



# Overcoming

Irvin Himmel

There is no greater challenge before the Christian than overcoming temptation, defeating sin, triumphing over the world, and securing victory over Satan. This is a matter of compelling concern to every member of the body of Christ.

## Promises and Incentives

The Lord's message to the church at Ephesus includes strong incentive in these words: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7). The overcomer is promised free access to the tree of life in the garden of God. In the heavenly paradise there is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Christ promised the church at Smyrna, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Rev. 2:11). The second death is punishment in the lake of fire and brimstone (Rev. 21:8). The overcomer is given assurance that he will escape the second death. Overcoming is necessary if one expects to escape the punishment of hell.

The church at Pergamos was told, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" (Rev. 2:17). The overcomer will partake of the hidden manna, the fulness of Christ as the bread of life, and receive recognition as one who is pure and white.

To the church at Thyatira, the Lord said, "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star" (Rev. 2:26-28). The overcomer shares in the rule and dominion of Christ through the victory of the gospel.

In the day of judgment the wicked will be shattered hopelessly, but

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see "Overcoming" on p. 536

## Editorial

# The Subjection of Women

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## Mike Willis

Recently, the front page headline reported that the Southern Baptists passed a measure affirming that women must graciously submit to their husband's "servant leadership." This made front page news because it is so out of step with the feminist agenda. An explanation was given that Baptists believe in the "literal interpretation" of the Bible, a deceitful way of saying that others reject what the Bible clearly affirms. The news story for us Christians is not that the Southern Baptists forthrightly affirmed Bible doctrine, but that the secular press viewed this position as so out of step that it was front page news copy.

The model for the home promoted by feminism is egalitarian. The feminist "ideal" is "equal partner" marriages with interchangeable roles of bread winner, house keeper, child trainer, etc. Writing against the concept of women being subject to men in the home, Letha Dawson Scanzoni and Nancy C. Hardesty wrote, "Equality and subordination are contradictions" (*All We're Meant To Be* 163).

That subordination does not mean inequality can be seen easily. One can illustrate the principle of submission by referring to civil authorities. One may be smarter, have better decision making skills, and be more qualified as a leader than a police officer, but when he flashes his lights, one's obligation is to submit to his authority. One stands as a police officer's equal, but still is subordinate to him.

The feminist agenda has spread so thoroughly in our society that some women want "obey" left out of their marriage vows. Can we leave out feminine subjection and be true to God's word?

### The Biblical View of the Role of Men and Women

The creation reveals the respective roles of men and women. Man by himself was in a state of separation, being alone (בָּדֵד, "separation. . . b. with sf. (89 t.) to express the idea of *by oneself, alone* (prop. *in his, thy, my separation*), Gn. 2:18 it is not good for men to be לֹבֵדֵד; *alone*," BDB 94). The Lord made for man a "help meet" (עֵזֶר כְּגִבּוֹרָה). The word "meet" is from the substantive עֵזֶר, used to mean "*acc. to what is in front of = corresponding to*, Gn 2:18 I will make him עֵזֶר כְּגִבּוֹרָה a help *corresponding to* him i.e. equal and adequate to himself, v. 20 among the animals there was no עֵזֶר כְּגִבּוֹרָה" (BDB 617). Note the concept that woman was made as a "help, succour" to man. Man was not made as a help, succour to woman. Some modern trends would place women in the career field with man as

see "Subjection" on p. 536

# “Women Of Bible Served as Missionaries, Elders”

Donald P. Ames

Recently I was given a shoe box of old sermons on cassette, along with some old bulletins, etc. dated about 10-20 years ago. Among the bulletins, I found a newspaper clipping by a lady from Decatur, Illinois bearing the above heading. It was in reply to a previously submitted letter, but bore no date, so I have no real way of determining just when it was written. Nevertheless, she made a strong case for her position, and I thought it might be good to review it in *Truth Magazine*. Not only are we to be ready to give a reason for the hope within us (1 Pet. 3:15), but by such an examination, it may help us avoid being caught by surprise sometime in answering this position, which is bound to increase in popularity in the religious world today.

She begins by pointing out that Paul mentions Priscilla’s name before that of Aquila (see Acts 18:26), a practice “unheard of” at that time. And while the KJV reverses them again to list Aquila first, in the Greek, Priscilla is listed first! Such listings frequently show who was the more influential of those listed. From this fact, she boldly states it was “because Priscilla is the pre-eminent teacher over the church.” However, in this passage, while Priscilla may have taken the leadership in the study, it was not “over the church,” but rather they took Apollos aside and privately taught him “the way of God more perfectly.” The most that can be made from this passage is that a woman can study with a man privately. Our writer has assumed too much from the passage, and affirmed a position the passage does not teach.

She next affirms that Junia (Rom. 16:7) was a “woman missionary, started new churches and filled the role of pastor.” (While “pastor” is a term for an elder, I understand she is using it in the denominational sense of a “preacher.”) Now while the name is a woman’s name (as can be determined from the Greek word used), the only thing Paul says about her is that she and Adronicus were his “kinsmen . . . fellow prisoners . . . who were in Christ before me.” No sources I could find affirmed the role she alleges Junia filled. Again, she has assumed, asserted, but has not proven the argument.

“Tryphena, Tryphose, and Persis (Rom. 16:12) were women evangelists”

*continued next page*

<b>Overcoming</b>	
Irvin Himmel .....	front page
<b>The Subjection of Women</b>	
Mike Willis .....	2
<b>“Women of Bible Served as Missionaries, Elders”</b>	
Donald P. Ames.....	3
<b>Understand Alike?</b>	
Larry Ray Hafley .....	5
<b>Smoking</b>	
Ken Leach.....	6
<b>Walking In the Fear of God (3)</b>	
Donnie V. Rader.....	8
<b>Seven Books More Loved and Trusted Than the Bible</b>	
Clarence W. Fell .....	10
<b>Known But to God</b>	
Johnie Edwards.....	13
<b>Unscriptural Marriage Covenants</b>	
Ron Halbrook .....	14
<b>The Itinerary/Identity of Jesus Christ</b>	
P.J. Casebolt.....	16
<b>Two Unscriptural Views Regarding Elders’ Leadership</b>	
John N. Evans .....	18
<b>“It Hath No Stalk”</b>	
J. Wiley Adams .....	21
<b>Capernaum</b>	
Mike Willis .....	22
<b>We Should Be Watching</b>	
Carrol Ray Sutton .....	23

she next boldly states. Again, granting they are womens' names, and they "labored much in the Lord," nowhere does the Bible refer to them as "evangelists." There are many ways a woman could labor in the Lord without being an evangelist, as seem in 1 Timothy 5, etc. So again, she has assumed the point she is trying to make.

Next she alludes to Deborah as a prophetess from the O.T. book of Judges. However this shows nothing about whether or not a woman can be an evangelist or an elder in the N.T. age. We are not under the Law of Moses today (Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:15-16; 2 Cor. 3; Heb. 8), but under Christ (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:20-23; etc.). The O.T. is not our source of authority, hence this argument has no bearing on the point under study.

Her next point is that "Phoebe was a deacon." This has reference to Romans 16:1, where the RSV did use the term "deacon" with reference to Phoebe. However all other reliable translations use the term "servant" instead. The word "deacon" can refer to the office of a deacon, or it can simply refer to one in the role of a "servant" (cf. John 2:5). As Paul set forth the qualifications for the office of a deacon in 1 Timothy 3, he states in v. 12: "Let the deacons be the husband of one wife." That pretty well settles the gender question. There are no qualifications set forth for a female deacon, and no record of any ever serving as such. A footnote in the Nelson KJV Study Bible notes this problem and says: "No specific specifications however are given of such an office."

Such women are better viewed as being either the wives of deacons (cf. 1 Tim. 3:11) or godly widows who were supported financially by the church (cf. 1 Tim. 5:9, 10). Here it is best to understand Phoebe's role to be that of a "helper."

The next argument she presents is that "Nympha was an elder." Reference here is to Colossians 4:15, and she boldly states, "The churches met in the homes of the elder of that church." (Again, elders are plural in the N.T. — there was no "the elder" of a church.) But again, one of the qualifications of an elder is that he is to be the "husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:6). Again, the gender question is settled by Paul. And although the KJV plainly states "the church which is in his house," I understand the Greek manuscripts are not quite so plain — some using the male form of the name, some the female; some saying "his house," some "her house," and some "their house." However many Christians of that time opened their homes for brethren to have a place to meet (cf. Acts 12:12; 1 Cor. 16:19; etc.), often in small groups. But because they might have had the space for such a meeting is no proof they were "in charge" or served as "the elder" over that church. Again, it is assumed, affirmed, and asserted, but lacking in proof. Hospitality did not make one an "elder" of the church!

Then she states that the only reason Jesus chose men as apostles was "because oral Jewish law would not recognize a woman as a witness. Her testimony was worthless and Jesus needed witnesses the Jews would accept." Yet she would have us to believe he would turn around and appoint them as evangelists and elders to bear testimony to the whole world. I hardly think so! She even turns around and notes that Jesus appeared first to Mary after his resurrection and "commissioned her to apostle the Apostles." Did she not bear "witness" that he had resurrected? Does our writer have inside information of Jesus' motives the Bible doesn't reveal to us? Did he reverse himself that quickly? Jesus selected men to serve as apostles, and while she would like to expand that role, the authority is going to have to come from God, not human supposition!

Paul plainly states that the evangelist is to preach "with all authority" (Tit. 2:15), that he is to preach the word and to reprove, rebuke, and exhort (2 Tim. 4:2). He also plainly states a woman is not to "usurp authority over the man" (1 Tim. 2:13). There is no reference to women serving as evangelists or elders in the N.T. and Paul has spelled out the reasons why, as we have noted in this study. Human speculation does not replace divine revelation. Our writer concludes by going to Mark 10:42-44, where Jesus says we are not to seek lordship, but be servants; and concludes he was dealing with "leadership in the spiritual realm" and clearing the way for women to later become evangelists. And while the Bible affirms there is "no difference" in Jew or Greek, bond or free, male or female (in acceptance or preference) in Christ (Gal. 3:28), God still has roles for each to fulfill (see Eph. 5:22f; 1 Cor. 11:3; 14:34-35; Tit. 2; etc.). Let us beware we do not try to add to the word of God to suit society today, or seek to achieve roles God has not assigned to us.

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# Understand Alike?

Larry Ray Hafley

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Some excuse and justify the conflicting and contradictory doctrines of denominationalism by saying that we cannot understand the Bible alike. Though God tells us we may understand the truth, some say it is impossible to do so (John 8:32; Eph. 3:4; 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:4). Let us see the inconsistency of those who say this.

Those who say we cannot understand the Bible alike will say that we must believe that Jesus is the divine Son of God. They will not permit disagreement. All alike must understand that Jesus died for our sins and that he was raised from the dead by the power of God (Rom. 4:25; 10:9, 10). Let them explain how it is that we are expected to understand the Bible alike with respect to the life and death of Jesus while they say it is impossible in other areas.

It is said that we cannot know the purpose of baptism. We cannot agree on whether or not baptism is one of the conditions of pardon, therefore, we may go our separate ways. You may believe that baptism is not essential for salvation, and I may believe that baptism is “for the remission of sins” (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16). However, it does not matter in God’s sight since we cannot understand it alike.

If that is true, if it does not matter, and if we are free to believe either way, what about the element in which we are baptized? Does it matter? If I believe baptism is valid if one is immersed in buttermilk, am I just as free to believe that as you are to believe that baptism is in water (Acts 8:36; 10:47)? Would you insist that for baptism to be acceptable it must be performed in water and not in a pile of leaves? Must we understand alike that baptism is in water and not in whipped cream?

Others say we cannot agree on which church is right. Hence, I may go to “my church” and you are free to “join the church of your choice.” If that be true, is one free to choose not to be a member of *any* church, not even the Lord’s (Acts 20:28; Eph. 2:16; 5:23, 30, 32)? If we cannot “bind” one church over another, then Jim Jones, who led his

“church” to commit suicide, is as valid as the Lord’s body. What about those nut-case groups who kill themselves to hitch a ride on a spaceship tethered to a comet? Are those churches as good as the one for which Jesus suffered and bled and died (Eph. 5:25, 26)?

It has been said that some would justify adulterous marriages because there is no consensus on the knotty issue of marriage, divorce, and remarriage (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). Let us grant that since we cannot understand it alike that folks are allowed to enter into nearly any kind of questionable marriage relationship. Because there are many hard questions about divorce and remarriage, we will welcome nearly any married couple into our fellowship. Alright, then, suppose a fellow says he is not sure that marriage is limited to males and females. No, he is “not certain” that he can “understand it like you do.” He believes it is possible that God may allow marriages of men to men and women to women, not to mention the marriage of a man to a horse or a woman to a billygoat.

What now? Do we “demand” and insist that he understand with us that scriptural marriage can only be between a man and a woman (Matt. 19:3-6; 1 Cor. 7:2-5)? If so, what happens to the idea that we cannot understand the Bible alike?

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# Smoking

Ken Leach

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I don't know if you read the following article but it is worthy of note. It appeared in the June 18, 1998 *Arizona Republic*.

"It's the common dilemma every parent faces. You nurture them, guide them, lead by example, but once they reach their teen years, it often goes right out the window as adolescents try to reinvent themselves and recommit the mistakes their parents made.

Mike Balis, a Paradise Valley ophthalmologist, could see it coming. His younger daughter, Elizabeth, 14, was trying out her wings, and Balis wasn't too sure he liked her cruising altitude.

Then something happened. The father found out that his usually-health-conscious daughter had sampled a cigarette.

'When I found out she had experimented with smoking, I was disappointed.' Balis said. 'Initially, I was angry.

'I decided that rather than confront her with rage or anger, that the best thing would be to write her a letter that was informational and instructive, and would convey to her my reasons for not wanting her to do it.'

Here is that letter . . .

"Dear Elizabeth:

I have written this letter to you because I love you. When I heard that you had smoked, I was not angry. I was sad, but mostly I was disappointed. You had led me to believe that you understood the risks involved in smoking, and that you would 'never try it.'

I know how important peer pressure is, and how trying something new is exciting and fascinating. Exploring new territory is usually a positive endeavor, as long as the end result isn't potentially self-destructive. Often our judgment is clouded by emotions that are stronger than wisdom or reason. We all make mistakes. I don't want you to make a mistake that could affect the rest of your life.

Please take the time to read this letter in its entirety. I wrote it to inform you, not to harass you. Although everyone knows about lung cancer and smoking, there are many other considerations regarding this addiction that merit consideration.

**. . . nicotine addiction is more powerful than heroin or cocaine. One out of four intravenous cocaine users become addicted. One out of two smokers become addicted. There is no safe level of tobacco use.**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a huge federal agency that studies disease patterns, nicotine addiction is more powerful than heroin or cocaine. One out of four intravenous cocaine users become addicted. One out of two smokers become addicted. There is no safe level of tobacco use.

Each day, 6,000 kids smoke for the first time. Three thousand of these kids become regular smokers, and the vast majority continue smoking for the rest of their lives. The CDC estimates that 5 million children living today will die early

because of the decision they make as adolescents to use tobacco.

Tobacco companies spend over \$5 billion a year on advertising, and most of their ads are designed to appeal to kids. Virtually all adult smokers began their habit as children. Many internal memos and documents that have been circulated within the tobacco industry reveal the strong

motivation that the cigarette manufacturers have to hook kids on smoking. Here are some examples:

Memo from a tobacco company:

Realistically, if our company is to survive and prosper, over the long term, we must get our share of the youth market. In my opinion, this will require new brands tailored to the youth market.

R.J.R. should make a substantial long-term commitment of manpower and money dedicated to younger adult smoker programs.

These companies recognize that the vast majority of smokers start before the age of 18.

Since older smokers either quit (if they can) or die from smoking-related illness, the youth market is the major source of replacement smokers.

Memo from another tobacco company:

Today's teenager is tomorrow's potential regular customer, and the overwhelming majority of smokers first begin to smoke while still in their teens. Tobacco advertising works, and children are the ultimate victims. The strategy of the manufacturers, marketing companies and retail stores is to hook kids on smoking. Health is not their concern — making money is their only motivation.

The average smoker begins at age 13 and becomes a daily smoker by age 14½. Cigarettes kill more than 400,000 people a year. Smoking causes more deaths in women than breast cancer. That's more than from alcohol, crack, heroin, murders, suicide, car accidents and AIDS combined. Smoking is the most preventable cause of premature death in this country. Most adult smokers realize the dangers but they just cannot stop smoking. Indeed, the business of "stop-smoking" remedies is a multibillion-dollar industry.

Some of these remedies include hypnosis, biofeedback, psycho-therapy, subliminal tapes, motivational seminars, group therapy, stop-smoking clubs, and support groups. The store shelves are full of nicotine chewing gum, skin patches, tobaccoless cigarettes, and pills, all of which are designed to help 'kick the habit.' Few of these 'cures' work. Most smokers go right back to the habit after a brief period of time. Forty percent of teenagers who smoke daily have tried to quit and have failed. Forty-two percent of young people who smoke as few as three cigarettes go on to become regular smokers.

Why start smoking when the vast majority of existing smokers regret that they ever started, and are so desperate to stop that they are spending billions of dollars per year to free themselves from this horrible addiction?

Why start a habit that makes your breath bad, almost always causes a chronic cough, and stains your teeth and fingers? Why join that group of desperate individuals who, after a brief flight, run through the airport with an unlit cigarette dangling from their mouth, in desperate anticipation of lighting up? Why assemble in those little alleys outside office buildings with other nervous smokers getting their fix, as they stand around, inhaling those precious fumes amid piles of crushed cigarette butts? Tobacco use accounts for over one-third of all cancer-related deaths. Do you know what a carcinogen is? A carcinogen is a chemical that is known to induce cancer in healthy tissue. Cigarette smoke contains 43 known carcinogens. That means that these 43 agents have been proven, in laboratory tests, to cause cancer.

We all know about smoking and lung cancer. What about other cancers that are caused by smoking? The following list includes the cancers that are known to be associated with smoking: lung, colon, rectum, anus, liver, stomach, bladder, throat, tongue, lip, esophagus, breast, kidney, cervix, ureter, pancreas, leukemia, myeloma.

The negative effects of smoking are not limited to cancer causation. Some other disorders caused, or made worse by smoking, include: back pain due to lumbar disc disease, spinal fractures, hip fractures, emphysema, bronchitis, influenza, pneumonia, diabetes, high blood pressure, infertility, osteoporosis, stroke, heart attack, dental cavities, tooth loss from gum disease, premature wrinkling, delayed wound healing, ear infections, headaches, premature menopause, stomach ulcers.

Why are smokers at so much greater risk for heart disease and stroke? Because nicotine is a powerful vasoconstrictor. It causes blood vessels to narrow so that they carry less blood. Another effect of nicotine is that it raises blood pressure. High blood pressure is a known cause of heart attack and stroke. Smoking also causes atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), a condition that narrows and clogs blood vessels.

When I do an eye exam, I know if the person I'm examining is a smoker. I can determine this by looking inside their eyes. The blood vessels in the eyes are much smaller in smokers. They are very narrow and they contain many areas called focal constriction. The vessels look as if they are in spasm. Smokers also have a greater incidence of macular degeneration and ischemic optic neuropathy, two serious eye conditions that can often cause blindness.

You're a great kid. You're full of life and energy. You're just a normal, rebellious teenager who wants to experience life to the fullest. That's OK, but please consider the risks of some of your explorations. You have a healthy body — it

# Walking In The Fear Of God (3)

Donnie V. Rader

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Psalm 34 is a Psalm of David. It is an acrostic (Alphabetic) Psalm where in Hebrew each line begins with the successive Hebrew alphabet. However, it is irregular. One letter (*vau*) is missing and another (*pe*) is repeated. It is the second such Psalm. The twenty-fifth Psalm is one also.

The title of the Psalm says, "A Psalm of David when he pretended madness before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed." This refers to the events of 1 Samuel 21:10-15 where David, because he was afraid, acted like he was crazy before Achish, the king of Gath. The Psalm does not indicate any attempt to vindicate David's action. In fact, in the Psalm, David makes no reference to his conduct. He makes no comment upon it. He merely recalls his feelings at the time of his deliverance. We are not to assume that this was necessarily written at the time of the events of 1 Samuel 21.

A quick reading of this Psalm suggests there are two divisions: (1) vv. 1-10 and (2) vv. 11-22. Charles Spurgeon calls the first part a *hymn* and the second a *sermon*. The first ten verses deal with thanksgiving and praise for deliverance. The last twelve deal with instruction.

## The Point Of Psalms 34

The point of the Psalm is that Jehovah is our provider, protector, and deliverer. Albert Barnes wrote, "The general purport and bearing of the Psalm, therefore, is to furnish an argument for trusting in God in the time of trouble, and for leading such a life that we may confidently trust him as our Protector and Friend" (*Barnes Notes, Psalms*, I:286).

We also learn some lessons about the fear of God and the blessings that those who fear receive.

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is essentially brand new. Please consider the consequences of smoking before you try it again. Why start a habit that is responsible for more disease and death than any other voluntary endeavor?

I respect you immensely, and I love you as much as I respect you. Please choose wisely.

Love,  
Dad"

The letter you just read was not written by a Christian (at least I am unaware of him being a baptized believer) nor a preacher-type with something "spiritual" to prove. It was written by a doctor of medicine and a father to his daughter. Lessons can be learned from the letter.

If you are a Christian there are more considerations you must make before beginning or continuing the habit

of smoking. It violates 1 Corinthians 3:16 which says we must take care of our body. It violates 2 Corinthians 6:17 which says we must come out and be separate from the world. Smoking is worldly. If you are an adult smoker you violate Luke 17:2 which says it would be better if you were drowned than for you to set a bad example, thus causing a little one to stumble. Smoking sets a bad example. Smoking is a waste of money and violates the principle of stewardship outlined in 1 Corinthians 4:2.

Add to the things above that smoking makes your breath bad, your temper short and your clothes stink. I know, I was a smoker.

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### An Outline

1. David's Praise Toward God (vv. 1-10)
  - a. Pledge to praise God always (vv. 1-3).
  - b. David's experience: The Lord heard and delivered (vv. 4-7).
  - c. God blesses those who trust and fear (vv. 8-11).
2. Instructions To Fear (vv. 11-22)
  - a. How to fear God (vv. 11-14).
  - b. The blessings of those who fear (vv. 15-22).

### A Closer Look At The Psalm

David begins with a pledge to praise God at all times (vv. 1-3). In every circumstance and situation whether in trials and darkness or calmness when all is bright. In this, he makes a statement of his dedication and devotion of which he is not ashamed (v. 2). He stirs others to magnify God's name with him (v. 3).

In the next four verses David tells of how he cried to the Lord and the Lord heard and delivered him from his enemies. He shows his confidence in the Lord. It is in this section that he introduces us to the fear of the Lord (v. 7). His point is that the Lord protects and delivers those who fear God.

Verses 8-10 describe how God blesses those who trust him and fear his name. He said, "Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear him" (v. 9). He concludes the first part of this Psalm saying, "But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing" (v. 10).

The second part of the Psalm (vv. 11-22) is instructions to fear God. First, he invites all to come and learn about the fear of God (v. 11). In the next verse he tells us that those who fear God are the ones who truly enjoy life and see good days (v. 12). The writer then tells us how to see those good days (thus telling us how to fear God): (1) Control the tongue (v. 13). (2) Depart from evil (v. 14). (3) Do good (v. 14). (4) Seek peace, and pursue it (v. 14).

Verses 15-22 tell of the blessings that those who fear God receive. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous (those who fear) and his ears are open to their prayer (v. 15, cf. 1 Pet. 3:12). The Lord delivers his people from their troubles (vv. 17, 19). He redeems the soul of his servants (v. 22).

### Lessons About Fear From This Psalm

There are several practical lessons we learn from this Psalm about the fear of God.

*1. Fear must be taught* (v. 11). If we fear God, we have been taught to fear God. If we want our children to fear God, we must teach them to fear God. When we wonder why some of our children have no use for God or his word, we would do well to consider that maybe we didn't teach them to fear God.

*2. What it means to fear God.* The term "fear" is equated with several other expressions in the context. These terms serve as a commentary on what is involved in fearing God. What verses 7, 9, and 11 refer to as one who "fears," v. 8 describes as one who "trusts in him." Verse 10 says "seek the Lord." Verse 15 calls this one "righteous." Verse 22 says he is a servant.

*3. The Lord protects those who fear him* (vv. 7, 15, 17, 19). The Lord cares about his people. He delivers them from their troubles.

*4. The Lord blesses those who fear him* (vv. 8-10). God gives us all that we need (2 Pet. 1:3). There is no promise that the Lord would give us all we want. He did promise that he would grant all we need. While the young lion may hunger, his people will not lack any good thing (v. 10).

*5. Those who fear God are those who really enjoy life* (v. 12). Those who seek pleasure from life without the fear of God, have no idea what real joy is. In fact, they don't really understand what life itself is all about.

*6. God's listens to those who fear him* (vv. 15-22). What a privilege to have God's ear tuned to our request! Such an honor is not granted to just anyone. It is an honor bestowed only on those who fear God.

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# Seven Books More Loved and Trusted Than the Bible

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Clarence W. Fell

**F**or many people the very idea that any book could be more loved and trusted than the Bible is nothing less than blasphemy. Yet, it's true. What is even more surprising is that some people who love and trust these other books claim allegiance to the Bible!

Many people are surprised to learn that there are seven books more loved and trusted than the Bible. Let's look at those seven books to see if they are worthy of your love and trust.

For many people the very idea that any book could be more loved and trusted than the Bible is nothing less than blasphemy. Yet, it's true. What is even more surprising is that some people who love and trust these other books claim allegiance to the Bible! Other embrace these books and don't even realize that they are doing so.

How could this be? Especially when Jesus warns, "No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). How could people follow some other book than the Bible? As you will see, it is actually very simple. In fact, you could be a victim of one of these false books and not even know it.

## The Book of Opinion

This book is probably the most popular of the seven. It is frequently used to replace the actual study of God's word. You know that people are using this book when they say something like, "It just seems to me . . ."



When people build their hope on the Book of

Opinion they are headed for trouble because the Book of Opinion is not inspired. It is not the gospel (Rom. 1:16).

Compare the ever popular "It just seems to me . . ." statement to the teaching of Proverbs 14:12, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death," or Jeremiah 10:23, "It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps."

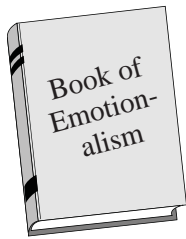
The Book of Opinion does not lead to eternal life. Toss it out. Build squarely on the Bible. After all, it is the word of God, not the Book of Opinion, that will judge you in the last day (John 12:48).

## The Book of Emotionalism

Quotes from this book often include the phrase, "I just feel in my heart . . ." It is amazing that anyone would use this book for spiritual guidance. Proverbs 28:26 warns, "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool." Yet, it is a popular book in many religious circles.

The danger of this book is further seen when we consider that everyone feels that he is right. No one becomes part of a religious group because he feels that the group is wrong.

If feeling right makes a person right then most people will be saved and Jesus was wrong. He said, "Not



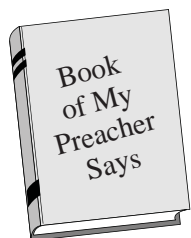
everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 7:21; cf. Matt. 7:13-14; Rom. 10:1-3).

Don't trust the Book of Emotionalism. Toss it out. Build squarely on the Bible. It is the Bible that makes man wise unto salvation (Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 3:15; cf. John 8:32).

### The Book of My Preacher Says

Many people substitute this book for study. The problem with this book is that everyone has his own version and the versions are as different as night and day. If this book was truly inspired by God then all the versions would be the same because God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33).

God anticipated this book and warned, "If anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:9). It does not matter who your preacher is, or what he thinks; the Holy Spirit has told him, if he teaches anything different from the Bible he is wrong. You are to count him among the "accursed" (2 John 9-11).



God is not inconsistent. After inspiring Galatians 1:9, God will not contradict himself by telling your preacher to preach a different message than the Bible message.

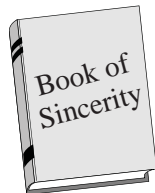
Preachers can make mistakes and be wrong. Don't trust the Book of My Preacher Says. Toss it out. Build on the Bible.

If you feel a little guilty about double checking your preacher's teaching then read about the Bereans.

They were praised for double checking the teachings of the Apostle Paul (Acts 17:11). If Paul can stand double checking, then certainly preachers can today. The truth has nothing to lose and everything to gain when double checked.

### The Book of Sincerity

This book is being used when you hear the phrase, "It doesn't matter what you believe, just so you are sincere." Most people are sincere, yet that does not make them right. Sincerity alone is not enough.

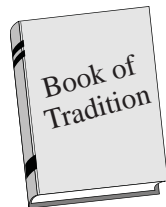


Paul said that Jesus will take vengeance on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:8). He also said that those who do not obey the truth will receive tribulation (Rom. 2:8-9).

While we must be sincere, we must also be right. Those who are sincerely mistaken are in for a rude awakening in the judgment day (Matt. 15:14). Toss out the Book of Sincerity. Build squarely on the Bible.

### The Book of Tradition

Quotes from this book sound something like, "It was good enough for Grandpa, so it's good enough for me."



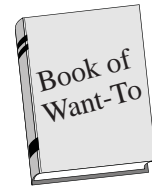
Jesus scolded people for mixing tradition in with the word of God (Matt. 15:8-9).

There is no doubt that following the religion of our ancestors will bring us to be eternally with them. The question is: "Where will it be? Be careful! Just because grandpa did it does not make it right.

Toss the Book of Tradition out. Build squarely upon the Word of God.

### The Book of Want-To

Some people think that just because the majority want to, that makes it OK. Folks, it just isn't so. If a million people believe in a stupid idea, it is still a stupid idea. The majority walk the broad way that leads to destruction (Matt. 7:13-14).

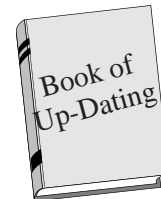


To assume that the "want-to" of the majority is acceptable to God is the ultimate in pride and arrogance. We please God by following his word, not the "want-to" of man. (cf. 2 Tim. 4:2-5) Toss the Book of Want-To out. Build squarely on the Bible.

### The Book of Up-Dating

Quotes from this book sound something like, "We need to get with the times."

To up-date the Bible is to doubt the sufficiency of the original (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3). Up-dating necessarily infers that the Bible is not good enough the way that God wrote it. Now tell us. Where is the man or woman qualified to judge God's word in this manner?



It gets worse. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My word will endure forever" (Matt. 24:35). Was Jesus right or wrong? If the Scriptures need up-dating, then Jesus' word did not endure but grew old and in need of repair. Are you really willing to take such a stand against the Scriptures and call into question the power and Judgment of God?

Toss out the Book of Updating. Build squarely on the Bible.

There you have seven books that some people love and trust more than the Bible. Others have been deceived. Are you a victim? Take the test and see.

### Take the Test!

Paul said, "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves" (2 Cor. 13:5).

Instructions: Answer the questions based on what your church teaches. Then list the verses that teach what your church teaches. (Ask your preacher for help if necessary.) Finally, compare your answers to the verses listed.

1. Is the name of your church in the Bible?  
Give the verse.  
See 1 Cor. 1:10-13.
2. Does your church use titles such as Pastor, Reverend, or Father?  
Give the verse.  
See Matt. 23:8-11.
3. Does your church teach that obedience is not necessary to be saved?  
Give the verse.  
See Heb. 5:9; Matt. 7:21; 2 Thess. 1:8.
4. Does your church teach that baptism is optional?  
Give the verse.  
See Luke 7:30; 2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Peter 3:21.
5. Does your church teach that denominational division is of God?  
Give the verse.  
See John 17:20-23; 1 Cor. 1:10-13.
6. Does your church observe the Lord's Supper once a year, twice a year, quarterly, or monthly?  
Give the verse.  
See Acts 20:7.
7. Does your church teach that you just have to be sincere for God to save you?  
Give the verse.  
See Matt. 7:21-23; 1 Peter 1:22.
8. Does your church teach once saved, always saved?  
Give the verse.  
See John 15:1-6; 1 Cor. 9:27
9. Does your church borrow practices from the Old Testament? (such as candles, incense, instrumental music, or priestly garments).  
Give the verse.  
See Gal. 3:23-25; 5:1-4; Heb. 8:7.
10. Does your church baptize infants?  
Give the verse.  
See Acts 8:12.
11. Does your church have women preachers?  
Give the verse.  
See 1 Tim. 2:12.
12. Does your church practice sprinkling or pouring for baptism?  
Give the verse.  
See Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12.
13. Does your church teach that if God did not specifically speak against any of the things listed above that it is all right to practice those things?  
Give the verse.  
See Lev. 10:1-2; Gal. 3:15; Rev. 22:18-19.
14. Does your church refer to any of the other seven books to authorize their practice of any of things listed above?  
Give the verse.  
See Gal. 1:6-9; 3:15; Rev. 22:18-19.

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# Known But To God

Johnie Edwards

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At the tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, there is a sign reading, "Known But To God." There are some things known but to God:

1. *The Hairs Of Our Head.* Most people do not know how many hairs there are on their head. God does. Jesus said, "But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Luke 12:7). And, yet folks want to worry about things over which they have no control.

2. *When A Sparrow Falls.* It is asked, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father?" (Matt. 10:29). I have no idea how many sparrows fall on the ground, do you? This is known only to God. Surely he cares for us. ". . . ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke 12:7).

3. *The Thoughts Of A Man.* The Psalmist penned, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of a man, that they are vanity" (Ps. 94:11). I do not know what men are thinking, unless they tell me. God knows our every thought! "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11). The only way that we can know the mind of God is to read what he has revealed in the Bible. So, we need to quit saying, "I know what you are thinking," when we don't know the thoughts of a man.

4. *The Number Added To The Church.* I often see men trying to guess as to the number of members in the Lord's church. This is known only to God. We can read in Acts 2:41 as to how many were baptized on Pentecost, "Then they that gladly received the word were baptized . . ." ". . . And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). Do you know how many that is? I read of "multitudes" being added to the Lord (Acts 11:24). Can you tell how many that is? There are some things known but to God.

5. *When Christ Will Return.* Time and date setters, as to the second coming of Christ, have come and gone over the

years. And he has still not come! Jesus said of his second coming, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13:32). Peter said that Jesus will return as a "thief in the night" (2 Pet. 3:10). So be ready!

6. *What We Will Look Like In Heaven.* If you will read Philippians 3:21, 1 John 3:2, and 1 Corinthians 15:36-54, you will know all that any man knows about it. There are some things known as, "the secret things" which "belong unto God . . ." (Deut. 29:29).

## Whisper Sweet Nothings to Me Morris Hafley

Due to the preaching we get  
It makes me want to up and quit.  
I know it was to the Ephesians for three years  
That Paul ceased not to warn night and day with tears.

Why must we that kind of preaching repeat  
When my ears could be tickled with words so sweet?  
Take all this preaching from our so-called "watchdogs"  
Pitch it in the slop-bucket and give it to the hogs.

My mind's made up, don't confuse me with the facts.  
Just preach to me from the gospels, nothing from Acts.  
I like soft preaching when sitting my pew,  
Nothing with substance upon which I must chew.

Hellfire and brimstone preaching is not my cup of tea.  
I can't stand sermons warning that I must flea  
From things like fornication, false teachers or whatever it be.  
Tell me how I can feel good and whisper sweet nothings to me.

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# Unscriptural Marriage Covenants

Ron Halbrook

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It is sometimes argued that people in unscriptural marriages should remain in them because they have made a covenant to do so. It is said that a person in an unscriptural marriage should not get out of it because to do so would be to break his marriage bond. Such a person should preserve the sanctity of his family relationship rather than become guilty of covenant breaking, we are told. This view is in error for several reasons.

## When God Does *Not* Join Them

God ordained marriage and he joins people in marriage only if it is according to his will (Gen. 2:24). “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matt. 19:6). God does not join two homosexuals in marriage no matter how many vows, ceremonies, and covenants they participate in. Their immoral relationship may be called “marriage” only in an accommodative sense, i.e., they profess and pretend to enter the relationship of Genesis 2:24 known as marriage. Their “covenant” is a farce and a fiction. There is no true “marriage bond” joining them together in the sight of God. There is no “sanctity” to a “family relationship” not sanctioned or sanctified by God.

The same objections stand against polygamous marriages, according to plain statements of God’s law in the gospel age. The Lord, who ordained marriage and who joins people in marriage, said, “Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband” (1 Cor. 7:2). God did not say, “Let every man have his own *wives*, and let every woman have her own *husbands*.”

Likewise, the same objections stand against other unscriptural marriages, according to plain statements of God’s law in the gospel age. The Lord, who ordained marriage and who joins people in marriage, said, “Whosoever shall put

away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery,” and, “Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marieth her which is put away doth commit adultery” (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). When people marry contrary to God’s law, God recognizes it only as sin and rebellion against Him. Yes, Jesus spoke of people entering such relationships as marrying, for that is what they profess and pretend to do, but he also pronounced it to be nothing more or less than “adultery.” Such people do not go to the bed of purity in true marriage but go to the bed of impurity in adultery (Heb. 13:4). In other words, such a relationship is unscriptural, unauthorized, impure, immoral, and an abomination in God’s sight!

**There is no “sanctity” to homosexual, polygamous, or other adulterous relationships — even when they are put under the name of “marriage.”**

There is no “sanctity” to homosexual, polygamous, or other adulterous relationships — even when they are put under the name of “marriage.” To attempt to give them the aura of “sanctity” is bold, brazen, highhanded rebellion against the authority of God. Such is the spirit of the “man of sin . . . , the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped;

so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2 Thess. 2:3-4).

## Fruits Meet for Repentance”

To enter such immoral relationships is to defy the God of heaven, and to continue in them is to persist in defying God. The Bible teaches consistently that people in unscriptural marriages need to repent and to “bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance” by getting out of them (Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20). For instance, when the Jews married Gentile wives contrary to the law of Moses, Ezra as God’s prophet demanded this very thing: “Now therefore

make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure; and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives” (Ezra 10:11). In order to come to the Lord, they had to get out of their unscriptural marriages. The marriage of Herod to Herodias was incestuous adultery. John told Herod to repent and get out of this marriage: “It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife” (Mark 6:18). Herod could not have come to Christ while remaining in this adulterous marriage. When a brother at Corinth persisted in marriage with his father’s wife, Paul commanded the church “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan” (1 Cor. 5:1-5). The church erred by tolerating this man. In fact, the brethren were proud to have him — perhaps he was a good song leader or could make impressive talks at the Lord’s table. This man could not come to Christ and find forgiveness unless he got out of his union with this woman, no matter what vows, ceremonies, and commitments had occurred.

### **Breaking a Covenant with Satan**

But, someone protests, if people get out of unscriptural marriages, aren’t they “breaking a covenant”? Yes, they are breaking a covenant witnessed and sealed by Satan rather than God. When the commitments of marriage are made to form an unscriptural and adulterous union, they are vows and promises to live in sin. A person sins by making such vows and commitments, not by breaking them. Saul vowed with letters representing civil authority to cast Christians into prison — he promised to sin. Had he refused to break this promise, he could not have come to Christ in baptism (Acts 9:1-2, 18). After his remarkable conversion, forty Jews “bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul” (Acts 23:12). These men needed to “repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance” (Acts 26:20). To have kept their covenant would have been sinful, to break it righteous. Vows and promises to live in sin, even those made before legal authorities and friends, ought not to be kept. “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Promises, vows, commitments, and covenants to sin are themselves sinful. To vow to live with someone as a mate in marriage when God forbids it is to vow to live in sin. It is a covenant committing these two people to live in immorality and rebellion against God. What ought to be done about such a promise? To ask is to answer. Such a covenant is “a covenant with death, and with hell,” i.e., a deal with the devil, but it shall not stand nor deliver people from the wrath of God. The only hope for deliverance through Christ is in forsaking such a covenant (Isa. 28:14-20).

### **Separating Valid Obligations from Sin**

Someone may ask what should be done about financial and moral obligations which were created while living in

sin but which can be fulfilled without committing sin. For instance, suppose Saul had borrowed a coat or rented a donkey when he went in search of Christians to imprison. Must he return the coat and pay the rent? Yes, no sin is involved in meeting such obligations. Suppose a polygamous man obeys the gospel. Can he continue to live with several wives? No, sin is involved in maintaining unscriptural and adulterous marriages. Suppose a man like Herod obeys the gospel. Can he continue to maintain his unscriptural marriage? No, sin is involved in maintaining unscriptural and adulterous marriages.

Might it be possible to provide some association, moral training, and material needs to the children born through adulterous unions? Yes, a person should try to fulfill such obligations to the best of his ability without participating in anything sinful. That is true even of children fathered outside any pretense of marriage, as often happens. The father will find his efforts to fulfill his duty to the children fraught with difficulties and constant, painful reminders of his sin. A father who walks away from such children compounds his sins, but occasionally a mother prevents the father from performing his duty. The mothers of children born of adulteries sometimes leave the area and cut off all contact between the father and the children. While that is painful for the father and the innocent children, all must realize that this pain is the tragic result of his committing adultery, not of his obedience to God. Had he obeyed God from the beginning and avoided adultery, he would not be facing the bitter fruit of his sin. Had he continued in an unscriptural and unsanctified marriage, he ultimately would have reaped an even more painful and shameful harvest from his sins.

### **Consequences and Complications**

Many temporal consequences afflict the adulterer and the adulteress even after they seek and find forgiveness of their sins. At times, it seems only a Solomon could unravel all the tangled complications which may follow. The knotty problems and unutterable sorrows which attended David’s life after his sin with Bathsheba are instructive in this regard. Such consequences are not limited to the sin of adultery. When Paul remembered his past sins against God’s people, he thought of himself as the very chief of sinners, though he knew God had forgiven him (1 Tim. 1:15). There must have been times when he saw, perhaps even in his dreams, the relatives of people he had mercilessly persecuted, and found his heart throbbing in his throat. God warned long ago, “Good understanding giveth favor: but the way of the transgressor is hard” (Prov. 13:15).

Let those who are weary and heavy laden with the weight of sin in adulterous marriages know that God will forgive the sinner who forsakes his sin (Matt. 11:27-30). Let them know it was a sin to enter such a marriage, which is no marriage at all under divine law, but which is the moral

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# The Itinerary/Identity of Jesus Christ

P. J. Casebolt

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**For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this (Isa. 9:6,7).**

Not only can Jesus be identified by the names given unto him, but also by his itinerary during his earthly sojourn. Some of the names assigned to Jesus had to do with some of the places he visited, and his itinerary had something to do with the fulfillment of prophecies made concerning him.

First of all, the itinerary and identity of Jesus began in heaven. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (John 3: 13). "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim. 3:16).

In fulfillment of prophecy, the earthly itinerary of Jesus began in "Bethlehem of Judea" (Matt. 2:4-6). This event

fulfilled another prophecy: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:23). Not only was Jesus to sit and reign on the throne of David, but both David and Jesus were from the same town of Bethlehem (1 Sam. 17:12).

After the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, an angel of the Lord directed Joseph to flee into Egypt with Jesus and his mother. This part of the earthly itinerary of Jesus fulfilled another prophecy: "Out of Egypt have I called my son" (Matt. 3:13-15; Hos. 11:1).

Upon the return of Joseph, Mary, and Jesus from Egypt, they "came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene" (Matt. 2:23). When Jesus was crucified, the title on his cross identified his early childhood itinerary with the words, "JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS" (John 19:19). Jesus also identified himself in this fashion to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus (Acts 22:8). This mark of Christ's identity may have been a reproach to some of the Jews (John 1:46), but it tends to identify the Son of God.

The name Christian was given to the disciples of Jesus while the apostles Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch (Acts

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equivalent of adultery and an abomination to God. The alien sinner must come to Christ by faith, repent of every sin, confess Christ's name, and submit to him in baptism for the remission of sins (Gal. 3:26-27). But, he cannot maintain an unscriptural marriage. The Christian who errs by entering an adulterous marriage must repent of it, confess it, and seek God's forgiveness in prayer (Acts 8:22). But, he cannot maintain an unscriptural marriage. Let the sinner know that as a result of his sin, he will reap temporal pain,

including the pain of seeing the innocent suffer from his sin, but know too that God can bind up his wounds. Let him come to God with a poor, humble, contrite heart, trembling before God, and he will forgive and guide us all to a home in heaven (Ps. 51:17; Isa. 66:2). Do not be deceived by those who say the sinner can come to Christ while maintaining the sinful covenant of an unscriptural marriage.

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11:26), and that name was later endorsed by both Paul (Acts 26:28, 29), and Peter (1 Pet. 4:14-16). Jesus could be called a Nazarene because it (Nazareth) was the city where Jesus spent his boyhood years, even as some of his disciples were called Galilaens (Acts 2:7), and John was called “John the Baptist” because of his mission to baptize (Matt. 3:1). No other one claiming to be the Messiah could lay claim to the itinerary or identity of Jesus of Nazareth.

“And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying . . . The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up” (Matt. 4:13-16). Not only was much of Jesus’ preaching done in the regions of Galilee, this is where he began to make disciples and choose his apostles. Some 750 years before Jesus began his earthly sojourn, Isaiah the prophet outlines a portion — itinerary and some of the salient marks of his identity.

During his earthly ministry, Jesus often avoided Jerusalem and the final confrontation with those who were determined to apprehend, torture, and crucify “the Son of God,” because his “hour was not yet come.” But eventually, Jesus knew that he had to face Jerusalem and the part it played in his itinerary and identity as “the Son of God.”

The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah established a reputation which lives to this day. In the eyes of the Jews, Nazareth and Galilee held dubious reputations as far as prophets were concerned (John 1:46; 7:52). Jesus confounded those who held these latter concepts, and established himself as “Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee” (Matt. 21:11). But Jerusalem holds the all-time record for the persecution, imprisonment, and death of God’s holy prophets (Matt. 23:29-36; Luke 13:33-35). Jesus was not born in Jerusalem as the Book of Mormon falsely stated, but he was certainly condemned and crucified there on Calvary.

President Roosevelt declared December 7, 1941 as “a day of infamy” when the Japanese perpetrated their sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, but Jerusalem laid claim to that title when it crucified the sinless Son of God on Calvary some 1900 years before Pearl Harbor. Attempts have been made to delete these events from history, and to exonerate those who were guilty of such ignominious deeds, but history cannot be forever buried, whether it be good or bad.

When Jesus made his earthly advent, he “was made of the seed of David according to the flesh” (Rom. 1:3), and this phase of his identity was stressed during his earthly sojourn. After his death and burial, not only was his claim to be the son of David vindicated as he ascended to David’s throne, but he was “declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4). When Jesus claimed on earth that he was the Son of God, it cost him his life because, said the Jews, “he made himself the Son of God” (John 19:7). Jesus was not crucified because of his earthly itinerary in or identity with Nazareth, but because of his claim to be the Son of God.

Where did the itinerary of Jesus take him when he left this earth? He ascended into the clouds of heaven (Acts 1:7-9), “he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things” (Eph. 4:9, 10.)

When Jesus asked his disciples, “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?” (Matt. 16:13), several answers were given. But no man can come close to duplicating the itinerary and identity of Jesus, the Son of God.

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# Two Unscriptural Views Regarding Elders' Leadership

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John N. Evans

Have you ever examined thoroughly the subject of elders' leadership or authority? It has been my experience that this is one topic which is often neglected in our study of God's shepherds. We spend hours debating and thrashing out the qualifications of elders, which are indeed important, and neglect to examine in equal detail the congregation's relationship to the elders.

What is the scope of the elders' leadership? Just how far should a congregation follow elders? What are the limits which God's word imposes on elders' authority? Do elders serve as examples only? Do they have the right to make any decisions of judgment on behalf of the congregation? Do Acts 6, Acts 15, and 1 Corinthians 5 indicate that all significant decisions must be congregational decisions, with all members taking an active role in making those decisions? These are the types of questions which come to mind when we discuss the elders' leadership.

In recent years, this subject has received greater attention. Books have been written which address these questions, debates have taken place, and Christians have sought Bible answers. When a preacher addresses the subject in his sermons, he'll often be asked now about the elders' authority. Where does it begin and where does it end?

It would be impossible to answer all the questions which I have posed in one article. For example, a careful examina-

tion of Acts 6, Acts 15, and 1 Corinthians 5 necessitates a separate study. What I would like to do, however, is examine two prominent, equally unscriptural views regarding the elders' leadership. I say equally unscriptural because both of these doctrines violate God's law to an equal degree.

The first view holds that we must follow the elders no matter how they rule or decide. This is the notion that, "We have to do whatever the elders say, because they are the elders. They know what's best for us." In essence, this view gives elders authoritarian or dictatorial powers and would allow them to "lord it over" the flock, in violation of such passages as 1 Peter 5:3.

**Qualified, working elders lead, guide, and feed a congregation. They act as wise and loving shepherds in exercising this oversight (1 Pet. 5:2; Heb. 13:17; Acts 20:28). The scope of their rule is limited by the boundaries of God's word (Matt. 28:18; Acts 5:29).**

This view also overlooks the fact elders are men, subject to sin, as we all are. In 1 Timothy 5:19-20, the apostle Paul writes, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (KJV). One of the implications of these verses is that elders can sin and that they need to be rebuked and corrected when

it is established that they have erred.

Obviously, we cannot follow elders into sin. If they ask us to do something which is contrary to God's law, or will lead us in a way that violates Scripture, we must refuse. Our obligation is summed up by the apostles' words in Acts 5:29: "We ought to obey God rather than men" (KJV). We cannot use the excuse, "The elders made me do it!" as a reason to tolerate or practice error.

You might be tempted to ask, “John, does anyone really believe that? — that we should follow the elders, even if their decision is sinful?” While they probably would not frame it in those words, I assure you that many have practiced this false doctrine.

For example, I am told by reliable witnesses who were present back in the 1950s, when questions regarding institutionalism and the sponsoring church arrangement were raging, that many brethren drifted into error on the basis of the excuse, “The elders said it is okay, and they know what’s best for us.” There was also the idea that, “The elders have made the decision to support this arrangement, and I cannot go against their authority.”

Friends, this is a sorry excuse to sin, and we ought to know better. “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8, KJV). Being respectful of the elders’ leadership does not include the idea of violating God’s word. Who would honestly argue that it does?

This false doctrine also overlooks the fact that ultimate authority resides in Christ. In Matthew 28:18, Christ says, “All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth” (ASV). Clearly, elders have no legislative, law-making authority, and whatever leadership they exercise would have to be under the *headship* of Christ. Elders serve as shepherds or pastors of the flock under the Chief Shepherd, who is Jesus (1 Pet. 5:4). They cannot make a law where God has made no law, nor can they act outside the boundaries of God’s word.

These points are axiomatic, and all honest students of the Bible will accept them.

Sadly, in recent years I have become aware of an equally false doctrine regarding the elders’ leadership which goes to the opposite extreme. In fact, it is my observation that some of those who hold this unscriptural view drifted into it because they witnessed the sin of dictatorial, authoritarian elders. One human frailty we must guard against is the tendency to swing from one false extreme to the opposite, false extreme. I would also submit that this second false view is founded on the misinterpretation and misapplication of such passages as Acts 6, Acts 15, and 1 Corinthians 5. It has also been my experience that those who believe this second doctrine are working to increase the role of female participation in the leadership of the congregation, though I would hasten to add that many of them would deny this. Time will tell.

Simply put, this second view holds that elders can make no significant decisions of judgment in harmony with God’s word without the prior knowledge or consent of the entire

congregation. Let me be clear on this: There are those who teach and practice that elders can make *no decisions on behalf of the congregation regarding its work and worship* unless the entire church has met, discussed, and agreed on the matter first. According to these proponents, Acts 6 and Acts 15 give the pattern for all decision-making in the congregation, and there is no Bible authority for any private business meetings of the elders or of the men of the congregation in their absence.

They would contend that there are no examples of private decision-making meetings in the Bible and to have them, whether they be by the elders or the men of the congregation, is unscriptural. They will often give a conspiratorial flavor to this concept and talk about the sin of “secret, closed-door meetings” as if some diabolical plot is being hatched.

This view is wrong on about a half dozen counts, and I would contend against it just as strongly as I would the notion of authoritarian elders.

Primarily, this viewpoint denies the clear meaning of such passages as 1 Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:17, Acts 20:28, and 1 Peter 5:1-2, which describe the role and work of elders in leading a congregation. These verses say that elders are to “rule well,” we are to submit to them that “rule over” us, the Holy Ghost has made them “overseers,” and they are to “exercise the oversight.” They do all of this and yet they have no decision-making ability in harmony with God’s word? Friends, can we not see that the authority to make decisions of judgment in harmony with God’s word is inherent in the very phrases which God’s inspired writers used to describe the leadership of elders? Those who want to argue that there are no examples of private, decision-making meetings of the elders forget that is not the only way God instructs. Indeed, they make the same kind of arguments the non-class brethren have made through the years: “There’s no example of Bible classes smaller than the whole assembly meeting at the building.” They ignore the fact that God informs us in a variety of ways.

It is interesting to observe some of the arguments which those who hold this position try to make from the Greek. While I’m no Greek scholar, I can read an accurate English translation, and so can you. There are good textual reasons why the best Greek scholars of their day who worked on the American Standard Version decided that 1 Timothy 5:17 should read, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor.” Those same translators rendered Hebrews 13:17 as, “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch on behalf of your souls.”

*Young’s Analytical Concordance* tells me that rule in Hebrews 13:17 means to “lead, guide, govern,” and those

three words certainly include the idea of being able to make decisions and judgments in harmony with God's word! And, surely we can understand that shepherding a flock involves watchful care and active supervision.

Is there no genuine leadership in harmony with God's word inherent in such terms? May elders oversee the work but make no real decisions until they check it out with the whole congregation first? Are we saying that shepherds guide the flock but make no decisions on behalf of the flock? Are elders prohibited from exercising judgment until they check it out with the whole church? Friends, *who's* leading *whom* if all of that is true? Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3 describe men of judgment and experience; why the need for such wisdom and maturity if it cannot be employed and others are to make the decisions?

Those who hold this second, unscriptural position may not realize it, but the ultimate result of their teaching is that bishops become little more than *announcement elders* who preside over meetings of the entire church and make known the decisions the church has reached. I understand that they would not agree with this assessment, but see if that is not the end result.

Elders do not become dictators lording it over the flock as soon as they make any decisions on behalf of the local church. If they are men of judgment and experience, as the qualifications demand, and if they have the proper respect for God's word and their fellow saints, then they can make decisions in harmony with God's word without behaving as tyrants. We should respect them for that responsibility and "obey them that have the rule" over us.

And certainly qualified, working elders should keep a congregation informed concerning decisions affecting the

work and worship of the group. They should also solicit the input of the members on a regular basis. No one denies this. In fact, Titus 1:7 states that one of the qualifications of elders is that they act as stewards of God who are not self-willed. If the men are truly qualified, they will understand exactly what Peter meant when he wrote, "Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God, nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock" (1 Pet. 5:2-3, ASV).

But, friends, let us never take the position that elders can make no decisions on behalf of the congregation. Even from a practical standpoint, such a position is impossible to defend. For example, sometimes elders must make judgments immediately, when there simply is no opportunity to call the congregation together, even if they wanted to. Sometimes decisions are of such a private, personal nature that the fewer people who know about a situation, the better. Those who have been members of the Lord's body for any length of time at all can think of many examples which fit the circumstances I have just described.

The bottom line is that "exercising the oversight" and shepherding the flock involves leadership. And, anyway you cut it, leadership involves making decisions.

If someone were to ask me to sum up my beliefs regarding the elders' leadership in one paragraph, I might say it this way:

Qualified, working elders lead, guide, and feed a congregation. They act as wise and loving shepherds in exercising this oversight (1 Pet. 5:2; Heb. 13:17; Acts 20:28). The scope of their rule is limited by the boundaries of God's word (Matt. 28:18; Acts 5:29). Can they make decisions on behalf of the local church in harmony with God's law? Absolutely! One cannot exercise oversight, lead, and act as a shepherd without doing so! Will qualified elders keep a congregation informed, solicit input, and ask for suggestions from all the members? Absolutely! Remember, these are stewards of God who are not self-willed (Tit. 1: 7).

In closing allow me to make one final point: Our understanding of truth should be shaped *not* by what has happened to us, but *rather* by what God's word says. Do not allow your own or another's past experience with elders who acted, perhaps, in an unscriptural way, to cause you to embrace a false view concerning their leadership. Be content with what God's word plainly teaches on the subject. Do not add to the authority of elders (the first view we examined) or subtract from it (the second view). Remember 2 John 9 and Revelation 22:18-19.


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# “It Hath No Stalk”

J. Wiley Adams

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In Hosea 8:7 the prophet of old laments the condition of Israel and how the people are turned to idols from serving the true God.

While it is true that man reaps in kind to the thing sown, it is also true he reaps more than he sows of that kind. Paul said, “Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” For instance, from one grain of corn there comes forth a stalk. It can stop growing at that point, but if it grows, in time an ear of corn (or maybe more than one ear) appears on the stalk. One grain is sown and ears of corn are produced. How many grains on one ear? It may vary but, even though I was raised in the country, it has never been appealing to me to count the number of grains on an ear of corn. But, it is evident from casual observation that more was produced than was planted. It was all corn, however.

Hosea said Israel “had no stalk.” If there is no strong, sustaining stalk, anything produced will come to naught for lack of support.

Israel had sown the wind (sin) and reaped the whirlwind (even greater consequences) because there was “no stalk.” When we speak of sowing and reaping, we may be speaking good or evil. The principle is the same as it pertains to rewards or consequences. It is a consequence even though it may be good. And, of course, it is also true if we are speaking of sin.

So whether it be righteousness or sin, the principle of sowing and reaping is there. The farmer delights when he has an abundant harvest of good things from his field. God’s people reap many blessings, both temporal and spiritual. The wicked reap much more than they bargained for. Wind is one thing. A tornado is something else. But both are wind.

Hosea warns (8:1). The trumpet sounds forth the alarm and calls the people to repentance. God will surely have his vengeance, make no mistake. Their cries will be to

no avail and will come too late. They say “My God, we know thee.” But, Israel has lost her identity. Jesus said this could happen. In speaking of the final judgment and day of wrath on the wicked, he said to some “Depart from me, I know not who you are.” Sin can so deform us as to make us unrecognizable as the people of God. It was true of Israel then and is no less true in the Israel of God, the church, today.

So Israel had “no stalk.” Anything produced was too heavy for the stalk to support. Brethren, indeed sin is heavy. Hosea said even the “bud shall wither” without the sustaining stalk.

In John 15 Jesus talks of the vine and the branches. The secret of growth and fruit-bearing is found as we “abide in the vine.” To become separated from the vine or stalk cuts off the flow of strength needed for the required “much fruit.”

Brethren, be profited from a study of God’s Word!

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# Capernaum (*Tel Hum*)

Mike Willis

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Little remains of “the town of Jesus,” except for the ruins, enclosed within black basalt walls, excavated by Franciscan monks over the last 100 years. According to Matthew 4:11 Jesus moved to Capernaum from Nazareth to fulfill the words of Isaiah (9:1-2). Jesus performed numerous miracles in and around Capernaum. Enlarged by

collection and was the place where Matthew worked as a tax collector, for it was here where Matthew was called to be an apostle and entertained his former publicans (Mark 4:13; Matt. 9:1, 9-13).

Capernaum was an important part of Jesus’ Galilean ministry. Here are some of the important things said about Capernaum:

- Jesus made Capernaum his home after he entered his ministry (Matt. 4:13; John 2:12) in fulfillment of Isaiah 9:1-2.
- The centurion who did not think himself worthy for Jesus to come into his home appealed for Jesus to heal his servant in Capernaum (Matt. 8:5; Luke 7:1ff).
- Jesus instructed Peter to catch a fish, in whose mouth would be a coin for the temple tax, in Capernaum (Matt. 17:24).
- Jesus taught in the synagogue at Capernaum (Mark 1:21).
- He healed the paralytic borne of four here (Mark 2:1).
- The disciples argued about who would be greatest here (Mark 9:33).
- Jesus performed many miracles here (Luke 4:23). He cast out a demon from a man (Luke 4:31ff).

**The black basalt base is the remains of the synagogue where Jesus taught.**

refugees from Jerusalem after A.D. 70, the town thrived until it was completely destroyed during the 7th century Arab conquest. Franciscans acquired the ruins in 1894 and began a program of excavation which continued into the 1960s. One of the buildings which has been reconstructed is a synagogue which dates from the 2nd century A.D. This synagogue stands on the same spot as the one where Jesus taught.

The village is called Kefer Nahum (village of Naham the prophet). The word *kepher*, from כפרים is a village in distinction from a כרמים a city. The “city” was usually girt with walls whereas the village was not. Capernaum is located on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. It is a quiet place, away from the hustle and bustle of Jerusalem. Located on the trade routes, it was also a place for tax

**Mile marker of the Via Maris.**

- While in Cana, he healed the son of royal official who lay ill in Capernaum (John 4:46f).
- After feeding the 5000, Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee and came to Capernaum where he taught in the synagogue and gave his “bread of life” discourse (John 6:17, 24).
- Despite witnessing so many miracles, the people of Capernaum did not manifest great faith in Jesus (Matt. 11:23; Luke 10:15).

### Transporting the Ark of the Covenant.

The ruins at Capernaum are impressive. The restored synagogue, dated from the second to the fourth century A.D., is built on the foundations of the first century synagogue. One can be fairly confident that he is standing in the place where Jesus worshiped on the Sabbath day when he is in the synagogue at Capernaum. Some of the carved stones there display the Jewish menorah (lampstand), transporting the ark of the covenant on a cart, a mile marker of the *Via Maris*, millstones, olive presses, etc.

At Capernaum, Jesus healed the man who was let down through the roof because the door to the house in which Jesus was teaching was too crowded (Mark 2:1ff). The little houses in front of the synagogue at Capernaum give us some picture of what happened that day.

### Remains of the little houses in front of the synagogue.

## We Should Be Watching!

Carrol Ray Sutton

The word “watch” is found in the Scriptures about 90 times. It suggests the idea of “caution, carefulness, giving close attention to.” Watching is essential to our spiritual welfare and our eternal salvation.

Moses missed Canaan because he failed to watch (Num. 20:1-12; Deut. 34:1-4). Samson’s failure to watch allowed the Philistines to overcome him (Judg. 16). David was ensnared by sin and gave the enemies of Jehovah an occasion to blaspheme because he failed to watch. Solomon was led into idolatry because of his failure to watch (1 Kings 11:3-4).

During his personal ministry on earth, Jesus told the apostles to *watch!* He admonished them saying: “Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matt. 26:41; cf. 24:42-44).

Disciples are told to *watch*. 1 Corinthians 16:13 says: “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, but be strong.” In 1 Thessalonians 5:6 Paul exhorted, saying: “Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; let us watch and be sober.” Peter warned disciples, saying: “Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8).

Evangelists are told to *watch!* In 2 Timothy 4:5 Paul exhorted Timothy saying: “But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.” It is absolutely essential that evangelists give close attention!

Elders are told to *watch!* To elders Paul warned, saying, “Take heed . . . therefore watch . . .” (Acts 20:28-31). Elders are to *watch for the souls of others!* A serious obligation. It must not be taken lightly!

Jesus said: “And what I say unto you, I say unto all, *watch!*” (Mark 13:37).

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*From The Instructor, Albertville, Alabama*

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The Roman Catholics have erected a monument at Capernaum over what they believe to be the house of Peter or his mother-in-law. The building is somewhat distracting from the simple little village at Capernaum.

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## “Overcoming” continued from front page

the faithful will enter a new day through him who is the morning star (Rev. 22:16). Royal splendor and heavenly glory await all who conquer wickedness.

Christ disclosed to the church at Sardis, “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels” (Rev. 3:5). The overcomer’s name will not be erased from the heavenly record. Arrayed in white apparel, the obedient believer will be acknowledged as a child of God. This is a reminder of what the Master said in Matthew 10:32: “Who-soever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.”

To the church at Philadelphia, the Lord’s promise was, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name” (Rev. 3:12). The overcomer will have permanence as a pillar in the heavenly temple. Inalienable citizenship awaits the conqueror in the celestial city, the new Jerusalem.

The Lord said to the church at Laodicea, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne” (Rev. 3:21). The overcomer will share in the eternal reign of the conquering Christ. Having gained victory over sin, Satan, death, and the grave, Christ was exalted to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. The Christian who fights the good fight of faith and is victorious is assured of an exalted place with his Master and Savior.

What blessings await the overcomer!

### The Basis of Victory

Trusting, obedient faith is the key to overcoming the world. John wrote, “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4, 5). A study of the examples given in Hebrews 11 should impress one with the power of faith. Worthy men and women of old conquered through faith. They struggled against the seductions of Satan, the power of darkness, fleshly weaknesses, and numerous obstacles, but faith gave them victory. Faith and victory are inseparable.

Jesus warned and consoled the apostles in this meaningful statement: “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). The apostles needed to realize that the battle to be

fought would not be easy. Afflictions and troubles would abound. They would be hated by the world. Notwithstanding the mountains of tribulation, they would climb to triumph by keeping their faith strong. Their Master had shown the way. He had overcome the world. Despite persecution, disappointment, sorrow, and hardship, they could win the battle.

Jesus’ victory over the world is the basis of our being assured of success. Indeed, “we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (Rom. 8:37). The faithful followers of Christ are guaranteed overwhelming success. To express it as military victories are sometimes described, a “brilliant victory” is certified.

In an age when so many who are baptized into Christ are being overcome by the world, it is urgent that we remind Christians that we must guard our hearts, keep our lives, and preserve our souls. By concentrating on the things which will strengthen our faith in the Son of God we can conquer. Why be overcome by the world when Christ offers us power to be overcomers of the world?

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Rev. 21:7). The child of God as an heir of God takes full possession of all that he is promised in the new habitation. He dwells eternally where there is no death, no sorrow, no crying, and no pain. He drinks freely of the refreshing water of life. He lives in the city with foundations whose builder and maker is God. In this new Jerusalem the loving heavenly Father is his God, and forevermore he is a child of God. The overcomer is home at last.

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## “Subjection” continued from page 2

the stay-at-home helper. This reverses the pattern revealed in creation.

Indications of the role of man and woman are seen in the divine comments about the first sin. Adam was called to account for his disobedience (3:9). Why call Adam to account since Eve led the way in disobedience? The answer is that Adam was the head of the family and responsible for leading it. The role of Eve in her “leading” is condemned. Adam sinned when he “hearkened unto the voice of thy wife” (Gen. 3:17). Eve was placed in a position that her husband would “rule” (רָשָׁה, “rule, have dominion, reign,” BDB 605) over her.

The Old Testament recognizes the role of subjection for women throughout its pages. The word “husband” is



frequently translated from *בָּעַל*, the verb form of which means “marry, rule over.” The noun means “owner, lord” and is used of the husband on many occasions (BDB 127). Sarah referred to her husband Abraham as “her lord” (Gen. 18:12). The word “lord” is here translated from *יְהוָה*, which is used to refer to Jehovah as Lord, masters in a slave relationship, and husbands in their role over the home. This passage is cited in 1 Peter 3:6 as an example for women to follow in their submission to their husbands.

The New Testament is very explicit about the role of subjection in the family. The husband is the “head” of the home just as Christ is the “head” of the church (*κεφαλή*: “head. . . metaph. anything *supreme, chief, prominent*; of persons, *master, lord*; *τινός*, of a husband in relation to his wife,” Thayer 345) (Eph. 5:23). We do not have an egalitarian role with reference to Christ. He is the supreme Lord who issues commands for us to obey. In the same manner as he is head over the church, so man is the head of the home. The nature of his rule is explained in the text:

- It is self-sacrificing (5:25). It is based on a self-sacrificing love in which the husband places the needs of his companion above his own needs. This excludes dictatorial, tyrannical rule in the family. A husband whoonly thinks of what he wants in ruling his family is not following the example of Christ.
- It is a giving rule (5:25).
- It is a rule that manifests love for his wife equal to what he has for himself (5:28).
- It is a rule that provides a home in which the wife is nourished and cherished (5:29).

The wife is to submit to her husband’s rule (5:22). The word *ὑποτάσσω* means “to arrange under, to subordinate; to subject, put in subjection. . . mid. to subject one’s self, to obey; to submit to one’s control; to yield to one’s admonition or advice” (Thayer 645). The same word is used for one’s submission to the following: (a) One’s relationship to civil government (Rom. 13:1, 5); (b) A slave to a master (1 Pet. 2:18). The wife is to submit “as unto the Lord” (5:22). Her submission to the Lord Jesus is voluntary, not forced. Hers should be a voluntary submission to her husband. Her submission is to be “in every thing” (5:24), not merely to those things that he says that she wants him to say. Her submission is “fitting” in the Lord (Col. 3:18).

1 Peter 3:1-6 commands the submissive role to the woman. She is to submit herself to his rule (3:1). She is to manifest a “meek and quiet” spirit. The word “meek” is from *πραῦς* which means “gentle, mild, meek” (Thayer 534). It is from the same word group as appears in James 1:21, “receive with meekness the engrafted word.” The idea is that of yielding one’s will to the authority of the word. In 1 Peter 3:1 the yielding is to the authority of the husband’s

leadership. The word “quiet” is from *ἡσυχίος* which means “quiet, tranquil.” The idea is not silence but quietness (cf. 1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:12). Sarah gave an example of “obedience” (3:6). The text referred to is Genesis 18:12. It records the time when three angels appeared to Abraham in Hebron near the Oaks of Mamre. He told Sarah to prepare supper for the guests saying, “Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth” (18:6). Sarah obeyed. The modern woman might not be so inclined.

The woman who is married is described in Romans 7:2 as *ὑπανδρος*. The word is translated “wife” but literally it means “under i.e. subject to a man” (Thayer 638).

The text in 1 Corinthians 11:1-16 teaches the subjection of women. The order of submission (11:3): (a) God is the head of Christ. (b) Christ is the head of man. (c) Man is the head of woman. Man is the glory of God and woman is the glory of man (11:7). The order of submission is related to creation (11:7). Man is not from the woman, but woman is from the man. Man was not created *for* the woman, but the woman *for* the man (11:9). The preposition “for” is translated from *διὰ* which is used in this text to mean “for the benefit, [Eng. for the sake of]” (Thayer 134). The wearing of the customary veil was the symbol in the first century of this relationship to a man.

1 Corinthians 14:34-35 speaks of her submissive role in worship. The woman is forbidden to “speak” in the assembly. She is forbidden to speak in the same manner as the others previously mentioned (14:28, 30). Under the circumstances described the tongue speaker and prophet could not speak (i.e. publicly address the assembly). The reason given for the woman’s role is that the Law teaches her to be under obedience (cf. Gen. 3:16). It was shameful for her to “speak” (the opposite of “be silent” and, therefore, used in the context to mean “publicly address the assembly,” cf. 14:28).

1 Timothy 2:12-15 also speaks of the submission of women. The woman is to learn in “quietness.” The word *ἡσυχία* means “quietness: descriptive of the life of one who stays at home doing his own work, and does not officiously meddle with the affairs of others. . . silence” (Thayer 281). The role of women is tied again to creation: (a) Adam was first formed, then Eve (2:13). (b) Eve was deceived in the transgression (2:14). Woman shall be saved if she accepts her God-defined role.

1 Timothy 5:14. Women are “guides” to the house. The word is derived from the verb *οἰκοδεσποτέω* which means “to be master (or head) of a house; to rule a household, manage family affairs: 1 Tim. v.14” (Thayer 439).

Titus 2:5. The woman is to be “obedient” (*ὑποτασσομέ*

νας) to her own husband. If she is otherwise, she will cause the word of God to be blasphemed (Tit. 2:6).

### Cultural Influences Challenge The Home

The biblical view of the respective roles of husband and wife is being culturally challenged. Perhaps that is always so in all cultures. In some middle east countries, women are treated almost as if they were sub-humans. Were we to live in those societies, we would need to preach about how that culture influences one's concept toward the roles of men and women. We must not be blind to how our own culture is influencing our views toward the respective roles of men and women. Our young ladies are being taught that they should not be submissive to their husbands. Perhaps one should look at the marriages of feminists who are teaching this to see how well these principles are working in their own homes. Those who are repeatedly divorced make poor advisors about how to have a happy marriage.

We must shape our families according to the word of God, not according to the culture (Rom. 12:1-2). Those who teach us not to spank our children and those who teach wives not to be submissive to their husbands are both sending twentieth century cultural messages contrary to God's word. We must look at these messages and make a conscious decision to reject them in order to be submissive to the word of God! The reason for this subjection is the same in both cases: what God commanded is for our own good.

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## Church Directory Corrections

Work is being done on the next revision of the *Directory of Churches* which the Guardian of Truth Foundation publishes. Over the years, a directory becomes outdated by a number of things, such as the post office changing one's address, a church relocating, a change in phone number, etc. We would like to update our directory and need your help. Will you check your entry in the church directory to verify its accuracy? If changes need to be made, please contact us. Also, we would like to add a second contact telephone number to our directory. Brethren are complaining that they call the number given and get no answer because no one is at the building until service time, a time too late for them to travel to the services. Consequently, we would like to have a second contact phone number so that traveling brethren can locate someone to find out how to locate the building, what time services begin, and other pertinent information.

To enable you to make these changes with the least inconvenience to you, we ask that you call our toll-free number: 1-800-633-3216 at the C E I Bookstore.



**W.G."Bert" Enostacion, P.O. Box 09, San Fernando City, La Union 2500 Philippines:** Praise the name of our God! As we experienced a global crisis rendered by the so-called "El Nino" phenomenon, a nationwide drought affected the rural and urban folks which eventually triggered the raising of prime commodities in the markets. Our brethren were not spared from such a famine, and because of that great need, our U.S. brethren did not wait for any call from the needy Filipino brethren. Due to constant travel to the islands, Jim McDonald, Ron Halbrook and another brother came to answer the physical needs of our Filipino needy brethren.

They embarked at the NAIA (Ninoy Aquino International Airport) in Manila on the night of June 30. And immediately on the following day, they toured the Philippines; from Davao City in Mindanao to Cebu City in Visayas and Laoag City in Ilocos Norte. Ron reached as far as Sinit, Ilocos Sur, while Jim went to another area south of Metro Manila to widely distribute benevolent funds to all those whom they knew are in deep need.

At least, hundreds if not thousands of individual local members were recipients of benevolent funds personally handed by these understanding and generous brethren. It edified all Christians along the countryside who were directly affected by such great drought. Though the bounty was not enough to fully distribute to all needy Filipino brothers and sisters, yet it helps them who have it.

In a telephone conversation, brethren Joy Notarte and Juanito Balbin both of Davao City expressed thanks to all of those who contributed to the funds brought by these men though there are still prime areas which distributions of these funds were not enough. Yet, those brethren who have it expressed their great gratitude to all of our American brethren who shared their bounty for the poor Filipinos.

Brethren in Isabel, Cagayan Valley down to Nueva Ecija, Pangasinan, Bulacan and Pampanga areas got their share in a little means. So as with those in Abra and La Union. Some of these brethren met personally with Jim or Ron to

get their share of funds for foods (or medicines, etc.).

Personally, I would like to express our thanks to brother Payne Sisco who sent \$1000 as advised by the elders at Parkview church, Pasadena, Texas for food for our needy brethren. It was properly distributed to the brethren here in San Fernando City church. In disbursing the amount, distributions varied as it was done in cash so that brethren can know what to buy, because some needed medicines and others food. So as not to violate their way of choice, it was done in cash "according to their own needs." Somehow, though we may not send any appeals for such, brethren if you know of any particular needs, please feel free to send it to those whom you may know. If not, Jim and Ron can be a good "Saul and Barnabas" to carry on this bounty.

In behalf of the Filipino brethren, let this note carry the message of thanks to all. Brethren there is no other word to offer you the best that can utter what is in our hearts, but a simple words of "THANKS!" May the God of Heaven bless us all as we continue our efforts for the Gospel and to be faithful in all things "until the end." We hope that someday, we all will march to the "beautiful land of the brave!" Beyond the bright blue awaits us love for those who have gained victories in this present world. Brethren, pray for us. Amen.



### The Byler-Jenkins Debate

On the evenings of May 25, 26, Don L. Byler and Jesse G. Jenkins met in a public discussion on the pros and cons of Christmas. The church in Woodville, Texas hosted the discussion and invited Jesse to come and discuss this issue with their local preacher, Don Byler. Good spirit prevailed and the debaters and audience conducted themselves as Christians ought. This issue does not separate brethren but is a topic which all have thought about and some wanted to hear discussed.

Each speaker had two thirty-minute speeches each evening followed by twenty minutes of written questions from the floor. On the second evening Jesse had a ten-minute rejoinder. Harvey Falls moderated for Don Buler, and I moderated for Jesse Jenkins. Announcements were sent only to brethren because of the nature of the study.

There was no formal proposition for either to affirm or deny, but Don spoke first on Monday, and Jesse first on Tuesday. Don's main argument was *guilt by association*. He came out with an overcoat on then took it off and had a Masonic apron on, and a host of other such "trinkets" of various religions. He argued if we observe customs of religions or of Christmas which came from the heathen in their religious practices, then we are practicing idolatry. Jesse argued that they both agree customs change and some do not mean what they once did. Jesse gave examples of eating the O.T. forbidden foods, yet the Jews today still think they are under the O.T., but it is not inherently wrong to eat such foods today. Jesse made most of his arguments based on I Corinthians 8, 10, Romans 14, and Acts 21. He showed that we today can do certain things *if* (1) we do not place any religious significance on them, and (2) if we do not cause a weak brother to violate his conscience by doing such *if* he believes such things are wrong.

Crowds were slim and few more than half came back the second night. Some 17 from Lufkin attended and 14 of these were from Fourth and Groesbeck. Surely it is good to study the Bible on this, and other subjects in which brethren might have interest. **David D. Bonner, 407 April Dr., Lufkin, Texas 75904.**

### Pama Britton

The family of Pama Britton would like to thank all who generously gave to enable her to have her pancreas transplant. She had the transplant May 1 and at first it started functioning normally, giving her the promise of a longer and more useful life. Then, she developed a series of infections and complications which were unprecedented. Her chief surgeon had performed many such transplants successfully. These infections and problems continued until she passed away June 26. Funeral services were conducted for her June 30 before a full house.

We all regret this turn of events, but we along with Pama felt that whatever happened she would be a winner. If she lived, her health would allow her to live longer and serve the Lord more. If she died, she would go to be with the Lord, and this would be gain. We sorrow but not as those who have no hope.

Your generosity cheered her and strengthened her faith in the Lord and in his people. Your kindness meant so much to her and her family. Her husband is not sure what the final financial situation will be, but for the time being, he requests that no more funds be sent. All above medical expenses went to provide for her funeral. If there should be a crisis need, we will inform you. **Robert W. Goodman, 6315 Crestside Dr., Pasadena, Texas 77505.**

