and erring creeds, there is one book that all parties concede is right. They all agree that the Bible is right — that it came from God. They all further agree that it contains the law of God — that the law of the Lord is perfect. The only wonder is, that man ever attempted to make any other creed or law for the Church. Such an undertaking could not have commenced without two wicked assumptions: 1. That the law of God, as set forth in the Bible, is not sufficient — is a failure. 2. That the insufficiency or failure can be remedied by weak, erring, and uninspired men. No man of intelligence will affirm, in plain terms, that the Bible is not sufficient for the government of the saints; or that man — uninspired man — can make a creed that will serve a better purpose than the Bible. If you admit, as all are bound to do, that the law of God is in the Bible, that nothing may be added to it, nothing taken from it, and that no part of it may be changed, there is not an excuse in the world for making another law. The law of God in the Bible is the law, the divine law, the supreme law, in the kingdom of God; and it is a reasonable movement to attempt to get up another constitution, law, name, body, or officers, apart from the constitution, law, name, body, and officers as found in the Bible.

But the matter now in hand is to find a safe course to pursue. Can this be done? Certainly it can. All admit the Bible to be right. All admit that the law of God in the Bible is right. All admit that those who follow the Bible honestly and faithfully, in faith and practice, will be saved. All admit that wherever any creed differs from the Bible it is wrong. Then it is infallibly safe to take the Bible and follow it. When men undertake to prove that a human creed is a good one, they argue that it is like the Bible. If a creed like the Bible is a good one, why will not the Bible itself do? If the Bible will not serve the purpose — is insufficient and a failure — a creed like it would be equally insufficient. When men make a creed to do what the Bible would not do, they should certainly make it different from the Bible, or it would serve no better purpose than the Bible itself. Why does not some man, who thinks we can not govern the Church with the law of God, come out and show us wherein the law of God, is deficient; where the creed should be made different from the law of God, so as to serve the purpose better? No man does this; but every advocate of a human creed maintains that he took his creed from the Bible; that he can prove it by the Bible, or that it is like the Bible. There are not many positions that are con-
ceivable touching this matter. It might be a source of some satisfaction to look at the positions possible:

1. Did the Lord design the Bible, or his law set forth in it, as the creed — the rule of faith and practice? He certainly did; for the first Christians and the Church had no creed or rule of faith and practice but the instructions found in the sacred writings, the law of God, as now found in the Bible. It is simply a matter of fact, that the first Christians and Church had no guide but the teaching of Christ and the apostles. Then, the apostolic requirements to "preach the word" — to commit the things learned of the apostles to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also; to preach no other Gospel nor ever pervert the Gospel; to add nothing, take away nothing; to continue in the things learned; to hold fast the form of sound words — sound speech, that can not be condemned, shows that the Lord intended us to go to him for the creed, the rule of faith and practice; to adhere to his teaching, as set forth by him and his apostles, and not to be turned away after the commandments of men and the rudiments of the world. The grand statement of Paul, that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works," shows the use that the Lord intended should be made of scriptures. They were intended to perfect the man of God, and thoroughly furnish him for every good work. This leaves no room for any human creed, and no excuse for any man to hanker after one. It shows, also, the Lord's design — that he designed the inspired Scriptures to be the rule of faith and practice.

2. Seeing, now, the Lord's design, to make the inspired Scriptures the rule of faith and practice, has he failed in that design? And shall some man, or set of men, presume to improve on the Lord's design, and accomplish that wherein the Lord failed? This would be presumption added to presumption.

3. But it is a fact, that no human creed existed for about three hundred years after the birth of Christ. During the most successful and triumphant period of the existence of the Church, she had no human creed, but was governed wholly by the law of God. This ought to satisfy all good men.

4. But what is gained when you make a creed? Nothing, only that a foundation is laid for a party. No man nor set of men can make a creed that will give general satisfaction to any considerable number even of the best men in the world. Vast numbers of them will never indorse it, and will never unite with those who hold the creed. Even those who indorse it, every few years will get into contentions about it, and split asunder. Take the Presbyterians as an example. They have a creed with as much human skill, wisdom, and labor bestowed on it as any creed in the world. What has resulted from it? 1. It has barred them from all other denominations. 2. It is not believed nor received by any people in the world except themselves. 3. They have had eight or ten divisions over it.

4. The Old and New School are now divided about the interpretation of the creed. 5. After a struggle of some two hundred years, all the sorts of Presbyterians together in the United States amount to not more than five hundred thousand, or about one in seventy of our entire population! The effort to return to apostolic ground and teaching, in all things, in the great reformatory movement of the nineteenth century, has risen up and outnumbered them in
fifty years, in defiance of the combined opposition of all the parties in the land. The same has been illustrated by the Methodist and Baptist creeds, only that they have been more prolific in both numbers and divisions.

5. There is not a human creed in the world that has any popularity in a single party on the face of the earth, except the one that has adopted it. All other religious parties utterly disregard it. The idea of any extended success on a human creed is utterly hopeless. There is nothing clearer than that the parties built on these human platforms are decomposing and crumbling away to nothing. The man bowed down under a human creed, at this late date, with the history of the past three hundred years before him, must be a dull scholar truly.

6. The Bible has the advantage in every respect. All admit that it is right in all respects; that it is perfect in all its parts; that it contains the whole will of God to man; that it contains the law of God; that it contains the teaching of Christ and the apostles; the word of God, able to save the soul, to build up the saints, and give them an inheritance among the sanctified; thoroughly furnish them for every good work; that it contains the rule by which all shall be judged in the last day. It has the weight of divine authority in it. It has the power of God in it. It is backed up by the Almighty Father of heaven and earth; his oath, by the throne, and him who sits on the throne; by the crown and all the armies of the upper world. The men stand by it to defend it, and commit their all to it; are girded as with the everlasting hills, and continually realize that the everlasting arms are underneath. They depend not on their own wisdom, but on the wisdom of God, as set forth in the holy teaching of Scripture; the power of God and the wisdom of God, as displayed in the preaching of the cross of Christ. They depend on no teaching of their own views, nor theories, but on their great Master, the Messiah; his teaching, and that of his apostles; his cause and his work. They have identified themselves with him and his cause, and have lost sight of themselves in beholding the glories of their Lord and Redeemer. They have taken their stand behind their great Leader, the Lord, the King who sits on the throne in heaven, and intend to keep him in front of them. They have planted themselves squarely on the foundation which the Lord laid, on which the Church was at the first planted, and on the law of the Lord, and intend to stand by their Lord, his cause, all he said and did; to defend and maintain that and nothing else. This, they know, is infallibly safe for this world and that which is to come. They intend to stand by every man, side by side, in full fellowship, who is identified with their Lord and his cause, and push the Bible, the law of the Lord, the teaching of Christ and his apostles, through the world. The Gospel of Christ is their theme. Those for the Gospel of Christ, his teaching, and that of the apostles, and nothing else, find themselves all united in one cause and one work, under their one great Leader and Commander. The Lord of hosts will be with them.

On the other hand, those on the side of human creeds, if they have not seen enough to satisfy them, will soon see enough. They have no cohesion. They are splitting on every pretext. They are crumbling and falling to pieces on every hand. They are convincing sensible men that they have nothing tangible nor intelligible. They are groping their way in the dark. They cannot stand before Bible men. For they admit that the Bible is right; that it is from God; that it is perfect; that their creed is (See COURSE...................... Page 190)
The Roman Catholic Church has perhaps the most elaborate system of ritual of any religious group is what is popularly called "Christendom." Her ritualistic ceremonies include the use of holy water, the sign of the cross, special recitations, prayers read from a Missal, an altar, chanting, priests wearing special vestments, Mass said in Latin, lighting of candles, burning of incense, etc., etc.

There is supposed to be special symbolic significance to every gesture, every word, and every action in these complex ceremonies. Some of the ritualism is borrowed from Judaism. Such things as priestly vestments, burning of incense, and use of an altar come from the Old Testament — God's law to the Jews in a former dispensation. Other forms, such as the use of holy water, originated in Paganism.

No doubt many Catholics are sincere in their participation in these elaborate forms. Probably many folks are attracted to Catholicism because of their love of such splendor and pageantry. To the minds of a host of people there may be much more in the Roman ritual than pomp and ceremony.

But the fact remains that the church built by Christ, as revealed in the pages of the New Testament, was free from elaborate ceremonies. The apostles warned against those teachers who were attempting to borrow from Judaism. When Paul learned that the churches of Galatia were going back to the Old Testament for holidays and festivities, he wrote, "You are observing days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, lest perhaps I have labored among you in vain." (Gal. 4:10,11, Catholic Bible.) It is just as wrong now as it was then to look to the law of Moses as authority for religious practices.

The true church of Christ is characterized by simplicity in its worship. The following are the only items of worship prescribed in the New Testament:

1. The Lord's Supper. (Matt. 26:26-30; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 10:21; 11:23-34.)
2. The contribution. (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8,9; Acts 20:35.)
3. Prayer. (Lk. 18:1; Acts 2:42; 12:12; 1 Tim. 2:1-8; 1 Thess. 5:17.)
4. Singing. (Acts 16:25; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:18-20; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12.)
5. Teaching. (Acts 20:7; 11:26; 1 Cor. 14:23-31.)

The church revealed in the New Testament knew nothing of a separate priesthood, altars, burning incense, or making the sign of the cross. There were no ceremonies involving the use of holy water or lighting of candles. The apostle Paul warned against the use of an unknown language in the assembly. He wrote, "I thank God that I speak will all your tongues; yet in the church, I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may also instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue." (1 Cor. 14:18,19, Catholic Bible.) Prayers were from the heart, not a book. Songs were to praise God and teach and admonish each other, not to create ecstasy or a mystic trance.

In brief, the worship ordained in the New Testament for Christ's followers is designed to be a spontaneous and voluntary expression of praise and adoration to the heavenly Father. It requires no expensive buildings, vestments, nor equipment. The elements required for
the communion are easily obtained — bread and the fruit of the vine. There is nothing complex, elaborate, nor of brilliant display about it. Jesus emphasized the importance of worshipping in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24.) While ritualism may appeal to the mind of man, the Lord Jesus has ordained a plan of worship free from earthly vanities. Ritualistic ceremonies and traditionalism are found in Roman Catholicism; the simplicity of the divine plan is found in Christ's church. Read the New Testament.

—I. H.

(Continued)

sisted by "DEACONS," who were specially appointed in every local church to serve under the direction of the elders, administered their own affairs under Christ and in harmony with his divine will. They were both autonomous in government, and independent of each other in all their activities.

SO SHOULD IT BE TODAY—and it will be by all those who are informed and who respect the authority of God's word.

(Continued)

not right, not from God, not perfect. With these admissions, they can not stand before the Bible and Bible men. They can not maintain their plea for a creed which they admit is not right, not from God, not perfect, in competition with the book which all admit is from God, right, perfect. They can not withstand the men for Christ, his cause, his Gospel, his teaching, and that of his apostles, and nothing else. There is no standing before the Lord and his cause, nor before his word — his Gospel. The men who intend to oppose the friends of Jesus, should be informed what they will have to withstand, so as to enable them to make up the issue and prepare themselves for the contest. It is now in tangible and intelligible form, so that they can understand it. They need not commence isolating scraps from writings among Christians of the present day, or of any day, as exponents of the teaching of Bible men. Many of these scraps might be shown to be all right, if taken in their contextual connection; but whether this can be done in every instance or not, is a matter of no importance. The slips of the pens of good men, the chance erroneous positions taken by them, or mistakes, are not the teaching, or a fair representation of their effort. No man is bound to defend these. They are not the ground of Bible men. The gospel, the teaching of the Lord and his apostles, the ground on which the first Christians stood, is the ground, the Gospel, and teaching maintained, advocated, and defended. As one man, the friends of the Lord Jesus stand here, and, by the grace of God, intend to stand here till the last. If it is not safe, then all the Christians for the first three hundred years were not safe, for they all stood here. They believed the Gospel, and became obedient to the faith. They, then, followed the apostles' teaching faithfully, and had the promise of a crown of life. This is infallibly safe for this world and the world to come. May all the friends of the Lord prove themselves worthy of this ground, defend and maintain it with integrity till the Lord shall come, and thus be able to say, "I have kept the faith." In the Lord, their strength and Redeemer, is their everlasting trust. To his name be the honor and power everlasting.

(Editor's note: Benjamin Franklin was an outstanding preacher and editor of THE AMERICAN CHRISTIAN REVIEW a century ago. A distant
relative of the statesman of the same name, two volumes of his sermons are still in print under the title THE
GOSPEL PREACHER. In five installments we have given our readers one of those great sermons.)

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