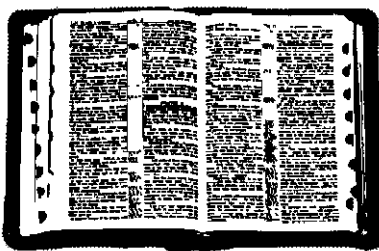


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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"


VOLUME XXII

SEPTEMBER, 1981

NUMBER 9

**ATHEISTS
WHO LOST THEIR "FAITH"**

James L. Sloan
508 Club Oak Dr.
Fort Worth, TX 76114



Some of the world's most brilliant and able literary men have been quite critical and outspoken in their condemnation of the notion of God and eternal life. Unfortunately, their testimonies have usually been heard in their young, brash, productive years when they were very full of themselves and when the day of their death seemed far removed. It might profit us to have the opportunity to learn from them in their declining days as they looked back and evaluated their lives from a high peak and broad perspective.

SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS, better known by his pen name, Mark Twain (1835-1910). "A myriad of men are born; they labor and sweat and struggle for bread; they squabble and scold and fight; they scramble for little mean advantages over each other. Age creeps upon them and infirmities follow; shame and humiliations bring down their prides and then-vanities. Those they love are taken from them, and the joy of life is turned to aching grief. The burden of pain, care, and misery grows heavier year by year. At length ambition is dead, pride is dead, vanity is dead; longing for release is in their place. It comes at last—the only unpoisoned gift earth ever had for them—and they vanish from a world where they were of no consequence; where they achieved nothing, where they were a mistake and a failure and a foolishness; where they left no sign that they have existed—a world that will lament them a day and forget them forever" (*Autobiography*, Vol. II, p. 37).

BERTRAND RUSSELL (1872-1970). "Why should you suppose I think it foolish to wish to see the people

one is fond of? What else is there to make life tolerable? We stand on the shore of an ocean, crying to the night and the emptiness; sometimes a voice answers out of the darkness. But it is a voice of one drowning; and in a moment the silence returns" (*Autobiography* p. 287). ROBERT G. INGERSOLL (1833-1899). "Death is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We cry aloud and the only answer is the wailing echo of our cry" (oration given at the grave of his brother).

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW (1856-1950). "The science to which I pinned my faith is bankrupt. . . . Its counsels which should have established the millennium have led directly to the suicide of Europe. I believed them once . . . In their name I helped to destroy the faith of millions of worshippers in the temples of a thousand creeds. And now they look at me and witness the great tragedy of an atheist who has lost his faith" (**Too True To Be Good**).

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM (1874-1965). "When I look back on my life . . . it seems to be strangely lacking in reality . . . it may be that my heart, having found rest nowhere, had some deep ancestral craving for God and immortality which my reason would have no truck with" (*The Chicago Daily News*, January 26, 1964).

These have been testimonies of atheists as they faced the bleak abyss of death and looked back on a life so lauded by others but now so strangely meaningless to themselves. Let us share just one more personal testimony. It was written by a man of immense intellect, great ambition (though not selfish), and genuine literary achievement. He was also a man who underwent great personal sufferings and gross miscarriages of justice. He said in his old age: "For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing (2 Tim. 4:6-8). This is the testimony of a believer!"

FORGIVENESS VS. PERMISSION

William V. Beasley
P.O. Box 147
Pekin, IN 47165

The school principal, a member of a large, liberal (digressive) church of Christ, was discussing one facet of his philosophy as a school principal when he said, "It is often easier to get forgiveness than it is to get permission." When an extraordinary situation arose he would do what he thought was best and then, if the superintendent or others in authority objected, he (the principal) could apologize and seek their forgiveness. Frankly, with the complex and oft times conflicting rules handed down by bureaucrats at all levels of government such a philosophy was probably very efficient. Such is not being recommended, but the workability of such is recognized.

The thing that bothers me is the emergence of this philosophy ("It is often easier to get forgiveness than it is to get permission.") in matters religious. Brethren search in vain for authority from the New Testament (permission) to build and maintain humanly devised institutions to do the work of the church. When permission is withheld (no command, approved apostolic example or necessary inference) they go on declaring that it is a "good work," and that the Lord must surely be happy with their efforts—if not, He forgives so easily.

Saints search the New Testament for "permission" to make the local congregation a social center (dinners in the basement, TV rooms, ping-pong tables, gymnasiums, etc.), fail to find a hint of permission, ignore New Testament condemnation of such (1 Cor. 11:22), but go onward, ever onward confident that God will forgive IF they have done ought that was wrong. After all, forgiveness is easier to get than permission.

Others, closer to home, reason in much the same fashion. Knowing that it is wrong (sinful) to forsake "our own assembling together" (Heb. 10:25) they take jobs that "necessitate" their missing worship services. The job is not for necessities (food and clothing, see Matt. 6:25-33), but for the good life, for spending money, to get some of the extras that society offers. "Surely," they reason, "the Lord will forgive me since I had to work."

Permission to (un)dress as the world is not forthcoming (1 Tim. 2:9; Rom. 12:2) but skirts and dresses with suggestive, provocative slits up the side are in style, and forgiveness is so easy to obtain so

.... When I first encountered the philosophy, "It is often easier to get forgiveness than it is to get permission," I was shocked since God's children are to serve their "masters according to the flesh ... heartily as unto the Lord" (see Col. 3:22-24). My shock turned to sadness and sorrow when I realized that the cheapening of forgiveness to make it a replacement for authority (permission) in secular matters was (is) in keeping with their service "unto the Lord" (Col. 3:23).

Searching The Scriptures

Volume 22 SEPTEMBER, 1981 Number 9

Published Monthly at
BROOKS, KENTUCKY

Second Class Postage Paid at Brooks, Kentucky
and at an Additional Mailing Office
USPS-487-440

CONNIE W. ADAMS, Editor

Office of Publication
52 Yearling Drive
Brooks, Kentucky 40109
Phone (502) 957-2257

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

\$7 per year in advance

Club rate:

\$6 per year for 4 or more

Bundles to one address:

12 for \$ 5.00

24 for \$10.00

Group subscriptions:

12 for \$ 5.00 per month

24 for \$10.00 per month

Address subscriptions and manuscripts to Connie W. Adams, P.O. Box 68, Brooks, Kentucky 40109-0068.

Address supply orders to Religious Supply Center, Inc., 4001 Preston Hwy., Louisville, Kentucky 40213. Phone (502) 366-9014.

POSTMASTER: Send change of address forms to P.O. Box 68, Brooks, Kentucky 40109-0068.

Books by R. L. Whiteside

For many years R. L. Whiteside was a favorite of many brethren. He was always a safe teacher. Though dead, he yet speaks through these excellent books:

Commentary on Romans	\$5.00
Doctrinal Discourses	\$6.25
Kingdom of Promise and Prophecy	\$5.95
Reflections (by his daughter Inys)	\$6.45
Whiteside-Clark Discussion (on Bible Class Question)	\$1.25
John the Baptist—His Mission and Work—Isaac E. Tackett 27 pages	\$1.00

Order from: RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER

Editorial

Connie W. Adams

P. O. Box 68
Brooks, Kentucky 40109



WHERE DID HE TELL US HOW TO DO IT?

Not long ago in a talk with a preacher in another state, the subject of church supported benevolence arose. He had come to hear me preach one night in a meeting although he preached for a congregation involved in practices which I could not endorse. Our conversation afterward was pleasant though it was evident we were not in accord on many things. Like writers and debaters of 25 years ago who advocated financial support from churches to private relief organizations, he wanted to know just where the Bible tells us "how to do it"?

We have been told that James 1:27 says to "visit the fatherless and widows" and that the passage does not say how it is to be done. It was strange a quarter of a century ago, and still is, that this argument should be made when none of the brethren who oppose church support of such organizations have ever argued over the "how." The issue was, and is, the question of "Who" and not "How." For example, in James 1:27, the one charged with the care of the fatherless and widows is the same one who is to "bridle his tongue" (verse 26) and who is to "keep himself unspotted from the world" so that "this man's religion" will not be in vain. The context here indicates that the "who" of this passage is an individual. The church as a body is not even under discussion. As to what method of administration the individual shall choose in visiting the fatherless and widows, the passage says nothing.

1 Tim. 5:16 deals with relief of widows indeed. "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." The "who" of this passage is clearly indicated. The "man or woman" who has widows is to relieve them so the church will not be charged in order that it (the church) may relieve "widows indeed." Here the church enters the picture. If the church is to relieve "widows indeed", it is understood by all that some method will have to be employed. There will have to be a place of care, supervision, provision and the necessary amount to accomplish all of this. But the point is that the church is charged to administer this relief. The only unit God ever ordained through which the church can do anything is the local congregation with its own elders and deacons (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1; 1 Pet. 5:1-3). This means that the elders will oversee the methods used and the expenditure of the Lord's money.

This is not done when a congregation supports a benevolent organization. The board of directors decides on the place of care, personnel and provisions. They oversee the matter. The board is not the "how" but another "who" than the church under its elders. Brethren need to learn to distinguish between organization and method. When the church relieves those for whom it is responsible, it must employ method. But when the church contributes to an organization, then that organization itself is not a method or "how" but another entity which still must determine the method to be used.

The question resolves itself to this: which organization did God appoint for the work? Did he ordain the church under the oversight of elders, or did he ordain another governing unit (a board of directors chartered by the state)? Which "who" (organization) must employ the "how" (method)?

There are various methods which might be used in relieving those who are the charge of the church. They might be supported in their own house, or one secured for that purpose. They might have to have qualified attendants to administer medicine or other care. But the selection of the care and administration of the matter must be under the oversight of the elders of the church. If elders cannot oversee it, then what makes it the work of the church? The relief for the poor saints in Judea was sent "to the elders", not to some Judean relief society (Acts 11:27-30).

The charge that some of us are seeking to bind methods is a straw man. It was a false argument 25 years ago. It has not improved with age. But we do insist that the church as purposed in divine wisdom, is adequate under its own elders to do everything God authorized the church to do. God did not bind "how" the relief is to be administered, but he certainly did bind the "who."

Recent Deaths

A. H. STAGGS—This beloved gospel preacher worked for many years in southern Indiana and Kentucky. He preached at one time for the Gardiner Lane congregation in Louisville. About 6 weeks ago he passed away while living in Florida. While his health had been failing for sometime, he was helping a small congregation until a few days before his death. Funeral services were conducted in Sellersburg, Indiana by Frank Ingram with burial in Nashville, Tennessee. We express our sympathy to the remaining members of the family.

SHIRLEY STAUFFER—After a long battle with cancer, Shirley Stauffer, wife of gospel preacher L. A. Stauffer of Kirkwood, Missouri, fell asleep in the Lord on Sunday, July 12. Her radiant spirit, courage and confidence left an example for her husband, children and all who knew her. She was an excellent teacher and through her work in camps operated by Florida College she influenced the lives of countless young people who feel the loss keenly. Many congregations and individuals have been blessed through the faithful service of the Stauffers and share with L.A. and the

children the sense of loss. May the God of all comfort sustain them as they now ponder their many precious memories.

GREAT FAITH

Irven Lee
P.O. Box 866
Hartselle, AL 35640



There was a woman of Canaan who came to Jesus to plead for the recovery of her daughter. Her behavior on that occasion was such that our Lord was led to say: "O woman, great is thy faith" (Matt. 15:22-28). Does he find great faith when He looks into our hearts? If so, how great is it?

Is it great enough to continue through all the attacks and ridicule that come from this unbelieving and ungodly world? The crime rate is increasing rapidly, the divorce rate is alarming, fornication and drunkenness are accepted as ways of life. Each person finds a desire within himself to conform to the ways of the crowd rather than to be cut off from the crowd.

Is your faith strong enough to fight back? We have been asked to contend for the faith. We are to be able to give an answer to those who ask a reason for the hope that is in us (Jude 3; 1 Pet. 3:15). The faithful child of God is able to teach or speak so as to lead others to believe (2 Tim. 2:2; Rom. 10:17). This sin sick world is in great need of more people who have great faith. We have no room to think that it might be too great. There is no record of any one's having a faith that is too great. How could that be?

Is your faith great enough to cause you to confidently and boldly apply the principles of the word of God to your own life? The same measure of faith that would cause us to contend boldly and earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints should surely cause us to obey every command and heed every warning delivered to us by holy men who were guided by the Holy Spirit. If we can so heartily recommend it to others we should be willing to practice what we preach.

It is inconsistent and hard to explain, but there have been men who were very effective teachers of truth who became immoral while preaching the truth. They say and do not. It might shock many of us if we know how many have appeared to be children of light by the things they said but are actually children of darkness in their behavior. Why do some fornicators preach the gospel? It would seem that any such person would give up one or the other. Our Lord was dealing with public teachers who sat in Moses' seat when He gave so many sharp rebukes in that last week of His life (Matt. 23). They loved the praise of men and other such things more than they loved the Lord Himself. In fact, the

leaders among the enemies of Jesus were priests, scribes, and rulers in the synagogues. Could similar things be true in our day? Enough teachers of the gospel are caught in ungodliness to let us know that this is a real problem.

Is your faith great enough to cause you to hunger and thirst after truth? Those who gladly receive the word by obeying it and teaching it would surely be eager to learn. Do you know of teachers who go to classes unprepared to teach? Do you know men who stand to preach who are poorly prepared? Can we think of enough excuses for our ignorance? A lack of Bible knowledge is very evident in many places. These teachers who lack knowledge evidently lack the power of discernment to recognize error when it is taught. There is great danger of apostasy when the teachers and leaders do not have their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. It is time to be filled with alarm because there is not much evidence of Bible knowledge today, even among likable people who take much responsibility in church work.

A rush of worldly concerns consume the time rather than Bible study. Television, games, and other forms of recreation compete for our time after the day's work is done. In what percentage of the church families is Bible study a point of special emphasis in the day's activities? This lack of knowledge may show up in careless behavior and speech. It may dull the edge of boldness and firmness in the teacher. Faith comes by hearing the word of God so where there is little knowledge and study there is little faith.

The man of great faith is not ashamed of the testimony of the Lord. He is eager to understand it and to live in harmony with it. Great faith is alive and active. A man may say he has faith, but he may fail to demonstrate it by his activities.

The man who loves the truth will find great joy in its promises and see the wisdom in its precepts. Many who are called Christians may find almost all their pleasure in something this world offers. America seems to have gotten beside itself in excitement over athletic events, boating, fishing, and even over the offerings of Hollywood. A day only has twenty four hours, and a week has only seven days. When can we find time for the most important things? The church itself is made up of many people who are caught up in the whirl of things that interest the unbelievers. The beauty of holiness, the hope of glory, and the power of the gospel may hardly be noticed by these busy people who know of things that interest them more. Where are our priorities?

Christ has advice we need, precious promises to encourage us, and many needed warnings, but there is little offered to the man of little faith. Knowledge and faith come by the same time consuming effort. The great joy and consolation that came to Paul in prison are not available to people whose thoughts and deeds center in material or worldly things. Do we realize the peace He offers? Have we no understanding of the joy that comes to the more devout? We cannot do everything, so we should select things of eternal value to fill more of our time. How great is your faith?

"THERE OUGHT
TO BE A LAW"

Ernest A. Finley

416 20th Ave. N.
Texas City, TX 77590



How many times have you heard some fellow say, in exasperation with some situation that has developed or something unbecoming that someone else has done, "**There ought to be a law!**"? Did you ever stop to think about this statement a bit? Just about every time this statement is made, if one will do a bit of searching he will find out that there already is a law relating to the very evil that has proved so disturbing. In fact, if you check it out, you will find that God, Himself, has given a law or made a statement that deals with the problem. Lets take a look at a few examples.

Have you ever seen a person who was characterized by such slovenliness, who was so slipshod in his work, in fact, who was just simply so downright lazy that you were more than a little tempted to say, "There ought to be a law against a feller bein' that lazy!"? The fact is, there is more than a little said in God's Word about the sluggard or his disposition. The statements are quite pointed. Solomon wrote: "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as a robber, And thy want as an armed man" (Prov. 6:9-11). **Paul gave some rather strong language directed against those who will not work:** "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, If any will not work, neither let him eat" (2 Thess. 3:10). We have a lot of "**dead-beats**", **leeches**, and "**spongers**" in our society who live off the productivity of the industrious segment of society. I think it would be good to apply the rule that was given by Paul to the Thessalonians. A little hunger might cure a lot of laziness. So—in this particular area, if you feel that there ought to be a law dealing with the problem, there already is.

More than once I have run into such a gross display of immodesty or undress that I have found myself saying, "There ought to be a law against such indecent exposure!" But, come to think of it, there already is. Folks just do not pay any attention to it. Or at least most folks don't. But here it is, plain and clear, right on the pages of Holy Writ: "In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment: but (which becometh **women professing godliness**) through good works" (1 Tim. 2:9, 10). **There it is. God saw the need for such a law and gave it to us. Let's respect it!**

Did you ever see a sister just about take complete

control of a class, a mixed class, and do more teaching from her seat than the man who was standing on the floor trying to teach the class? Did you ever, out of sympathy for the teacher and the class, think, "There ought to be a law against a woman's dominating the class in that fashion."? Well, you won't have to bother passing such a law. It is already in the Book. Paul called for a disposition of reserve and restraint on the part of a woman. "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness" (1 Tim. 2:11, 12). That should be sufficient for one who is satisfied with the Lord's word in the matter.

Were you ever tempted to say, "There ought to be a law," when you see some fellow with disgustingly long hair walking down the street or riding by on his motorcycle? The Holy Spirit saw fit to deal with this problem too. He guided the pen of Paul to reveal these words: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a dishonor to him? (1 Cor. 11:14). Many people do not see the shame of it, but if they had read their Book and believed it, they would. Or, perhaps, I should say they see the dishonor and shame of it, but they ignore it in order to go along with the crowd. It is still a shame!

Have you ever groaned within when you are watching TV and you see a young gang of "rebels" throwing rocks and bottles at the police? Surely, there ought to be a law against such conduct! To make such an observation is almost ludicrous. Certainly, there is such a law. Peter dealt with the matter of civil government and the respect that should be shown toward those who represent it: "Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to the king, as supreme; or unto governors sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers and for praise to them that do well . . . Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king" (1 Pet. 2:13, 14, 17). The beloved brother Paul also wrote concerning civil government and our attitude toward it: "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. . . Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor" (Rom. 13:1, 2, 7). Agents of civil government, when fulfilling their divinely appointed role, are "ministers of God" (Rom. 13:4, 6). We must respect them and be in subjection to them.

I have seen rebellious children do just about everything but spit on their parents and I am sure that this has happened also. "There ought to be a law," we may say. There is, in both the Old and New Covenants. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. 6:1-3). See also Ex. 20:12 and Deut. 5:16. God saw that there was a need for such a law and He gave it. Let us

teach our children to respect it. They will be the better and the happier for it.

I am sure that the Lord does not call upon me to hold in respect those who will not shoulder their responsibility as parents. A mother and father who will abandon their children to someone else to raise, are not worthy of the name "mother" and "father." There have been many instances in which children have literally starved to death physically simply because of the inhumanity of their parents. But there are many more children who are starving to death spiritually. "There ought to be a law," someone says. Well, there is. Paul wrote, "But if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Tim. 5:8).

Rending asunder the body of Christ is a terrible thing. Fomenting strife and division and contention is a great hindrance to the progress of the cause of Christ. The way some folks behave in the church, the attitudes they manifest toward their brethren,— "There ought to be a law." Well, friend, there is. When Paul found division and strife among the brethren, he wrote, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent" (Rom. 16:17, 18). There is a sense in which one can never destroy the kingdom of Christ. It shall stand forever. But one may destroy its well-being. In local instances, one may cause it to sicken and die. But woe to him who is responsible for the evil that is wrought. Paul stated succinctly, "If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye" (1 Cor. 3:17).

Many young people, and older ones too, will go to bed with just about anybody who asks or consents. Marriage is out of date for some. Just "shackin' up" is preferred. The situation is bad and getting worse. Many who marry seem to regard marriage as a sort of "trial-and-error" proposition. Try them a while and if you do not find them to your liking ship them out and order another one. Many hearts are broken. Many lives are ruined. "There ought to be a law," one may say. There is. "Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4). Fornication is listed by Paul among the "works of the flesh." He further tells us, "that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21).

In fact, we may think "There ought to be a law" against the wide prevalence of evil and wickedness that is manifest in our society and the world today. But God took care of that thousands of years ago through the prophet Enoch, the father of Methuselah, ". . . Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came when ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard

things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14, 15). God did not see fit to record much that Enoch said, but what He did record has plenty of impact. We are not left in doubt in regard to where Enoch stood on the matter of ungodliness. I am glad that God let us have this much insight into the mind of a man who was so upright in character that "God took him" (Gen. 5:24). Enoch did not "pull any punches." Neither can we if we are going to please Him.

When you feel moved to say, "There ought to be a law," take a look into God's Word. You will find that where a law was needed, God has already taken care of the problem.

Plain Talk Reprints

A limited number of reprints, of Volumes 1-4 (Jan., '64 to Feb., '68) of this well-known paper have been bound in hardback binding, complete with scripture and subject indexes, and are now available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Robert F. Turner's unique style and down-to-earth approach to complex Bible topics make this a very readable book for any saint.

Reservations are also being accepted for future reprints and bindings — so that eventually one could have four books, covering sixteen years of *Plain Talk*. That is 1,536 articles.

Price, including tax and mailing, is \$11.95 per book.

Now Ready

Vol. 5-8 (Mar. '68—Feb. '72)
Vol. 9-12 (Mar '72—Feb. '76)

\$11.95
Per Book

Order from: Religious Supply Center

Now Bound in Hardback!

OBEDIENCE OF FAITH COMMENTARY ON

ROMANS

This book by Robert C. Welch is of an especially unique format that you will want to order right now to aid in your study of the book of Romans! This is no ordinary commentary! It consists of more than 100 essays discussing in detail the most troublesome sections of the book of Romans! You will have no trouble understanding the clear and concise explanations of the text. It has complete text with it and consists of 240 pages in hardback \$7.00

Order From: Religious Supply Center

SET FOR THE
DEFENSE OF
THE GOSPEL

T. G. O'Neal

P.O. Box 723
Bessemer, Alabama 35021



EVIDENCES OF DIGRESSION

From time to time I have often pointed out evidence that some churches of Christ are departing from the teaching of the New Testament. Many of these lessons have fallen upon deaf ears because as Jesus said of some in Mt. 13:15, ". . . this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Some will say, "Well, the only difference between you and other brethren is just over the orphan home question." This shows that somebody does not know what is going on.

A church in Nashville, Tennessee, hired a full-time coach, different kinds of recreation are engaged in, and all of this provided by the church. A church in Memphis, Tennessee built a lodge out in the forest, spending thousands and thousands of dollars for such items as cabins, a fishing lake, a swimming pool, and other such things. These two facts by themselves should prove to one that there is more involved in the controversy within the churches of Christ than just what is called the "orphan home" question.

But this is not the basic trouble within the church of the Lord. An Old Testament example will show the very attitude and what the Lord said of it. You will recall that when the children of Israel were in Rephidim that they murmured against Moses and said, "Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?" Moses took the matter to the Lord in these words, "What shall I do unto this people? They are almost ready to stone me." The Lord said unto Moses as recorded in Exodus 17:5-6, "Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and the rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel."

Upon another occasion when Israel was in need of water, this time they were in Kadesh, as recorded in Numbers, chapter 20. Israel again came and complained unto Moses and Aaron about their having no water. They came "unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation" and the Lord spoke to Moses,

saying, "Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink" (Num. 20:8).

But what did Moses do upon this occasion? He gathered the congregation together before the rock and said unto them "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also."

Notice the charge that God made unto Moses and Aaron, "**Because ye believed me not**, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them" (Num. 20:12). God charged them with unbelief. The problem in the church today in unbelief.

The Broad Street church in Cookeville, Tennessee once planned a "1600 seat auditorium, with a matching educational space including a day school, off-street parking, and finally a nursing home." The plans for the first unit "call for 325 seat chapel to be used as temporary auditorium, fellowship hall which can double as a gym and three class rooms designed for use in a Christian day school. . . . Part of parking area near fellowship hall will be designed for recreation area." Now what is this church of Christ in Cookeville, Tennessee going to do that the Bible authorizes which requires a gym and a day school?

From the bulletin of the Broadway church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas October 20, 1963 is the announcement of one of the elders elected as the "Chairman of the Elders" and another elder is elevated to the "Vice-Chairman of the Elders." In what passage in the word of the Lord do you read about Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Elders?

In a **North Atlantic Christian** magazine in 1963, I read, "A Nation-Wide Youth Rally will be held in New York City August 18-24 sponsored by the Washington Heights church of Christ. Some 800 young people are expected to attend this Rally to meet and discuss the various problems of youth in the 20th century. The Rally will be under the direction of Howard U. Johnson, minister of the Washington Heights congregation. Various prominent figures have been invited to attend the opening of the Rally, including Dr. Martin Luther King. In order to accommodate the large numbers, the facilities of a nearby Baptist Church have been secured for the meetings; the leadership of this Baptist Church has been in touch with the Washington Heights Church through contacts made through the Herald of Truth radio program."

Brethren, do you think it is just the orphan home question that is the difference between members in the church of Christ. Here is a church of Christ, in contact with a Baptist church, and the way they got in contact with each other was through the Herald of Truth. Fur-

thermore, they had a denominational preacher to come speak to the church of Christ, and that speaker was none other than "Dr. Martin Luther King".

The church of the Lord has digressed into apostasy further than anybody would have ever thought. It is out of a love for your souls that I am trying to get you to wake up and not let institutional preachers sell you a bill of goods all wrapped up under the pretense of "faithfulness to the Lord" when the inside of the package plainly reveals it is digression, sectarianism, apostasy in complete dress.

We are calling brethren to come back to the Bible and for "a thus saith the Lord" for the old time kind of gospel preaching, with book, chapter, and verse for all that we do. Preachers among us at one time were men of power, men of persuasion, and men of conviction; but these same men today have lost all the power, the conviction, and ability they ever had to preach the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ. They will boldly affirm that they believe in debating and will even boast of having had debates, yet when one challenges them for a debate, they run from the polemic platform.

If it be said that no apostle ever signed a formal proposition or that Jesus Christ never did such, do we understand that when propositions have been signed that this was wrong? My friends, I tell you what no apostle of Jesus Christ nor Jesus Christ would have ever done; they would not have let anyone challenge them week in and week out, month in and month out, year in and year out, and not come face to face with him and expose his false doctrine with all of the power and conviction of the word of God. It is enough to make every faithful child of God sick to hear men affirm that they are great defenders of the faith, when all of them put together do not evidence the convictions of any of the apostles.

If I were to tell you that Tom O'Neal was the best quail hunter in this part of the country, you might be willing to put some confidence in my word for a while; but the time would come, having heard so much about what I was supposed to be able to do, that you would like to see it demonstrated. If when you called upon me to evidence my ability, I said one time that I decided not to show it, another time I said I had a cold, another time I didn't have a gun, and another time I was completely out of shells, you would know that I couldn't hit the broad side of a barn.

Available Again

God's Prophetic Word

by Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

This work gives the most complete exposure and refutation of premillennialism available anywhere and includes a review of British Anglo-Israelism and Seventh Day Adventism.

7th Printing

583 pages

\$12.00

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED (1)

Morris W. R. Bailey

965 Brown St. Moose Jaw
Sask. Canada S6H2Z1



Many sermons have been preached on the subject of What must I do to be saved? Comparatively few, however, to my knowledge, have been preached on what it means to be saved. Yet it is reasonable to assume that one will appreciate salvation to the extent that he or she understands what is involved in the transaction. It is with the hope of assisting in a better understanding of what is involved in being saved from sin that this series of articles is written.

Salvation Is From Heaven

It must be recognized first of all, that salvation is from heaven. Paul ascribed salvation to God, "Who saved us, and called us with a heavenly calling" (2 Tim. 1:9). But he also ascribed salvation to Christ, when he said, "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15).

Salvation—The Purpose of Christ's Mission

From the beginning of his personal ministry, Jesus recognized that the purpose of his mission to earth was to save men from their sins. It was on that basis that he justified himself in his conduct in associating with sinners—some of them sinners of the deepest dye. So when his enemies, who were ever on the alert for something in his life whereby they could discredit him, murmured and professed a righteous indignation because he had gone to dine in the house of Zachaeus, the publican, Jesus' reply was, "For the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:11). On another occasion he said, "For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (John 12:47).

When the apostles went out preaching under the great commission, they preached Christ as the Saviour of the world. In a discourse before the Jews, Peter said, "Him did God exalt at his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins" (Acts 5:31). The apostle John said of Jesus, "And we have beheld, and bear witness that the Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 John 4:14).

Salvation Defined

As with all subjects, it is well to have, at the beginning, a definition of the terms used. Like other words of the English language, the word salvation takes on various forms, depending on the grammatical use. There is the word, save, which is the verb form, and used in the present, past, and future tenses—save,

saved, and shall be saved. Then it occurs in the active and passive voices—save and be saved. This word, save, may be broadly defined as, To deliver from peril or danger. The passive form, be saved, suggest the idea of escape from danger. The noun form, salvation, may thus be understood as the process of saving, or the state enjoyed by one who has been saved.

The word, saved, is sometimes used in the Bible with reference to deliverance from, or escape from enemies. The writer of Exodus tells us how that God parted the waters of the Red Sea, allowing the children of Israel to pass through, which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned (Ex, 14:21-29). The result is stated in the words, "Thus Jehovah saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians" (Ex. 14:30).

The word, saved, is also sometimes used in the Bible in the sense of deliverance or escape from a wicked environment. Peter tells us that "the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls were saved by water, which also after a true likeness doth now save you even baptism..." (1 Peter 3:20, 21).

This passage of scripture has given denominational preachers no little trouble in their efforts to explain away its obvious meaning. They tell us that it cannot be a figure of salvation by baptism, which requires getting into the water; whereas Noah was saved by staying out of the water. This passage, however, does not say that Noah was saved from water. They miss the point there. It says that he was saved by water. But how were Noah and his family saved by water, when that same water destroyed all the rest of humanity? The answer, of course, lies in that from which they were saved.

Look at the background. The sixth chapter of Genesis tells us that man had become so wicked that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. If the few righteous people that remained were to be saved from such as ungodly environment, it could be accomplished only by the complete destruction of all the wicked. To that end the flood was sent, and the waters of the flood that destroyed the wicked, bore up the ark and its passengers, and carried them to a new and cleansed world.

It is in that sense that we are saved by baptism, and therefore "a true likeness" of Noah's salvation by water. As the waters of the flood carried Noah and his family to a new and purified world, so also baptism is the dividing line where we leave the old world of sin and enter Christ. Paul said, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). It is in Christ that we find forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7). In Christ we are a new creature where old things are passed away, all things are become new (2 Cor. 5:17).

From the above definition and examples of salvation, it follows that salvation from sin is the deliverance or escape from the guilt of sin and its just penalty. Paul reminded the Thessalonians that they had been "delivered from the wrath that is to come" (1

Thess. 1:10). Peter told those to whom he wrote that they had "escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust" (2 Peter 1:4).

The Dark Background

Just as one who has recovered from a serious illness can appreciate his return to health, only as he understands the gravity of the disease from which he recovered, so also we can appreciate salvation, only as we view it against the dark background of sin with its immediate consequences and its ultimate punishment. Sin carries with it consequences both here and hereafter.

1. **Sin separates man from God.** Isaiah said, "Behold, Jehovah's hand is not shortened that it can not save; neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you so that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:1, 2). Paul described those who are without God as being also without hope (Eph. 2:12).

2. **Sin makes man an enemy of God.** To the Colossians Paul wrote, "And you being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works" (Col. 1:21). We are accustomed to saying that man, with God on his side, is able to face any crisis in life. Conversely, it is a fearful thought for one to realize that God is his enemy, even though he has the whole world on his side.

3. **The continued practice of sin makes one a bond-servant or a slave of sin.** Jesus said, "Whosoever committeth sin is a bondservant of sin" (John 8:34). It is a simple law of nature that persistent practice of any vice will crystallize into a habit, or pattern of life. The one who persistently steals will eventually become a compulsive thief, stealing even things for which he has no use. The man who persistently lies, will eventually become a compulsive liar, seemingly unable to tell the truth. Through the prophet Jeremiah, God said, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin? or the leopard his spots? So neither can my people do good that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. 13:23).

4. **Sin defiles man.** On one occasion the scribes and Pharisees found fault with the disciples of Jesus because they ate with unwashed hands—a matter which the Pharisees were very scrupulous about doing. After pointing out to them that they elevated the traditions of men above the word of God, Jesus then turned to his disciples and said, "Perceive ye not that whatsoever from without goeth into the man, it cannot defile him That which proceedeth out of the man, that defileth the man. For them within, out of the heart of man evil thoughts proceed, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, wickednesses, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness: all these things proceed from within and defile the man" (Mark 7:18-23).

5. **Sin has eternal consequences.** "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). This is not just the death of the body. That comes to sinner and saint alike. The writer of Revelation describes it as the second death in the

lake of fire (Rev. 21:8). Jesus called it hell where the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:48).

Good News

The word gospel, means good news. The good news of the gospel is that the sinner can be saved. It means that though separated from God by sin, he can be brought back to God. It means that though an enemy of God through sin, he can be reconciled to God. It means that though he has become a bondservant of sin, he can be made free from that service. It means that though he has been defiled by sin, he can be cleansed from its filth. Surely such news should be cause for rejoicing. And it has been. When Philip met the Ethiopian eunuch on the Jerusalem to Gaza road, the eunuch was much perplexed as to the meaning of the prophecy he was reading. When they parted, the eunuch went on his way rejoicing in the salvation he had found in Christ (Acts 8:39). When an earthquake shook the prison house in Philippi, the jailor was about to kill himself. But before the night ended he and his house rejoiced in the salvation he found through the preaching of Paul (Acts 16:34).

ARROWS of TRUTH for denominational error

Ward Hogland

Post Office Bdx 166
Greenville, Texas 75402



THREE VIEWS OF ONE TEXT

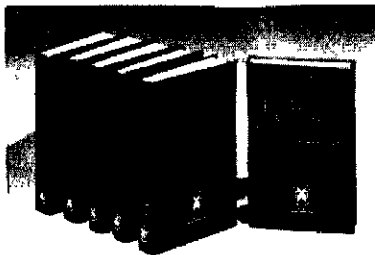
The service had ended and the preacher, as was his custom, moved to the foyer to greet the people. A visitor upon leaving paused a moment and inquired, "Preacher, why do you folks observe the Lord's Supper only on Sunday?" The preacher would likely have given one of three views for its observance. This would depend on where the church of Christ was located and the preacher's view on Acts 20:7. View number one is that of the restoration movement. These grand old soldiers of the cross held to the view that Acts 20:7, of itself, was sufficient authority for the observance of the supper on Sunday only. View number two came into existence in the late forties and early fifties. It had its birth soon after the sponsoring church. It consisted of the basic idea that Acts 20:7, of itself, was not sufficient authority for a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper. The thrust of the argument was that this passage needed either a command to back it up or other scriptures to sustain the basic idea. Its purpose was to neutralize and perhaps counteract arguments against the sponsoring churches and the support of orphan homes in the brotherhood. The third view is that Acts 20:7, of itself, is not binding in any respect. That it permits one to observe the supper on Sunday but would not eliminate its observance on any other day. This view came into existence in the late sixties and early seventies as a result of view number two and to give certain brethren more leverage in regard to innovations within the confines of the church. These are the three basic views, and now as they say on a certain television program "Will the real Acts 20:7 please stand up?" Is it view number one, view number two or view number three?

It is, indeed unfortunate that a uniform answer cannot be given with reference to this great text. Certainly, the Bible does not teach all three. It might be well in the beginning to give the text, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them." With no desire to cause consternation among brethren, I will discuss the three views.

View number one was espoused by men of the restoration movement. They held to the idea that Acts 20:7 of itself gave ample authority for the observance of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week exclusively. They were not oblique to all passages on the supper but knew that only one mentioned the

Enrich Your Bible Study

With the Popular Commentary
on the Whole Bible
By E. M. Zerr



\$45.00 - Set
\$7.95 - Each

Six volumes

Order From:
Religious Supply Center
4001 Preston
Louisville, KY 40213

PORTER SERMON OUTLINES

By W. Curtis Porter

These sermon outlines by the late brother Porter reflect some of the preaching he did throughout our country which caused him to be so highly respected. The volume includes sermons for the saint and the alien sinners.

Price..... \$6.95

Order From: RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER

element. When they read such passages as Phil. 4:9, this enhanced their conviction that apostolic examples were binding. Paul said, "Those things which you have both learned, and received, and heard and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." It was their deep conviction that when Paul had given the instruction to DO the things they had SEEN in him that **approved apostolic examples were definitely binding**. They felt the Bible was explicit with reference to approved examples and ones which were not approved. They were fully cognizant that some examples were "bad" and not intended for emulation. For years the church of Christ had practiced the observance of the Lord's supper every Sunday, based on Acts 20:7. However, in the late forties and early fifties, new clouds appeared on the horizon. The clouds had embedded in them what was called the sponsoring church and orphan asylums which brings us to view number two.

With the coming of the sponsoring churches, a new look was taken at Acts 20:7. In 1958 a book called *We Be Brethren* was published and edited by J. D. Thomas, professor of Bible, at Abilene Christian College. In this book, brother Thomas gives his expertise on our text. So that our readers may employ a degree of equanimity, I give a direct quote from the book on page 93. He hits the key note when he says, "Traditionally, we in the restoration movement have accepted the teaching of the examples of the Christians at Troas in the Acts 20:7 context as establishing definitely and unmistakable a pattern-authority to the effect that the Lord's Supper was to be partaken of every first day of the week, and on that day exclusively!" Thomas goes on to say, "When brethren, however, began to question the practices that we had been following with reference to cooperation and orphan homes, and to claim there was a Biblical pattern limiting how cooperation could scripturally be accomplished, this caused the question of the teaching on examples to be placed under the 'microscope' for careful investigation and as we indicated earlier, some of our very good brethren came to the conclusion that examples do not teach binding matters at all."

Please note that Thomas, in the above, acquiesces to several vital things. (1) He admits that the men of the restoration used Acts 20:7 exclusively as pattern authority for the observance of the supper. (2) He admits that until the coming of the sponsoring churches and orphan homes, the practice was never questioned. (3) He admits that it was put under the "microscope" when they were challenged with reference to the sponsoring churches and orphan homes. This proves beyond any doubt that these "good brethren" he speaks of would have never used the "microscope" if it had not been for their pet projects which were unknown in apostolic times. One does not have to be astute to see the reason Acts 20:7 was put under the microscope. It was the fact that the innovations in the church had been challenged. These brethren had the mental acumen to see their dilemma. If Acts 20:7, as an approved example, gave ample authority for the ex-

clusive observance of the Supper on Sunday; then 2 Cor. 11:8 and Phil. 4:15, 16 gave ample authority to exclusively send directly to the evangelist and down goes the sponsoring church! The same would be true of the orphan homes based on 1 Cor. 16:1,2; Acts 11:29,30 which authorizes sending directly to a church in the field of benevolence. Brother Thomas knew very well these examples either stand or fall together. However, he still had a problem. The Lord's Supper on the first day of the week must be salvaged out of this complicated web. Brethren at this point were not ready to throw the Lord's Supper out the window. So the problem was to get rid of direct support to the evangelist and also direct support to a needy church in benevolence and yet save the Lord's Supper on Sunday. This was an impossible task but not for J. D. Thomas. He was the man of the hour. With the art of a modern Houdini and the audacity of a Goliath, he addressed himself to the task. To be as pragmatic as possible, I now give you another quote from his book. Page 96, says, "The full authority for the Biblical pattern of the TIME (emp. mine) of the Lord's Supper is based upon four contexts: Hebrews 10:25; 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 1 Corinthians 11:20-26 and Acts 20:7." Please note he said the "Biblical pattern for the TIME of the Supper" was based on three texts besides Acts 20:7. How in the name of common reasoning could a text have anything to do with the TIME of the supper when they do not mention the TIME at all? The three passages mention assembling, the Lord's supper and giving on the first day of the week but not one mentions the Lord's Supper on the FIRST day of the week. This is the real issue. It seems brother Thomas, operated under the delusion that any passage mentioning assembling, worship, the Lord's Supper or giving would be directly related to the TIME element. Such is faulty reasoning. I recall a Baptist preacher used this kind of logic with reference to foot-washing as an act of worship. Like Thomas he compacted such passages as Jno. 13:5 and 1 Tim. 5:10 to vindicate his position on worship. He argued that Jesus had washed the disciple's feet and the widow had washed the saint's feet and since they were all in the church, it is an act of worship in the church. The scriptures used by the Baptist lacked one thing and that was the act of worship! Brother Thomas' scriptures for the Lord's supper on Sunday lack one thing and that was the TIME element which in this case was the first day of the week.

Kind friend, you may search your Bible from cover to cover and you will find only one text which mentions the Lord's supper and TIME and that is Acts 20:7. Finding scriptures on assembling, giving, etc. does not solve the problem of TIME. Finding scriptures on foot-washing and hospitality does not solve the problem of worship! In the field of polemics some of the old time debaters called this sort of subterfuge "chasing rabbits." The reason for this title was that the real issue was sometimes smothered and even forgotten in favor of side issues.

The third and last view was a take-off from Thomas' book. In 1974 the **Firm Foundation** published a book

by one Milo Richard Hadwin, entitled *The Role of New Testament Examples As Related To Biblical Authority*. A rather long title but one which expresses brother Hadwin's views on our text. He sums up his arguments on page 47 when he says, "This study has concluded that examples have no inherent authority to require imitation. This implies that the mere fact that disciples at Troas came together to break bread upon the first day of the week, does not require Christians today to do the same. To do the same would be permissible, at least but not required."

You will notice Milo Hadwin said the Lord's Supper on Sunday is permissible but not required. I completely disagree with this young man but I glory in his spunk. He threw caution to the wind, defied his professor and expressed his views. He wrote this book as a thesis for his master's degree. Frankly, I feel Milo Hadwin is more consistent than J. D. Thomas. Hadwin threw apostolic examples out the window and never did bat an eye. Thomas, on the other hand, tried to cling tenaciously to Acts 20:7 in order to save the Supper but tossed the examples of church cooperation out the window. At least Hadwin was consistent. This is one of the reasons he attacked Thomas' position relative to Bible examples. He saw the inconsistency and capitalized on them.

Thomas, in feeling the impact of Hadwin's book has come out with a sequel called *Heaven's Window*, in which he tries in vain to patch up his original work, *We Be Brethren*. In this book he tries to refute what Hadwin said by coming back to a more conservative position. Where will all of this stop? Well, to a sincere child of God it has already stopped. He has forgotten this foolish rhetoric and has made his way back to the Bible.

Preach The Word

Edited By Early E. Robertson

- ★ *Twenty-one writers contributed to this sermon outline book.*
- ★ *A large, cloth bound, book of 416 pages.*
- ★ *There are seven divisions:*
 1. **Old Testament**
 2. **New Testament**
 3. **First Principles**
 4. **Kingdom Studies**
 5. **Christian Development**
 6. **Individual Favorites**
 7. **General Studies**

★ *Contributors are faithful gospel preachers whose work is time-tested before discerning audiences.*

Price: 12.95

Order From: RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER

THE MIND OF CHRIST

by

Dudley Ross Spears

1609 Parkside Dr.

Bowling Green, KY 42101

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Romans 11:34). There have been great minds in the world but none comparable to the mind of Christ. The accumulated wisdom and intelligence of mankind compares to the mind of Christ as a grain of sand compares to the sandy wastes of the deserts of this world. Even Solomon in all his glory could not compare to Christ in this respect.

One of the most frightening things that can cross our minds is the fact that the mind of Christ is so vast and deep that there is nothing that can escape its apprehension and perception. Even our own lives are open and bare to His knowledge. Christ knows the innermost workings of the thinking, planning, motivation, and intentions of all men. He knows the quality of our faith, our profession and our obedience.

This staggering feature of the mind of Christ is demonstrated vividly in John 2:23-25. "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in him, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men. And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man." As if lying right on top of this event, one immediately knows that He has every right to know what is in us for He participated in our origin (John 1:3-4; Col. 1:16).

Jesus was in Jerusalem at the time of the passover, an important feast day for the Jewish people. He produced many miracles early in His earthly life. Many of them are not recorded and the apostle John takes special note of this (John 20:30, 31). Miracles, or signs as John calls them, were not designed to create faith—they served to confirm that which is to be believed. It is by the miracles that they saw and we read about that faith in Christ is possible. Miracles strengthen our faith and our faith is to be in Christ.

Those who are converted to miracles or so-called miracles need then to have them perpetuated in order that they may continue to believe. Take the modern so-called "faith healing cult." Their vain and ungodly efforts to duplicate or counterfeit some of the miracles of Christ speaks loudly of their superficial faith. Their unreasonable and tenacious clinging to such fakery is plain evidence that they do not believe in Christ—they believe in their version of "miracles."

Those who saw the miracles of Jesus differ from those of today who claim to believe miracles still are being performed only in that they saw actual miracles from Christ. Those of today have never seen a real miracle. These people "believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did," says John. But Jesus

did not commit himself to them. The reason why He would not commit Himself to them is said to be the fact that He knew all men.

This may seem strange to some people—especially those who preach that men are saved by the mere act of believing, before and without any further act of obedience, but Jesus did not accept the faith of those in Jerusalem as genuine. There is really a play-on-words here. The same word is used of both the people and the Lord. They "believed" (EPISTEUSAN) and He "committed Himself" (EPISTEUEN). Godet explains it that Christ had no faith in their faith. They believed Him, but He did not believe them. Godet says, "He discerns the insufficient nature of their faith." (*Commentary on St. John's Gospel*, B. Godet, Vol. II, p. 40).

Why did the Lord reject their belief in Him? He knew them. The word for "knew" here in the text is the ordinary word for becoming aware of certain facts. But the insight Christ has into the hearts of all men is not that which came about by natural means. In the next chapter His insight into the motives of men is illustrated in his conversation with Nicodemus. The same is true in chapter 4:29 with the Samaritan woman, as well as with His disciples (16:30), Judas (6:70; 13:11) and Thomas (20:27). Jesus did not need to even question mankind to know what men thought. In fact, He seldom asked questions, and I know of only a few instances that indicate that He truly wanted information. It is of interest also to notice that the definite article is present before the word man in vs. 25, indicating man generally. Chapter three begins with the statement that "there was a man", indicating the specific person of Nicodemus. By this we can infer that Jesus knows man from generic to specific, from inside out, top to bottom, in every aspect of human existence. The fact that the article is there also may mean "the man from time to time with whom He had to deal." (B. F. Westcott).

One of the great proofs of the Deity of Christ is His supernatural knowledge of man. Only God can know the heart of man. God said to Jeremiah, "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer. 17:10). The same is said in Jer. 20:12. Let us consider together just a few of the things we know He knows about man. Although He does not need that anyone testify to Him of man, we need to know all we can of what He knows about us.

1. He knows the nature of man. Jesus said of Nathanael, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile" (John 1:47). This was not merely a benevolent appraisal of the man—this was the expression of one who could know the very nature of Nathanael. It was enough to convince Nathanael, for he exclaimed, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (vs. 49). But for a practical lesson we ought to think of ourselves. Our Lord knows our nature. He knows who we are and how we are put together and how we tick. Question: Are we trying to deceive Him by covering up our sins? Read Galatians 6:7,8.

2. He knows the fickleness of man. He rejected the faith of those in Jerusalem. They believed in Him because they saw the signs. He knew that those who were struck by the great phenomena He did would soon tire of the miraculous and drift away from Him. Those who ate the fishes and loaves deserted Him almost before the scraps were gathered up (John 6:66). Even among His own disciples He said, "But there are some of you that believe not" (vs. 64). No one could think that His disciples would do anything but stand and affirm their faith in Him, but He knew better. He knew from the very beginning who would betray Him. But He still knows the fickleness of man. He knows of those of us in the world today who run hot for a while and then cool off rapidly. He knows of our hypocrisies and sham. He will as surely reject our empty profession of faith in Him now as He did those then.

3. He knows the mind of man. When we stop to consider, there is really very little that we know about our own thought process. We know very little about our own intellect, our emotions, our will. We know we have such things, but how much of the ingredients and workings of them can we really know? One evidence of our ignorance of our own mind is the often repeated expression of a "heartfelt religion." Denominationalists use this to explain their sensations they experience in their version of salvation. But Christ knows everything about our minds. He knows the source of every influence on us, every thought and action and the birth of them. He likewise knows our feelings and their sources, our emotions and their effects on our actions. He knows these things when we cannot or will not even perceive them ourselves. Perhaps if we could know what the Lord knows about our minds we would not be confused and bewildered on so many things in life.

4. He knows the capacities of man. He holds man responsible for what he is able to do. Paul said as much when encouraging the Corinthians to a liberal donation for the relief of the needy saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:12). The parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30) teaches us that our opportunities, commensurate with our abilities lay responsibility on us for which we are individually accountable. It is fearful to think that the Lord really knows our capacities in giving of our money to further His cause and then knows what we are actually doing. He knows our capacity to grow in grace and knowledge. He knows our capacity to live the Christian life and our capacity to serve Him in all things, but also knows how far short of our capacity many of us are coming.

The question of real importance from all this is, Does Christ have faith in our faith? If He refused to commit Himself to those in whom He could see a superficial faith, will He do us some special favor and overlook our superficiality? Christ will have faith in any faith that obeys from the heart (Rom. 6:17). He has faith in faith only when that faith is active in working His works. (Gal. 5:6). He has faith in the faith of those whose lives are truly changed by the power of the word of God. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing,

because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, *which effectually worketh also in you that believe*" (1 Thess. 2:13, my emphasis, DRS).

So when Jesus said, "I know my sheep," we know a little of how deep and thorough that knowledge is. If we belong to His sheepfold, we must know Him also. We cannot know ourselves as well as Christ knows us, but we can know Him who does know all about us. It is now time to examine our faith. Are we converted to Christ and does He commit Himself to our profession of faith. God help us all to have the faith He will accept.

THE COVETOUS SPIRIT OF AHAB

by
Charles Boshart
1229 Janeway Circle
Moore, Okla. 73160

Naboth the Jezreelite "had a vineyard" "hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria" (1 Kings 21:1) that Ahab desired,—deeply desired. He coveted Naboth's vineyard, actually, and that in transgression of the command, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house... nor anything that is thy neighbor's" (Exodus 20:17). This transgression led him further into sin (read 1 Kings 21) that would have been a disgrace to either subject or king and is a good example of the highest, socio-economically, sinking to the lowest, morally and spiritually.

The covetous spirit of Ahab teaches us that: I. A covetous spirit is unsatisfied with the most abundant possessions.

Ahab lived in the luxurious wealth of a king. He was "king of Samaria" (1 Kings 4:11). He lived in an "ivory house," and "built" a number "of cities" (1 Kings 22:39). He wore the robes of royalty and, no doubt, enjoyed the daintiest delicacies Samaria could serve for its monarch. But when Ahab surveyed all his wealth, all his luxurious surroundings, all the trappings of opulence in which he was submerged, it was not enough. He had to have Naboth's vineyard.

Part of the tragedy of covetousness is that its prisoner is never satisfied. In another connection, Ecclesiastes 1:8 says that "the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing." This is true of covetousness,—as true as if Ecclesiastes had been specifically dealing with it. Covetousness will gobble up a thousand possessions and then demand more.

And this suggests, further, that part of the cause of covetousness is to be obsessed beyond perspective. Covetousness does not allow us to see things in their proper relation to each other. The object of one's covetousness is, in general, the object of his consuming preoccupation. Ahab could not think of his fine home, his palace, the doubtlessly, well-groomed grounds and

well-cared-for gardens framing them like a beautiful picture, the large amounts of land he controlled. He could only think of a vineyard he did not have. Ample provisions never gratify the demon covetousness.

II. A covetous spirit gives way to petty childish distress when it cannot have what it wants.

1 Kings 21:4 says, "And Ahab came unto his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread."

Covetousness makes such demands on its captives that we are here presented with the spectacle of the king of Israel surrounded with regal luxury and monarchical finery fretting and blubbering because he does not own one vineyard! And if he can't have that vineyard, he will just fix Naboth. He will return to his bedroom, lie down, refuse to eat, refuse to talk, and be "sad"(v.5).

This is not the manly and courageous leadership Israel would need and look for in her king. It is not the nobility in action that should be reflected by the nobility of position. It is downright childish. But it is covetousness at work.

Christians should beware. Covetousness prevents maturity, hinders nobility, thwarts manliness, and reduces one to puerile silliness.

III. A covetous spirit is, often, unqualifiedly unscrupulous as to how its wishes are gratified.

In its obsessive drive to obtain the objects of its desire, covetousness will shamelessly use the most disreputable of agents. And in Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, covetousness had its agent.

Jezebel was a Phoenician, not a Jew, and was the daughter of Ethbaal, an idol worshipper. Jezebel brought with her into the house and life of Ahab her idol-worshipping habits and introduced Baal worship in Israel maintaining those who led in this idolatry. 1 Kings 18:19 states that "the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the Asherah, four hundred" "ate at Jezebel's table."

But she had an irreversible antipathy to Jehovah and was an inveterate enemy of his prophets. 1 Kings 18:4 refers to the time when Jezebel cut off the prophets of Jehovah. And 1 Kings 18:13 refers to the fact that "Jezebel slew the prophets of Jehovah." This was an extermination effort but "a hundred prophets" were "hid" "in a cave" (1 Kings 8:4) escaping murder at her hands.

When her beloved prophets of Baal suffered the miserable disgrace of defeat at Mount Carmel at the hands of Elijah and the true God, Jehovah, and were subsequently slain at the brook Kishon (see 1 Kings 13:40), Jezebel sent a message to Elijah saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time" (1 Kings 19:2).

Jezebel was a self-willed, ambitious, unfeeling murderess, ideally suited for the purposes of covetousness. For covetousness will often sanction deeds it does not

have the courage to do or to prevent. 1 Kings 21:7 says, "And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let thy heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." And so she did through perjury and murder as recounted in 1 Kings 21.

Reader, can you believe that Ahab did not know something abominable, wicked, and heartless—something he was too cowardly to do—was about to be perpetrated? Can you believe Ahab could not have known had he wanted to? Ahab's covetousness held him back in willful ignorance while Jezebel, in brazen depravity, reached for the covetous ends of Ahab's heart. Ahab may have been too chicken-hearted to do what Jezebel did but his covetousness accepted the gift of her immoral atrocity, no questions asked.

Covetousness will desire and accept, no matter how its obsessions are gratified. No wonder it is forbidden to God's children.

IV. A covetous spirit will grasp its prize eagerly not caring how it has been acquired nor what problems it may bring.

1 Kings 21:15, 16 says, "And it came to pass when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead. And it came to pass when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it."

Observe that Ahab quickly went to "take possession of" Naboth's vineyard. Without, apparently, a single pang of regret wasted on the cruel fate of the righteous and harmless Naboth, without a single thought to Naboth's posterity, Ahab headed to Jezreel to immediately enjoy the possession of a new property. Does not covetousness cause a hardened state of mind?

His enjoyment, however, was destined to be quickly diluted. For while Ahab was surveying his new vineyard, the acquisition of which by whatever means was the only thing that could scratch his covetous itch, there confronted him, like an apparition from the other world, like "a ghost from a past he would like to banish," God's prophet, Elijah the Tishbite. He could not have the vineyard without the consequences of the manner in which it was acquired. He heard Elijah say, "Thus saith Jehovah, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession . . . thus saith Jehovah, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine" (1 Kings 21:19, 20). In subsequent verses, Ahab is told not only that he will suffer evil but that his family will be wiped out. Ahab thus learns that any acquisition secured by sin means peace is lost. For hovering over his head and festering in the back of his mind from that time on would be the sentence Elijah produced and he would be waiting for it to fall like Damacles' sword. And he would know peace no more. His covetousness had driven him to acquire

without regard to means and consequences.

V. The covetous spirit is blind to its true friends and its real foes.

When Ahab met Elijah in Naboth's vineyard, he said, "Hast thou found me mine enemy? (1 Kings 21:20)."

Ahab's covetousness had perverted for him all relations of all things. He did not really know that Jezebel was his enemy and Elijah his friend. He did not really care what was right and what was wrong. His driving compulsive covetousness for Naboth's vineyard blurred moral distinctions, disguised God's prophet as an enemy of legitimate interests and dressed up Jezebel as a friend of innocent acquirement.

Covetousness and sin now make man think that the Bible is his enemy. Is the sign across the road that says, "Danger—Road Out," an enemy? Neither is the Bible which says, "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and **covetousness which is idolatry**; for which things' sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience..." (Colossians 3:5, 6). And "So then am I become your enemy by telling you the truth?" (Galatians 4:16).

The man who thinks that God's prophet is his enemy and who thinks that his finding him out is a calamity and a loss may be sure that an occasion of discovery of far more lasting effects is awaiting him someday. There is nothing more tragic, nothing more pathetic, than a human spirit confined with forgotten lies and dead transgressions. For there is always a foreboding uneasiness that there will be a just resurrection of deeds as well as a real resurrection of bodies. Ecclesiastes 12:14 says, "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every hidden thing whether it be good, or whether it be evil." And 2 Corinthians 5:10 states, "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done whether it be good or bad."

Think what it will be in the day of judgment for a man to be followed after by the incriminating company of his own sins. Each fault he tried to forget and all the badness he tried to buy will be there to point not only a finger of accusation to indict but also a finger of direction of punishment.

VI. The covetous spirit may be brought to mourning for its sins.

1 Kings 21:27 states that "when Ahab heard these words" (i.e., the evil the Lord was going to bring on him) "that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and wept softly." In acknowledgement of this God said, "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? . . ." (1 Kings 21:29).


Not even covetousness, callusing as it is, was sufficient to shield Ahab when the force of Divine condemnation came crashing down on his conscience. Without offering any of those responsibility-denying rationales, Ahab immediately caved in to the truthful charges Elijah made and the terrible consequences

Elijah announced. The King, in spite of his recent sins, and in spite of the further deteriorations of his character, was still reached by God's message of truth in plain, simple, and straightforward terms.

Most of God's people today could be saved from the corruption that is in the world by lust if all teachers of the truth would do as Elijah did—straightforwardly point out sin and show its consequences. A preacher or teacher who will not do this and will, moreover, compromise God's truth and righteousness and lower its standards so as to be like the world about us does not deserve to be in the same heaven with Elijah at all.

This tragic account in the life of King Ahab shows how sin infected his life and took that of another. Sin is seldom a solitary tragedy. It is almost never an exclusively individual phenomenon. And this is part of its curse. Covetousness, as do most forms of sin, corrupts its possessor and damages his associates, often beyond repair. The ugliness of sin in general, and of covetousness in particular, is our spiritual instruction from this king's bad example,—from the covetous spirit of Ahab.

Using Great Plainness
of Speech



J. T. Smith
3433 Studebaker Road
Long Beach, CA 90808

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF GOD

In view of the fact that we are commanded to "rightly divide the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15), I believe that if a proper division of Scriptures was made by all those who are endeavoring to serve God, we would eliminate much of the religious confusion in the world today. For example, if we could just get people to accept the fact that Jesus lived and died under the Law of Moses (as well as all of his disciples who lived during that period of time) we would not have to continually try to get people to see that there is a distinction in what the "thief on the cross" had to do to be saved (in view of the fact that he was in the very bodily presence of Christ who could therefore say unto the thief, "this day shalt thou be with me in paradise") and what those of us who live today must do. For as we have already shown, Jesus (and the thief) both lived under the Law of Moses.

As we study and make a proper division of the Scriptures, we can readily see when the New Testament came into force. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Hebrews 9:16-17).

If a person is to be converted to Christ today, he must learn those things Jesus taught his disciples after his death, burial and resurrection. In Mark 16:15-16 Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Also in Luke 24:47 Jesus said before He ascended into heaven, "... Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Understanding that this distinction in "laws" must be made if we are to become New Testament Christians, we will deal with this subject in our next article.

MACKNIGHT ON THE GOSPELS
A classic long out of print—

NOW AVAILABLE AGAIN
Owners of MacKnight on the EPISTLES will welcome this companion volume by the same renowned scholar.

2 Volumes—1150 pages Set \$22.95

Order from: **RELIGIOUS SUPPLY CENTER**

NEW - The Last Book published
by Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

The Instrumental Music Question
This large volume contains not only debate notes on the subject by Wallace, a review of debates of significance on the issue, also by Wallace, but also includes material from M. C. Kurfess, Adam Clark, Don H. Morris, Moses E. Lard and John L. Girardeau. This is a monumental collection of material ever needed in the continuing battle to preserve pure worship.

\$16.50

Order From: **Religious Supply Center**
4001 Preston
Louisville, KY 40213

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

News Items to: Wilson Adams, 317Trinkle Ave., N.E., Roanoke, VA24012

REPORT FROM NORWAY

TOM BUNTING, Bergen, Norway—One year's work in Bergen, Norway has been completed and we now look ahead to the upcoming one. The past year's work has been hard and difficult. We have not been able to accomplish as much as we would have liked, yet progress is being made. The time has passed by quickly and it does not seem like we have been here one year. During the year we have had encouragements and discouragements. It has been a year of learning and readjusting. Improvement has been made with the language but we still have a long way to go in this regard.

Concerning the efforts and work during this past year includes about 30 people taking the correspondence course. Of these, eight have completed it and a few still continue. Unfortunately all of these live in other parts of Norway rather than in our area. I have written 45 single spaced pages answering questions the students have raised in connection with the course. We have had many people in our home and we have visited in several homes. We have been able to arrange two home Bible studies which have lasted several weeks, one of which still continues. This class is with a young couple who seem to be very interested but since they have no Bible background it will take some time to teach them. There have been 16 large teaching ads in newspapers away from Bergen and 3 such articles in the Bergen paper. There have also been 23 small ads in the Bergen paper. We have printed one correspondence course and twelve different tracts in Norwegian. I have four other tracts and another correspondence course written, but they need translating before having them printed. Due to translation and printing being so expensive we have to do things as finances permit. Hopefully by the end of the summer or early fall we will have these ready. It makes it very difficult when all our material has to be translated and printed new, for there are no publishing firms here in Norway.

For the distribution of materials and tracts we have built a portable tract display which we set up in different areas of Bergen. Each time we wish to set it up permission must be gained from local authorities. We set the stand up on the sidewalk and passing people may stop and take whatever material they are interested in. Usually there is a large headline or question at the top of the stand which deals with the tracts found in the display. So far it has proven to be an excellent way to distribute material.

We have Bible study and worship services in our home, but few have attended. At first an elderly lady attended regularly for a few months but has not attended since January. In February an American family moved here and attended with us the few weeks they were here on government business. Other Norwegians have visited but not returned. We have had one interesting contact with a man who lives 1 1/2 hours north of Bergen. I have had several conversations with him by letter and we went to see him last month. He claims he is a member of the true church and from our visit it would seem he has a good understanding of the scriptures. Since our visit he has talked with me and asked that I send him copies of all the tracts and correspondence courses I have and he is going to try to interest others in his community. In addition to this we are so happy to have our middle son, Terrell, come and join us in the work here. He will be here for at least one year to help us in our efforts. Just this one addition has been such an encouragement to us. Norway needs workers. I wish you could see how little work is being done in this country. This land has only one preacher trying to reach the many scattered people from the far north to the far south. There needs to be many, many more. One man can not be sent to one city in the country and then sit back and say "we have preached the word in Norway." Yes the work is difficult but I feel confident that souls will be converted through the gospel, but it is going to take time. There is a trend of dissatisfaction among the young concerning the traditional religion—Lutheranism. Finding those who are

searching for the truth is the problem. Yes, NORWAY NEEDS WORKERS! Another family would give us a nucleus in the assembly. Is there anyone that is interested in accepting the challenge?

Shirley, Terrell and I send our greetings to all our brethren and friends in the States. We want to express our sincere appreciation to all for the support both financially and verbally during the past year. Please continue to keep the work in Norway in your prayers.

PREACHERS NEEDED

WESTLAND, MI—The church that meets at 35900 Palmer Road, Westland, MI (suburban Detroit), is seeking a full time gospel preacher. The congregation numbers approximately 70-80 and are fully self-supporting. Anyone interested in working with us kindly contact Frank Wiser, 2132 Sheldon Rd., Canton, MI 48187 (313-981-3034), or Jack Nunn, 16902 Whitby, Livonia, MI 48154 (313-464-0288).

New Congregation

LAFAYETTE, TN—There is now a sound congregation in Lafayette known as the Scottsville Rd., church of Christ. If anyone wishes to know more about this congregation, contact Sam Snow at Rt. 3, Box 102-B Lafayette, TN 37083. Or Bobby Patterson at Star Rt., Lafayette, TN 37083.

PETER McPHERSON, 1265 5th Ave. S. Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 0V6. In September I am moving to preach to Airdrie, Alberta (near Calgary). About a year ago some half dozen families began the work there (they lived in that area). They felt that a New Testament church should be planted in this new and growing community (Calgary's population is over 600,000 and increasing at a rate of 2,500 per month). This zealot group began this new work with the hopes of getting a personal-work type preacher to locate there and set about to help increase their number. I have accepted that challenge. I have been preaching for 15 years and believe I do my best work in a new work where we can start from scratch. I want to devote my time and talents to working in home studies, door to door calling, and personal evangelism. Please consider my family and me in your budget regarding monthly support. We will need to raise \$1,000 per month above what the church here can help with. For references please contact: Marvin Nerland (403) 328-0855, Roy Diestekamp (416) 562-5519, or Connie Adams (502) 957-2257.

P. J. CASEBOLT, 313 S. 4th Ave., Paden City, WV 26159. My meeting schedule for the fall of '81 is: Marttown Rd., Parkersburg, WV (Sept. 14-20); New Cumberland, WV (Oct. 5-11); Fly, OH (Nov. 2-8); Middlebourne, WV (Nov. 16-22); Punta Corda, FL (Dec. 6-20). I plan to leave the work at Cedar Ave. in Moundsville the last of November. While in the Florida area, I will be glad to consider other meetings, singing schools, or working with some congregation during the winter months.

TOM MALMBERG, North Fort Myers, FL—Just a note to let you know that the work here is alive and well. We have baptized two this year and several families have left the institutional brethren to come and worship with us. The contribution has grown to the point that we are now helping support Bro. Ron Drumm in Naples, FL and Bro. Robert Bottorff in Pirtleville, AZ. We rejoice that recently we appointed brethren Vernon Ford and Glindle Johnson as elders. We thank God for the desire and faithfulness of these men. At present we are looking forward to our fall meeting with Bro. J. T. Smith from North Miami. Attendance this summer has reached the 120-130 plateau. During the winter we have seen as many as 177 in the building. If you are coming our way please visit with us.

BILL PIERCE, 759 E. North Ave., Spencer, IN 47460. After almost two years with the Moultrie Rd., congregation, I will move to Spencer, IN July 1. The church here in Thomasville is almost three years old and has made rapid progress. We have a debt free building and are almost self-supporting. There were 27 responses over the last

two years. Two of our men, Carlton Bassett (now working with the church in Monticello, FL) and Walter Marria (we started a black congregation and Walter preaches for them and is doing a good work but is still needing about \$200 monthly support) are preaching full time and three of our other young men are preaching once a month for a small congregation near here. Our average attendance is about 35-40 and contribution \$350-\$400. Bro. Curtis Pope will follow me in the work here.

PREACHER NEEDED

WINDSOR, MISSOURI—The church here would like to secure the services of a full time gospel preacher as soon as possible. At the present time, all of his support would have to come from elsewhere. If interested, write William H. Sewell, Jr., 2001 E. 6th St., Sedalia, MO 65301 or call 816-826-0799, or 816-647-3728 (Dale Boalan).

JEFF KINGRY, P.O. Box 26, Milton, VT 05468. Due to increasing financial demands, and insufficient support, I am reduced to

parting with some books from my library.

TRUTH MAGAZINE: Vol. 1-23'	\$500
GOSPEL GUARDIAN: Vol. 1-27	\$400
THE PRECEPTOR: Vol. 1-26	\$400
TORCH: Vol. 3-12	\$ 80
PULPIT COMMENTARY 22 volumes	\$250
KIEL & DELITZSCH COMMENTARY	\$100
BARNES NOTES ON OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS	\$150
BARNES NOTES ON OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS	\$150
SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES: Vol. 7-16	\$ 60

Call me at (802) 893-4825 or write to the above address.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	238
RESTORATIONS	122

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)
