

# SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me" — John 5:39.



"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" — Acts 17:11.

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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## THINK ON THESE THINGS

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### THE SOURCE OF REVELATION

There are two great avenues of revelation, both of them stemming from God. It could not be otherwise because only God knows all things.

#### 1. NATURAL REVELATION

This is the general revelation of nature which is learned by investigation and reason. It is the revelation by natural reason of man. This is alike to all people (Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:17,27; 22:23-31; Psalms 19:1).

Some say that the Bible is only what the people knew at the time they wrote it on a rational basis. Reason may assert many things about the experiences of man, but it cannot know all the divine revelation until revealed. Reason has a place in the investigation of truth, but it is not to manufacture the evidence. Through reason the will of man is controlled, and through the will the life is made to progress in its course. Some things in the Bible cannot be understood solely on the principle of reason. Miracles cannot be accepted on a rational basis; they must be accepted by special revelation.

The rationalist gives all authority to reason. What cannot be reasoned is not true to him. The Bible is of no benefit to such people at all. But the opposite extreme is the mystic, who assigns reason to no place in revelation and the investigation of truth. He disregards reason altogether.

#### 2. SPECIAL REVELATION

Special revelation is that which is supernaturally communicated from God to man. All this revelation is found in what we know as the Bible. All revelation had its origin in the mind of God. The uncovering must be by the Spirit of God who searches into the mind of God and reveals them to us (I Cor. 2:10,11). The only way we can know by this revelation is to study it. Nature does not reveal the things found in the Bible. This supernatural revelation tells us of our origin, moral conduct, the way to salvation, our destiny in eternity. Pertaining to ideas and facts beyond our person

experiences this revelation must be communicated in only two ways:

(1) **Oral communication.** Oral communication is that which is revealed by word of mouth. Man is an intelligent being, superior to the brute. In dealing with him as an intelligent being, God had to communicate to him in the language of his understanding. To such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, God communicated to them orally or by word in a direct and personal way.

(2) **Written communication.** Oral communication is one thing and written communication is entirely another. Revelation is absolutely necessary to the problem of origin. No other method can tell us of our origin. Who could write of the creation of the world when no man existed? It had to come from some source that was there and could relate it to man afterward. When creation was described to man later, it had to be delivered in written revelation for generations to later read. God used both the oral and written revelation to communicate His mind to man of all ages.

#### 3. GOD'S WRITTEN REVELATION THROUGH CHRIST

All revelation from God to us today is through Christ. This revelation is in what Christ did and what he said. All the treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ (Col. 1:15-23; 2:2,3).

In Hebrews 1:1-2 we find that God speaks through His Son Jesus Christ as the final revelation to man. Prophecy said that Christ would have the words of God (Deut. 18:18,19), and Peter applies this to Christ (Acts 3:22,23).

#### 4. THE PROCESS OF REVELATION THROUGH CHRIST

Christ did not write this revelation himself while on earth. He did speak many of these things to the apostles that they were afterward to remember. Jesus claimed to speak not his own words but the words of God (John 5:19; 6:38; 7:16,17; 8:28; 12:49,50). Christ gave these words which he had received from the Father to the apostles, so that the word of God came through Christ which was given through the apostles of Christ (John 17:8,18; 17:14; 20:21; I Thess. 2:13; II Pet. 1:21). The Holy Spirit was to guide the apostles in giving them the words of God through Christ (John 14:16,17,18,26; 16:13,14). When the Holy Spirit ceased revealing the words of Christ to the apostles, the process of revelation from God ceased. This faith was once for all delivered (II Pet. 1:1; Jude 1-3). No other revelation is allowed with this one (Gal. 1:6-10).

Paul is an example of an apostle writing the word of God by the Holy Spirit. Peter says that Paul's writing is scripture (II Pet. 3:16). Paul said he wrote the word of God (I Thess. 2:13; II Thess. 2:15; I Cor. 14:37).

#### ORAL REVELATION FROM GOD

Some expect God to speak to them orally today as He did in the past ages. This is neither promised nor expected by

Bible students. The grace of God has been revealed (Titus 2:11-14), and is forever settled in written form (Jude 3).

When God created Adam and Eve, He spoke to them in oral tones, and they spoke back to him (Gen. 2:16; Gen. 4:6). He spoke of marriage (Gen. 2:24). He spoke of sacrifice (Gen. 4:4; 8:20). All revelations He gave to mankind for the first 2500 years were orally given and none of it written. To the generations that followed from Adam to Moses all communications between God and man were in this manner. We have no record of any other kind of communication for the first 2500 years of man's history. When Noah built the ark (Gen. 6:13), all the instructions were given by the mouth of Jehovah and none written.

To Abraham and his posterity God communicated through the mouth of angels (Gen. 12:1; 20:3; 26:2; 28:13). His instructions differed from time to time and from generation to generation. Sometimes He spoke directly, sometimes through dreams and visions, and sometimes through the mouths of angels, but always by oral communications. What written record we have of the history of God's dealings with these Patriarchs was written by Moses many centuries after they happened. The Spirit of God guided the hand of Moses in the writing so that no errors crept into the revelation. There were no written revelation from God to man before Moses began to write the Pentateuch in 1500 B.C. There are some who claim that earlier writings from God exist, and some critics assert that there was no written revelation from God to Moses because there was no writing known then. Neither of these positions agree with facts.

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# Editorial

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## EDITORIAL STEW

About once a year we try to gather up several loose ends, none of which requires lengthy treatment, but all of which need some notice. Here is a little "stew" for the cold days of December.

### Our Thanks

Last January H. E. Phillips wrote an article concerning those who were yet receiving this paper at a reduced rate because of the Automatic Renewal Plan he had instituted when he edited the paper. He asked for volunteers to increase their subscription to the current rate of \$6 a year. In the same issue we carried an "Open Letter" to the editor from Gary Ogden in which he offered to do this and suggested that others at least raise theirs to the current club rate of \$5 a year. A number of readers have done this. We wish to thank those who did. We are still honoring the agreement with all who have not increased theirs, though that means that everyone receiving this paper for \$3 or \$4 a year does so now because someone else is making up the difference.

### The Odd Couple

The *Gospel Advocate*, published since 1855, has entered an unusual stage in its history. Founded by Tolbert Fanning to air the controversy over missionary societies and other innovations attempting to overtake the churches in the south, and since his day edited by such men as David Lipscomb, H. Leo Boles and Foy E. Wallace, Jr., the *ADVOCATE* finds itself now in a rather bizarre position. B.C. Goodpasture, who passed away last year, guided the paper into becoming the "advocate" of church supported institutions, sponsoring churches and many other innovations. A one-sided journalistic approach was adopted and a program of quarantine was inaugurated to silence all opposition.

The selection of a new editor was awaited with much interest. Ira North, the flamboyant promoter and ring master of the Madison, Tennessee church now has in his hands the editorship of the *ADVOCATE*. Who would have ever dreamed that the "Old Reliable" would now be in the hands of a man who would take a crew of workers to Akron, Ohio to visit Rex Humbard's Cathedral of Tomorrow and Dallas Billington's Baptist Temple to learn how to have a big crowd in Bible school? The "Old Reliable" in the hands of the recipient of *Guidepost* award presented by Norman Vincent Peale in the pulpit at

Madison amid special choral offerings and much fanfare? David Lipscomb's chair occupied by a clown who builds the "largest Bible school attendance" with the use of politicians and Kitty Wells, Johnny Wright and the Tennessee Mountain Boys of the Grand Ole Opry? Incredible!

But to add to the curiosity is the announcement that Guy N. Woods is to be Associate Editor. While we cannot endorse the position held by brother Woods relative to the institutional controversy, we do recognize him as a serious student of the Bible and capable writer. It has been our impression that he has not been in sympathy with the far-out promotionalism characteristic of the likes of Ira North. We would not have been surprised had Guy N. Woods been chosen as the editor of the *ADVOCATE* and, in spite of our differences with brother Woods, think that the paper would have been in far better hands. Stolid students and clowns make odd couples. The future will be interesting to watch.

### Catalogs From Religious Supply Center

Those on our mailing list will soon receive a catalog from *RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER* which advertises regularly in this paper. We think you will find it helpful and useful in ordering supplies needed for individual study and to meet church needs for literature and other necessary supplies. These are good folks to do business with and offer prompt and pleasant service. A new store is being built now just across the road from the present location. The new property adjoins a branch of the Post Office. Larger quarters will mean more display room, larger stock and better service to both mail and walk-in customers. They hope to be in the new facilities by January 1, 1978 and invite all to come in and see their new place and look over the materials on hand. Our business relationship could not be better and we gladly urge all readers of this paper to patronize *RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER*.

### Roy E. Cogdill

It was our good fortune to have Roy E. Cogdill in a series of gospel meetings at Expressway congregation in Louisville in October. Many ask us about his health as we travel about the country. We were able to be at home during the first part of the meeting and spent some time with him. He is holding up well physically and still preaching with great power. His preaching is the kind that builds faith, dispels doubt, exposes error and inspires to greater service in the kingdom.

### Home For Winter Classes

During 1977 it was the editor's privilege to preach the gospel in 24 meetings ranging from Kaysville, Utah to Pennsylvania and from Ontario, Canada to the Gulf Coast of Mississippi. Many of these meetings have been with small congregations while some were with churches of good size and substantial programs of work. We have seen overflow crowds at a number of points. Several meetings have closed when interest appeared at its peak and when it might

have been good to have extended the effort a few more days. Day services were planned in several places with good interest and attendance. Though there are yet three more meetings to conduct for the year, at the time this is being written, thus far there have been 53 souls to respond to the Lord's invitation in these meetings.

The word "home" grows dearer with each passing year. Nobody ever enjoyed preaching any more than this writer. But we must confess that the sweetness of that grand experience is somewhat dimmed by thoughts of home and hearth, especially in the night when there is time to think. How wonderful to have had my family along during some of these efforts, but how lonely to have been without them on other occasions!

Perhaps such sentiments are responsible for my coming to prize the winter months when meetings are over and we can enjoy the crackle of fire in the fireplace on a cold winter night. But the winter also gives time for some class work with the good church at Expressway. This winter I am teaching a young adult class on "The Family", a high school class on 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, preaching through the book of Hebrews each Monday night, conducting a training class for men and teaching a Friday morning class on "Premillennialism." Steve Wolfgang continues his able work with the Expressway church and our working relationship has been most pleasant.

#### **To Our Writers**

We owe a debt of gratitude to those able and worthy servants of God who handle so well the various writing assignments of this paper. These work without financial compensation and because they love the truth and want to see it advanced. We have a large backlog of good material which we hope to get published as soon as space permits.

#### **Bound Volume 17-18**

The index in this issue tells us that it is time to bind two more years of the paper. Bound Volume 17-18 (1976-77) will be ready for sale by April 1. Advance orders can be sent anytime now. They will be bound in blue buckram to match all previous bindings and will sell for \$8.50. The limited number printed means that in a few years these will be collectors items. None of the first eight years are available. We are completely sold out of Volume 13-14 and have a limited number of Volumes 9-10, 11-12, and 15-16.

#### **New Book Soon Ready**

We are printing a fine book by Gene Tope entitled "Trail-Blazers For Christ." This book is based on his 18 years of work in South Africa. It is perceptive, sobering, emotionally stirring and says much that needs to be said about the work of the gospel in other lands. It will make you think, laugh and cry. Printed in paperback it will sell for \$2.95. Advance orders both for individuals and bookstores may be sent to us at P.O. Box 68, Brooks, KY 40109.

#### **Postal Delays**

With very few exceptions this paper has been mailed within the first ten days of each month. Yet we hear complaints from many parts of the country about slow delivery. Some tell us it takes them a month to get their paper from the time it is mailed at Fort Wayne, Indiana. The best thing we know to do is to write to the Postmaster there and express your feelings about such service. According to the Postal Manual it should never take anyone anywhere in this country longer than 10-12 days to receive second class mailings. If it is taking you longer than that, then you have every right to complain. Some local systems are giving very good service while some are not. Let the ones which are not hear from you. Other editors tell me they are having the same problems. Misery loves company.

#### **Help Our Circulation**

With very little effort our present readers could help us increase our circulation considerably. Why not show the paper to other Christians when you have finished with it? Ask them if they are regularly receiving a good paper in their homes. Or, why not subscribe for a friend when you renew your own subscription? Could you afford to send the paper to 15 people a year for \$5 a month? How better could you spend \$60 a year than in sending this paper into 15 homes? May we hear from you? Many readers have stayed with us through the years, some from the very beginning. These are special to us and we express once more our gratitude to them.

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*by Gene and Betty Tope*

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## Let No Man Despise Thy Youth

*Larry Duncan*

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(EDITOR'S NOTE—Larry Duncan obeyed the gospel in Orlando, Florida being taught the truth by his wife Sharon and by Roy Cogdill and Jere Frost. Less than a year after obeying the gospel the Duncans moved to Biloxi, Mississippi where Larry was able to assist in the work. In less than a year after conversion, he preached his first sermon. From Biloxi he was transferred to Goose Bay, Labrador, Canada. Finding the congregation there without a preacher he volunteered to do the preaching. While living in Abilene, Texas he drove down to San Angelo every Sunday to preach. His first full-time work was at Forrest City, Arkansas. He now is laboring well with the Wendell Avenue church in Louisville, Kentucky where he followed Rodney Miller. We are pleased to present to our readers his first article submitted to any periodical, though he publishes a good weekly bulletin.)

### UNITY

Much has been said in the last several years about brethren being unified. Often (in my experience) the suggestion of unity comes from brethren in the Church with whom we are in disagreement over their religious practices. A case in point is the preacher for the "liberal" congregation where I live. Whenever we get together and begin to discuss issues plaguing the church the statement is made, "Instead of arguing old problems, we need to be unified, and with that unity accomplish the work God gave us."

I agree that it is God's plan for brethren to be unified and to accomplish the work assigned; however, I believe the Bible is specific in the manner unity comes about. Paul sought the Ephesian brethren to "keep the unity of the Spirit" however he also stated that there was but "one faith" (Ephesians 4:3-5). Though required to be unified, this unity came from a common faith (and by faith, obedience) in the Lord.

Webster defines unity as: "the quality or state of not being multiple, oneness; a condition of harmony; continuity without deviation or change (as in purpose of action); the quality or state of being made one." *Webster's 7th New Collegiate Dictionary.*

We see unity of this nature in the very early Church. Luke records that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul" (Acts 4:32). They were one, they were in harmony — but why? Speaking of the same Christians, the writer of

Acts tells why the Church was then unified — "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). Notice especially — "*they continued in the apostles' teaching.*"

Indeed we have the responsibility to be unified. But not at any cost. Unity is only to be purchased through careful and complete obedience to God's word.

## SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

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### DEMONOLOGY

Paul Harvey said, in the *Huntsville News*, Feb. 23, 1974, "It's amusing when TV's Flip Wilson grins and says, 'The devil made me do it!' It's terrifying when the child victim in the movie, 'The Exorcist' screams, 'The devil made me . . .' In every city where 'The Exorcist' has been shown, some youngsters have fled the theatre screaming, many into hospitals; some are under restraint as a result of that terrifying graphic portrayal of demon possession. . . The Church of England researched demon possession as recently as the 1960's and after eight years of diligent study, recommended as recently as 1972 that every diocesan bishop should appoint a priest as diocesan exorcist. . . Similarly, Roman Catholic priests are authorized by the Church hierarchy to perform the ancient rites." The movie, 'The Exorcist' was expected to gross \$100 million, and the book by William Blatty became an all-time best seller in paper back edition. Many 'Holiness' people claim to cast out demons now. For example, the late A. A. Allen published in his paper in Feb., 1956, the picture of what he called 'a demon' he cast out of a woman, but what others called a frog.

### Who Are Demons?

The New Testament tells us that demons are "spirits" (Mt. 8:16) and being such they do not have bodies like men have (Lk. 24:39) yet they inhabited the bodies of people.

Men have had several false concepts about demons. (1) Some have thought that demons were disembodied spirits of a pre-Adam race of people upon the earth, when the Bible tells us Adam was the "first man" (1 Cor. 15:45). (2) Others have thought demons were the offspring of women and angels based upon a misunderstanding of Gen. 6:1-4. (3) Some have thought that demons were the spirits of wicked dead men that have come back and are indwelling living men. Josephus and Alexander Campbell both believed this. However, when one considers Lk. 16:19-31 it is

clear spirits did not pass back and forth in the hadean realm, neither did they leave the hadean realm and come back to men on earth. This position appears to be a form of reincarnation. Others have believed demons to be fallen angels. Thayer says, page 124, that this is the position of New Testament writers, yet he gives no New Testament verse that so teaches. I fail to see anything in 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6, Mt. 25:41 or Rev. 12:7 and 9 that says demons are fallen angels. Personally, I don't know. To my mind at the present time it seems Deut. 29:29 gives us some information along this line.

#### **Nature of Demons**

(1) They were evil. Luke 7:21 speaks of "evil spirits" and Lk. 8:2 says "healed of evil spirits."

(2) Some were worse than others. In Matt. 12:45 it is said that one "taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself."

(3) They were cast out by the authority of Christ. The disciples said to Christ "the devils are subject unto us through thy name" (Lk. 10:17).

(4) They could enter and leave a person at will. "The unclean spirit . . . saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out" (Lk. 11:24).

(5) They once dwelt in animals. In Mk. 5:13 they "enter into the swine."

(6) They recognized Christ. In Mk. 5:7 one said, "Jesus, thou Son of the most high God" and in Mt. 8:29 one said, "Jesus, thou Son of God."

(7) They dwelt in desolate places, in tombs and in mountains (Mk. 5:2-5) as well as dry places (Lk. 11:24).

(8) They dreaded restriction and recognized time of their freedom was limited. In Lk. 8:28 one said, "torment me not" and in Mt. 8:29 said "torment us before the time."

#### **Active In New Testament Times**

From a reading of the New Testament it is evident that demons were active in New Testament times. Reading Matt. 12:22-30 one learns how they opposed the work of God.

People in New Testament times were really demon possessed. Men (Mk. 5:2), women (Lk. 8:2), boys (Lk. 9:38-39) and girls (Lk. 7:25) were all demon possessed. Possession by demons caused individuals to be dumb (Mt. 9:33; Mk. 9:17), to be blind (Mt. 12:22), to be deaf (Mk. 9:25), to be savage (Mt. 8:28; Mk. 5:4; Lk. 8:29) and to have superhuman strength (Mk. 5:4; Acts 19:16). People were caused to appear to be epileptic, falling into the fire and water (Mt. 17:15; Mk. 9:22), grinding their teeth (Mk. 9:18), having convulsions (Mk. 9:20; Lk. 4:35) and foaming at the mouth (Mk. 9:20; Lk. 9:39).

However, while demons caused the above, there needs to be a distinction made between demon possession and physical sickness (see Mt. 4:24; 8:16; 10:1; Mk. 1:32-34; Acts 8:7; 19:11-12).

#### **Demons Active Today?**

While demons were active in New Testament times, we need to know whether they are active now or not. The prophet Zechariah said "in that day" when

there would be "a fountain open" "for sin" that God would (1) "cut off the names of the idols out of the land" and (2) "I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land" (Zech. 13:1-2). Jesus said the apostles would "in my name cast out devils" (Mk. 16:17). Paul said "prophecies, they shall fail" (1 Cor. 13:8). Of one "with an unclean spirit" it is said "no man could bind him, no, not with chains" and when "he had been often bound with fetters and chains" "the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces; neither could any man tame him" (Mk. 5:4). Do we have men today that can not be bound? The average chain will hold any man. In Mt. 8:28 we learn of "two possessed with devils" who were "exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way" but we have no such circumstances today. Again, from Acts 19:13-16 we learn of certain ones who were caused to flee wounded and naked because one with an evil spirit leaped upon them, overcame them and prevailed against them. Do demons cause such today? If demons really possessed men today, before they could be converted, the demons would have to be cast out, thus calling for a miracle. Calvinism says man is so depraved that it takes a miracle in order for him to be converted. If miracles are needed to convert men today, then miracles have not ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-10) and Calvinism is true.

#### **Exorcism Contrasted**

Looking at Jesus casting out demons and what men today claim they do will reveal that they are not alike.

(1) Jesus did not cast out demons in some dark, secluded room to be publicized later. When Jesus cast out demons the record says "they were all amazed" (Lk. 4:33-37).

(2) With a word Jesus cast out demons (Mt. 17:18), yet a Catholic priest in the movie, 'The Exorcist' tried 20 times within two months. Another priest attempted Exorcism 14 times in 29 days.

(3) Those who were demon possessed in New Testament times had malfunctions of otherwise normal conditions; they were dumb, blind and deaf. However, Catholic exorcist Luigi Novagese said, "A possessed man's skin turned white like paper, his teeth became transparent, his eyes bulged with balls of flame and fire issued from his mouth." Where do you read of such descriptions of demon possessed people in the New Testament? Novagese said that during a session of exorcism one demon took a bite of a sandwich.

(4) So-called modern demons give out with 'fierce curses' and 'bursts of blasphemy' yet in New Testament times even the demons recognized and respected Deity (Mk. 1:24; 3:11; 5:7).

(5) The purpose of exorcism in New Testament days was to confirm the word (Mk. 16:15-20). The word does not need to be confirmed today. If some word needs confirmation today, this is an admission it is not the word preached by Christ and the apostles. Modern exorcists do not preach the confirmed word of God.

## Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

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### WHO IS JEHOVAH?

I feel that two extreme positions have been taken on this question. Many denominational writers teach that the name "Jehovah" always refers to Jesus. Such teaching is set forth in the late Harry Rimmer's "*The Magnificence of Jesus*" (in most respects, a magnificent volume, I might add).

Rimmer wrote: "Among the sacred names of God as He revealed Himself to the Hebrews in Old Testament times, is one hallowed name, the exact form of which is lost to our modern age. The American Revised Version seeks to recapture this name under the form 'Jehovah.' Other scholars say it should be 'Yah' or 'Yawah.' This is a question of small moment, and one that is impossible to settle, because of the dramatic disappearance of that word from written records. The loss of the exact form came about in this fashion: The name (which we will call Jehovah) occurs in the Old Testament text something over seven thousand times. It was held in such reverence and awe, men never spoke it in audible tones. When the priest was reading the law and came to this sacred name of God, he shut his eyes, bowed, crossed his hands on his breast, and worshipped. The congregation, knowing that he was thinking the name of God, bowed with him and joined in that homage.

"When a scribe was copying the law, the ceremonial admiration of that name was so great, he always used a new pen to write the holy appellation when he met it in the text. In the course of time, it became agreed that since the name was never spoken, they would leave a blank in the record, and copies thus were made in this fashion. When the reader came to this blank, he knew that the name of God was intended, and he paused and worshipped at the thought of that name. Thus, after generations and centuries of this practice, the name became lost. For the sake of convenience, we will use the English form 'Jehovah' and simply state that it was the holiest word for absolute deity in the Hebrew text, and that it always means the Person of Jesus Christ!"

I quoted those lengthy paragraphs because of the interesting information they contain. My objection lies with the last sentence of Dr. Rimmer's remarks, that the name "Jehovah" always means the Person of Jesus Christ.

David said: "The LORD said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Psalm 110:1). In the King James Bible,

the word "LORD" with all letters capitalized, is from the word "Jehovah." Here "Jehovah" refers to the Father, not to Jesus Christ.

Jesus quoted this passage in Matt. 22:41-45: "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I made thine enemies thy footstool?"

It was the Father who said these words to the Son (Heb. 1:13). Therefore this is one clear case in which the name "Jehovah" refers to the Father, and not to Jesus.

But I must also take issue with the idea that the name always refers to the Father. The "Jehovah's Witnesses" teach this, and it harmonizes well with their doctrine that Jesus is a created being. Many brethren (while in no way denying the deity of Jesus) also believe and teach that "Jehovah" is used exclusively of God the Father in the scriptures. I do not believe such teaching will stand up.

In Deut. 6:4, Moses wrote: "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD." The American Revised Standard has "Jehovah" where the King James Version has "LORD". Jehovah is here under consideration. The word "God" is from the Hebrew *Elohim*. This is the plural form of the word *El*. It is the word used in the very first verse of the Bible. It is used in Gen. 1:26: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." It is used in Gen. 3:22: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us. . . ." It is used again and again in the Old Testament, and it always refers to the Persons or Beings of the Godhead, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The word "one" in Deut. 6:4 is *echad*. This word means a united one, not an absolute one. It shows compound unity. It is used in Gen. 1:5: "And the evening and morning were the first day." The word "first" is *echad*. Two objects (evening and morning) equaled one, i.e., a united one. The word is used in Genesis 2:24: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh." Here again we have a compound unity. Husband and wife become one. When Jesus quoted these words in Matt. 19:5, He used the Greek *hen* for the Heb. *echad*. And then He used the same word in John 10:30 when He declared: "I and my Father are one."

Now, back to Deut. 6:4, when we put the above pieces together, it becomes obvious that "Jehovah" is the name of all three members of the Godhead. While the name might be applied exclusively to one Member in a given text (as in Psalm 110:1), it may be applied to any Member. It is a name of deity.

There are several texts in which the name "Jehovah" applies to Jesus: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD (Jehovah), make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Isa. 40:3). Readers will recognize this as a prophecy which Matthew stated was fulfilled

by John the Baptist as he prepared the way of Jesus (Matt. 3:3).

Psalm 24 should be read in its entirety. It is a prophecy of the ascension of Christ. Verse 10 asks: "Who is this King of glory?" Then the answer: "The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory."

Many other references could be given, but these should suffice. "Jehovah" is a name of the Godhead, not just of the Father.

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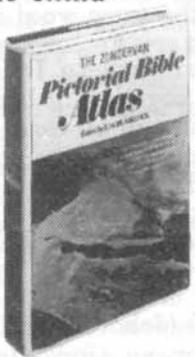
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## THE DEADLY SIN OF NEGLIGENCE

*L. Earl Fly*

P.O. Box 3295  
Jackson, Tennessee 38301



"Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward: How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation . . ." (Heb. 2:1-3). This clearly teaches that if Christians drift and neglect their salvation, they will no more escape punishment than did the disobedient Jews. The sin of negligence begins in the heart with a weakening of faith, a loss of zeal and love; and it results in slothfulness in the Lord's work. It is extremely deceptive and very dangerous, and will surely send one to hell. One can attend every service of the church, give liberally, pray, worship, live a good moral life, and still be guilty of negligence. If one is not alert and watchful, it is easy to be lulled into a false sense of security, not realizing the gradual drifting away into grave danger. This is why its so important to examine ourselves daily to see whether we are in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5).

I fear there are many churches, which are "sound on the issues," and faithful in doctrine, but complacent and lukewarm, not zealous of and not careful to maintain good works. Some may have a name that they live because of strong, past opposition to institutionalism, etc., but are dead like the church at Sardis (Rev. 3:1). Unless churches constantly, honestly and thoroughly examine themselves, they may go to the judgment in a dead, lukewarm, lost condition.

There are many warnings against negligence. The entire 25th chapter of Matthew warns us with examples: The five foolish virgins neglected to keep an adequate supply of oil; the one talent man neglected to use what he had according to his ability; those who neglected to give attention to "little things," such as giving food, drink, clothing to the Lord's brethren in need, and failing to visit the sick and those in prison. Jesus teaches that they shall be eternally condemned in punishment, not because of what they did, **but because of what they did not do** (Verse 46). Also, in John 15:1-6, Jesus says that the unfruitful branch will be cut off, cast into the fire and burned. Negligence causes this unfruitfulness. Christians are warned and exhorted to provoke one another unto love and good works, and to remember their former days of faithfulness, and to not cast away their confidence, but be patient in doing the

will of God, in order to receive the promise (Heb. 10:19-36).

### Causes of Negligence

(1) Love of and conformation to the world. We are warned to love not the world, neither the things in the world (1 John 2:15). Demas forsook Paul, "having loved this present world" (2 Tim. 4:10). We are exhorted to not be conformed to the world, but transformed (Rom. 12:1-2).

(2) Lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life can cause one to be negligent. When one had rather enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, than to suffer afflictions with the people of God (Heb. 11:25), he neglects the works of God.

(3) Temptation causes negligence; it causes one to fall away (Luke 8:13). God knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations (2 Pet. 2:9), and he always provides a way of escape (1 Cor. 10:12-13); but it is up to us to take the route of escape. We should pray that we enter not into temptation: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. . ." (Matt. 26:41).

(4) Some "go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection (Luke 8:14). We will always have some cares, but we can keep them from hindering works of God. Covetousness and riches cause negligence. A covetous rich man said: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry" (Luke 12:19). Even the desire to be rich brings temptations and snares (1 Tim. 6:9-10). Pleasures also cause negligence. Some are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God (2 Tim. 3:4). When cares of this life, riches and pleasures have priority over God's work, it results in sinful negligence.

(5) Weariness causes negligence. God says, "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (Heb. 4:1). Many are negligently resting now, and forfeiting their eternal salvation. Only when the faithful, fruitful Christian dies in the Lord, can he rest from his labours (Rev. 14:13).

### Tragic Consequences of Negligence

Negligence will cause multitudes of alien sinners and negligent Christians to be forever lost in hell. It is contagious: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Cor. 5:6). There is no escape for one who neglects his salvation (Heb. 2:1-3); he will go away into everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:1-46). The unfruitful, barren branch will be cut off and cast into the fire (John 15:1-6).

The Laodicean church is an example of a lukewarm, complacent, slothful, negligent church (Rev. 3:15-20). But they thought they were saved, safe and secure; actually, they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked and lost, in need of zeal and repentance. They could have known this if they had thoroughly examined themselves by God's word. This church was not charged with teaching false doctrine, immorality or forsaking the assembling of

themselves together. They were condemned, not because of what they did, but because of what they did not do. They needed to awaken from their sleep, rise from the dead, be zealous and repent, and start redeeming the time (Rev. 3:19; Eph. 5:14-17). Preachers should constantly warn churches to examine themselves, and be zealous, fervent in spirit, and careful to maintain good works, serving the Lord (Tit. 3:8; Rom. 12:11).

Christians are God's workmanship; they are ordained to walk in good works (Eph. 2:10). Jesus gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, to purify unto himself a people zealous of good works (Tit. 2:14). Surely, we can live and work for him who died for us, and not neglect his commandments.

Sometimes one may be negligent because he thinks he does not have ability, the means, and opportunities. This negative attitude manifests little faith. If we have a fervent desire and willingness to work, God will work in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). **God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us"** (Eph. 3:20). "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8). He can enrich us in ALL BOUNTIFULNESS IN EVERYTHING (Verse 11). Many limit God's blessings by their little faith in these promises, having a lukewarm spirit and a slothful life. They equate God's reasoning and power with their own, having little faith that God can and will provide bountifully all things needed for every good work. We do not have to see how God will do it; we must walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). His ways and thoughts are as much higher than ours, as the heavens are above the earth; his ways are past finding out (Rom. 11:33). So, why should we question God's ability and willingness to supply us bountifully? Brethren, let us cease doubting and wavering, and confidently and fully believe and apply the above passages, always walking by faith, not by our sight.

We can avoid the deadly, soul-condemning sin of negligence, if we will abstain and maintain: abstain from worldly things that hinder, and maintain good works. We must not love the world or the things of the world (1 John 2:15); we must not be friends of the world (James 4:4); we must not be conformed to the world (Rom. 12:1-2); otherwise, we will be negligent and slothful. We must **ALWAYS** put God's kingdom **FIRST** (Matt. 6:33).

We should add to our faith: virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love; "for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for **IF YE DO THESE THINGS, YE SHALL NEVER FALL**—for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting

kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:5-11), Peter said though they knew those things, he was putting them in remembrance (Verse 12). Evangelists today should constantly put the brethren in remembrance of being careful to maintain good works (Titus 3:8).

We must constantly, honestly and thoroughly examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith, or negligent (2 Cor. 13:5). If negligent, we must awaken from our sleep, rise from the dead and redeem the time (Eph. 5:17-18). We must be zealous and repent; this is what Jesus told the Laodiceans (Rev. 3:19). We should be fervent in spirit, not slothful in business, serving the Lord (Rom. 12:11). We must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12).

In order to go to heaven, we **MUST** do God's commandments, enduring to the end, being faithful unto death (Rev. 22:14; Matt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10). Christians can help each other to make it to heaven, if they will daily exhort each other, provoking unto love and good works (Heb. 3:12; 10:24).

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (Heb. 10:23). Let us have patience in doing God's will (Heb. 10:36). Let us never become weary in well doing (Gal. 6:9). "Therefore, we ought to give the most earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, **HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE. IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION. . .**" (Heb. 2:1-3).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58). "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb. 6:10-12). "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Heb. 10:35-36).

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING

*R. J. Evans*

3259 Greendale Road  
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Preaching the gospel of Christ is a tremendous responsibility. Every gospel preacher should be fully aware of its importance. But do we realize that LISTENING is just as important as speaking? A preacher's lesson does very little good (even though he may have spent many hours in its preparation) if the audience is not listening. And, surely, if a person desires to be entertained, the world provides that in many forms—many of which are acceptable and all right in their proper place. But entertainment has no place whatsoever in the pulpit or in our worship to God. Thus, when Christians assemble for worship, ALL must realize the importance of such an assembly, and treat it and others with due respect. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; For our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:28, 29).

### "They Gave Him Audience Unto This Word"

Some people will listen to the word of God up to a point. In Acts 22, Paul defends himself in Jerusalem. The Jews listened to Paul concerning his birth (vs. 3), education (vs. 3), zeal towards the law (vs. 3-5), and they even listened to the facts concerning his conversion to Christ (vs. 6-16). But, when Paul mentioned the Gentiles, a group of people they hated, that did it! (Acts 22:21). Their prejudices were so blinding that they would hear Paul no more. What Paul said in verse 21 "turned them off." **"And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live"** (Acts 22:22).

The Athenians listened to Paul in Acts 17:22-31. But, **"When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked"** (Acts 17:32).

The above are New Testament examples of poor listeners. Likewise, it is not uncommon to encounter the same today with those of the denominational world. For example, they may be quite interested, listening well to Bible teaching concerning faith or repentance. But not so when it is pointed out that baptism is essential to salvation (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3, 4; 1 Pet. 3:21). Though the teaching is sound and scriptural, they want to hear no more of it!

It must also be pointed out that some members of the Lord's church listen—up to a point, that is. They

like the preacher and what he says just fine until he begins to zero in on their sins. After that, they don't hear a word he says!

### "He Preaches Too Long"

I know of a case where the local preacher had a lesson that was a little longer than usual. One brother in the audience became so impatient (what with it past twelve and all), that he stood up, slammed his song book down on the bench, and stormed out of the assembly. (He later repented of such action.) Many members of the church are not so abrupt in expressing their impatience with the preacher's "long-windedness" as in the case cited above, but they, too, have means of sending out little signals revealing their impatience. It may come in the form of criticism—"he preaches too long." Or, it sometimes manifests itself by the listener (?) continually cleaning his throat, or by getting the song book out and opening it to the song to be sung at the close of the lesson, long before the preacher concludes. And we can't leave out that old standby—get real fidgety and continually look up at the clock or at your watch. The message will come in loud and clear every time!

I would be the first to acknowledge that a preacher must use good judgment as to the length of his sermons. But, the length of a lesson sometimes depends upon the subject. (Some lessons just take more time than do others.) There is no reason why a preacher should d-r-a-g o-u-t his sermon until he loses his audience by being redundant. He should be direct and to the point, thus, excluding the need to say the same thing two or three times before finishing his lesson. But at the same time, listeners should not get upset when he "goes over" because they can't "beat the Baptists" to the nearest cafeteria or restaurant, either!

### Conclusion

As listeners of God's word, may we all seek to be as Cornelius and his household . . . **"Now therefore are we all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God"** (Acts 10:33). Their main concern was to hear the word of God. When the preacher takes his place in the pulpit, as a listener, are you truly concerned with hearing God's word? The preacher will have to give an account for what he says, and you, the listener, will have to give an account for how you listen. The following is a quotation from a cartoon: "I have a task and that is talking to you. You have a task of listening to me. I hope you do not finish before I do." In most cases, when the listener stops listening to a gospel sermon before it is completed—the problem does not lie with the preacher, but rather, with the heart of the one who has stopped listening. May we all realize THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING to God's word.

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(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)

## A WORD WITH YOU: *Charakter*

O. E. Watts

A child in art class cuts a potato in two. He draws a simple picture on the flat face. Then he cuts away what is outside the outline. Next he "inks the stamp" by touching it to a paint pad. Now he stamps his figure on paper. The simple printed character comes out the same every time and delights the budding artist.

Transfer this action to an ancient workman. An expert, he engraved in metal an image to be stamped on coins, or wax, or on other material. The term for that stamped "picture" was the Greek word, *charakter*. In this connection it meant, "an exact expression; an exact reproduction; a perfect likeness; the impress, as enstamped; an exact copy; precise reproduction in every respect". These definitions are by recognized scholars. All of them refer to the same stamped image.

This word appears only once in all of God's Book. This is in Hebrews 1:3 which begins, "And He (God's Son) is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature (New American Standard Bible)".

Considering the definitions above we can appreciate how different translations render this. The American Standard Version has, "the very image of his substance". In the margin is, "the impress of his substance". The King James Version says, "the express image of his person". In the Revised Standard Version we read that he (Jesus) "bears the very stamp of his nature". The New International Version calls it, "the exact representation of his being."

All of these forcefully convey the thought that the nature, being, and person of God are seen in Jesus.

Other words and other verses teach that the Savior showed us the Father and how we are to imitate Him. But here one time is the answer to, "What does God look like?" In much detail and in great beauty we have the printed portrait. Jesus is the marvelous picture of God.

### THE BROOK KIDRON

(2 Sam. 15:23; 1 Kings 15:13; John 18:1)

We read the story and in sympathy  
Behold King David in his hour of woe  
Pass over Kidron. There with him we see  
His fleeing people, weeping as they go.  
Years afterward the good King Asa burned  
The image at the brook. On Kidron's sod  
Brave David's faithful great-great-grandson  
turned

The worship of God's people back to God.  
And finally at night, but not to hide, Our  
Lord passed over Kidron. Calm and meek,  
He sought the scene of grief.

It was beside Jerusalem's historic dusky  
creek.

Oliver Watts

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## THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

"... They rehearsed all that God had done with them..."—Acts 14:27

**IRVEN LEE**, P.O. Box 866, Hartselle, AL 35640 — Several months ago I sent word to SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES that I would be cutting down on meetings. My practice has been contrary to my word. Several things have changed since I wrote the letter, so I have been and will be conducting meetings as time allows, if it be the Lord's will. I am very thankful to have the strength and health that I now have.

### Despise Not the Day of Small Things

**RAY VOTAW**, Box 801, Springs, Tvl. 1560, South Africa — Thena and I have just returned from another trip into the kingdom of Swaziland. It was my privilege while there to make a thirty minute recording at the Swaziland Broadcasting System's studios—government owned and the only station in Swaziland—on "What About This Church of Christ in Swaziland?" This is to be broadcast over the air to Swaziland listeners at a prime time on Sunday. SBS has a potential listening audience of over five hundred thousand. . . . All of this was made possible because a few years ago—in a pinch—a crippled, tattered, shy and a completely unprepossessing young Swazi was selected to do some translating for me. This was the beginning of Nicholas Masuku's interest in the truth. For many months thereafter—on my occasional trips to Swaziland—Nicholas would say "I'm trying to repent." (He was convinced about the oneness of the body, baptism, etc.) About two years ago he made up his mind about the "new life" and I baptized him in a muddy stream coming

down from the Lebombo mountains. Our brief associations since that time have been a delight. When we arrived in Swaziland week before last I learned from Nicholas that he had already conducted two thirty minute programs over Swazi Radio using L. A. Mott's tract, "What Is The Church of Christ" as a guideline. This was in the Siwati language of the Swazis. How long this good thing will last I have no idea. But for now—and without costing a cent — this broadcast continues each Sunday evening. There is no way this time could be purchased. It just so happens that Masuku had at one time worked with the man in charge of religious programs. After Nicholas' conversion he had talked to this man — Mr. Lukela — about the church and he had suggested, "Why don't you tell all Swaziland?" Nicholas is doing just that. Quite possibly, through this little impoverished and crippled native black, more people have heard the gospel in this sub-continent than in all these years of gospel preaching. Indeed — "Who hath despised the day of small things" (Zech. 4:10)?

**JOHN McCORT**, 2675 Kentucky Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46241 —In September of 1976 a group of people started a new congregation in Indianapolis known as the Westside church of Christ. For nearly a year we met in the basement of one of the members. On August 21, 1977 we met in our new building for the first time and had 196 in attendance. Our building is located at 2675 Kentucky Avenue in Indianapolis. I wish you would announce this fact in your paper because many people are still unaware of the existence of this congregation.

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**New Congregation in Des Moines**

**RON ANDERSON**, 602 S.E. Magazine Rd., Ankeny, Iowa 50021 — I am writing to send word that a new congregation is now meeting in the city of Des Moines, Iowa, a city of over 200,000 people, and certainly in need of a faithful, sound congregation. On August 7, 1977, six families met together for the first time to initiate this new work. This came after much anticipation by several individuals over a period of time. We presently have 24 in attendance including 11 adults (average age 38) and the remainder children. We are presently averaging \$200 per week in contribution which we feel is quite good. All of the men can teach and preach and participate in other items of worship. We stand opposed to the church support of human institutions along with all the other innovations that have invaded the body of Christ in the last few years. The brethren here are present because of conviction and not for convenience which makes for a great asset in the Lord's work.

I moved here to do full-time work after preaching in Texas the last ten years. My support has been raised from congregations in Texas and Arkansas. The work thus far looks extremely encouraging and the brethren would like to proceed in a very positive way in making this new work go. We are presently meeting in a rented business property that is quite nice. We have Sunday Bible classes at 9:45 A.M., Worship at 10:45 A.M. and again at 6 P.M. We meet at 7:30 Wednesday night for Bible classes. The address is: 1490 W. 86th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50322. Please visit with us when you come this way.

**Debate**

**WILLIAM C. SEXTON** will meet Robert C. Loudermilk in a series of three debates in Wichita, Kansas. On January 13-14

Loudermilk will affirm that in communion "the cup" (drinking vessel) is emblematic of the New Testament and the fruit of the vine is emblematic of the blood of Christ. On February 17-18 Loudermilk will affirm that in the Lord's Supper the bread must be in one piece or loaf. On March 24-25 Sexton will affirm the scriptural right to use the Bible class arrangement and the right of women to teach a class of women or small children. On April 2 at 3 P.M. there will be summary speeches and a question and answer session. The propositions in this debate are a little out of the ordinary and should make for an interesting discussion.

**Preachers Needed**

**MOSCOW, IDAHO** — The congregation meeting here is in need of a full time evangelist. We have recently obtained a building to meet in and presently are able to supply all but a small part of the preacher's support. Those interested please write to: Moscow Church of Christ, P.O. Box 8172, Moscow, Idaho 83843. Phone (509) 332-8503.

**MEDINA, TENNESSEE** — The church in Medina is seeking an evangelist to work with it on a full time basis. Anyone who might be interested should address inquiries to: Medina Church of Christ, Medina, TN 38343 or call Hershel Cooley at (901) 783-3603.

**CRANE HILL, ALABAMA** — The church in Crane Hill, Alabama needs a full time preacher. We are a small congregation of eight families (total people 20). We are not yet self-supporting, though we have an adequate building in which to worship and can provide at least \$250 a month support to an evangelist. There is plenty to do and many souls to be saved in this area. Interested persons should inquire by calling (205) 747-6942 or writing the Crane Hill Church of Christ, Star Route, Crane Hill, Alabama 35053.

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