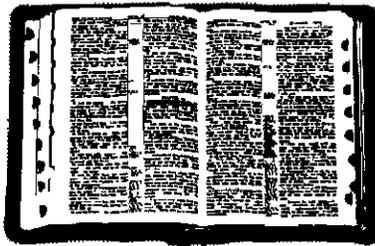


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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 XXIII

MARCH, 1982

NUMBER 3

EVERY CREATURE UNDER HEAVEN

Juven Lee
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Toney, AL 35773



We all understand that the Christ commissioned His disciples to teach all nations. He said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). This is a very great field of labor, but when Paul wrote the Colossians the whole world was having an opportunity to hear the good news (Col. 1:23). This is remarkable. How could they carry it all over the world in one generation? We need to learn from those people.

The gospel was preached to all, but it certainly was not accepted by all. Many Jews rejected it, the pagan religions were arrayed against the truth, and even the Roman government finally sought to destroy its influence. The gospel covered the earth in that generation, but it was not because there was no opposition. There was opposition that was more bitter than anything we have ever tasted. The opposition was fierce, but the disciples had weapons that were mighty to the tearing down of strongholds.

Preaching to some was like casting pearls before swine, or like the sower's casting seed by the wayside. There were also honest and good hearts to receive, so the preaching was not in vain. In fact, the gospel made very great improvements in the lives of those who received it. Those who were receptive became "holy and unblameable and unproveable" (Col. 1:22). They became lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation because they were blameless, harmless, and without rebuke (Phil. 2:14, 15). Some thought it strange that the Christians would not run with them to the same excess of riot of their former lives and spoke evil of them (1 Pet. 4:1-4). How bright the light of their good lives must have shined in that pagan world!

The changes that came in the wake of gospel preaching were for the good of all. Honesty, benevolence, purity, and other traits of Christians stood in special contrast to the immorality, lawlessness, and greed of the Roman world. The Bible was given because of God's love, so its precepts are for our good always. It is sad that some church members conform to the world today rather than giving the demonstration of that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Many did not believe, but there were samples of true Christianity in every area.

Persecution kept the number of hypocrites to a minimum in that first century. True Christians by their good works cause others to glorify God. There is an air of respect in our land for religion, so many take part in order to claim respectability. Religion becomes a cloak to cover their selfishness and ungodliness. There are so many counterfeits that some have not noticed the genuine. Untold harm is done by the large number who claim but do not practise.

The early church had some remarkable advantages as well as disadvantages. The world was not then torn by war. There were no iron or bamboo curtains. Men could travel freely from one part of the world to another. This is no little advantage. In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son (Gal. 4:4). This peace was evidently part of this fullness.

The early church had to fight idolatry and many other forces of error and superstition, but it did not face the shameful confusion of denominationalism. If one Christian goes to a so-called non-Christian country today, there is a sense in which three hundred stand by his side to speak, each in a different way. This confusion is deadly. It is of the devil, and is one of the greatest evils of our time. Why do we not carry the truth to all in our time? What hinders more than the contradictions of denominationalism? The early church had a great advantage in not having so many false brands of religion on the market, as it were.

We still feel like saying, How did the early Christians do it? How did they take the truth to the whole creation in one generation? This remarkable task was not accomplished by the philosophy of "Let George do it." It was not by the many asking the few to do it. "And at that time there was a great per-

secution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria . . . they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:1, 4). The church at Philippi sent aid to Paul at Thessalonica, Corinth, and Rome. They had fellowship in the furtherance of the gospel from the first day. There was a burning zeal in the hearts of the many, the like of which we do not see in our day.

The early church was not characterized by wealth. It was unselfishness and zeal that sent men like Paul out to the uttermost part of the earth with the life giving truth. They went with a sense of debt to the human race. (See 1 Cor. 9:16; Rom. 1:14,15.)

The men of that successful day did not have the automobile, plane, or fast ships to aid in their travels. Neither did they have radio, television, or the press. No way will ever be found to do the work better than the direct, person to person, "I beseech you" method. They preached publicly and from house to house. They preached daily. That explains it.

It is very, very evident that the early church did not have denominational machinery. There was no money-drinking, publicity-seeking central agency. They all went to work in the great field—the world—and that was their method of cooperation. There was concurrent action with "operation" the chief part of "cooperation." Denominational machinery would have taken the sense of urgency away from the individual and local church as they laid their load on the agency. They did better because, by divine wisdom, they did not have the machinery.

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Searching The Scriptures

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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ANOTHER "PEACE OFFENSIVE"?

For sometime now, our brother, Yater Tant, editor of *VANGUARD*, has hinted of another attempt at what he and William Wallace called a few years ago a "peace offensive." His speech at Crossroads in Gainesville, Florida suggested his intent to pursue this line once again. Now, in the December, 1981 issue of *VANGUARD* he said:

"Another thing I hope to do in the time I have left is to try once again to promote unity and harmony among the disciples of Christ.... In 1982 I hope to use *VANGUARD* in an effort to 'narrow the gap' between conservatively minded 'pro-institutional' brethren and their 'quarantined' brethren."

Since the days when division among brethren became a reality until the present hour, no true child of God has rejoiced over the fact of division. The choices were not easy. But there were valid issues which struck at the heart of Biblical authority and which made it impossible for people of contrary persuasion to remain together. Nothing would bring greater joy to my heart than to see all who wear the name of Christ standing together upon the solid foundation of divine truth. Through the years, we have never closed the door to discussion with sincere brethren. As time has passed, some brethren who followed the more liberal direction have seen their error and have come out of it. Others have closed their eyes to further study and have drifted wherever the tide took them.

Those who have been keeping up know that the liberal movement is in disarray. Serious issues now divide those who once stood united upon a platform of insistence on church supported private enterprises and sponsoring church super projects. The multiplication of recreational activities, including gymnasiums and carnival atmosphere and antics, have upset some and they may be more receptive to truth than they were a few years ago.

But this writer cannot help being apprehensive about another "peace offensive" promoted by brother Tant. During his last years as editor of the *GOSPEL GUARDIAN* he launched a similar "offensive" from which we have not fully recovered to this day. He thought then that he could somehow weld together the so-called "antis" and the "conservative-minded liberals" (if that expression makes any sense to you). His timing on that venture was parallel to his great IMP AC promotion to sell personal work kits to brethren around the country, complete with

motivational records and paraphernalia to stick on shaving mirrors or hang on the knobs of television sets. It was during those days that brother Tant wondered if perhaps this highly advertised soul-saving procedure might not be appealing to some of the liberals and might even be the means of bringing about closer understanding. He advanced that very thought in an "IMPAC luncheon" in Akron, Ohio at which I was present. He said he had already talked with Alan Bryan about it. His principal partner in this was John Whitehead who is now head of the "tape ministry" at Crossroads church in Gainesville, Florida. John is also a brother to Dick Whitehead, one of the elders at Crossroads.

These past entanglements and brother Tant's present affinity for Crossroads and repeated defense of them causes me to further question his renewed "peace offensive." If he thinks he sees light at the end of the tunnel concerning unity between "antis" and "conservatively minded pro-institutionalists" we cannot help wondering if he truly thinks Crossroads represents brethren of the latter category. And if he does, are we to interpret his conduct among them as a portent of things to come in his dealings with others whom he regards as in that category? When he spoke to them, after spending several days at Crossroads, he said nothing of substance to point out the errors in which they are involved. Some years ago Crossroads bought Fanning Springs which is equipped for all sorts of recreational and social activities and "retreats." The "Crossroads Singers" tour the country performing secular and sacred music. According to items in their bulletin, they also perform before the congregation at Crossroads. Their Master Plan approach in evangelism and their "prayer partner" practice smack of mind manipulation.

But what did he do when he had the chance? Here was a golden opportunity for him to focus attention on issues that divide. He has said in *VANGUARD* that he does not endorse everything at Crossroads. But which of the practices to which he objects did he expose forthrightly in his speech. He was warmly received and by actual count on the tape drew laughter twenty-seven times. What did he say about their church sponsored recreational activities? What did he say about their "Crossroads Singers" and their performances? What did he say about their "Master Plan" and their "prayer partners"? Is this to be taken as an example of the way to "narrow the gap" between differing brethren? Will he go in and out among the liberals, amuse them with his reservoir of wit, brag on what they are doing and leave them without ever really coming to grips with the basic areas of difference? If this is the way to promote "peace" then I can assure brother Tant that it is already "offensive" to some of us. Brother Tant, are YOU drifting?

Which "conservatively minded" liberals does he know who are willing to give up church supported private institutions and the sponsoring church concept? If they give up everything but those two items, then will we not be back where we started in the late 1940's and early 1950's? Oh yes, there are some who

can see abuses, but the abuse of a principle does not argue against the principle itself. If our brother could get Reuel Lemmons, Ira North and Guy N. Woods to strike hands with him on one hundred abuses, does he really think they are ready to oppose the aforementioned practices? In fact, one of the issues he would have to settle with brethren North and Woods is his defense of Crossroads to which they stand opposed, according to published material in the *GOSPEL AD-VOCATE*.

Still another thing which makes me uneasy about his proposed efforts is his affinity to brother William Wallace. Brother Wallace succeeded him as editor of the *GOSPEL GUARDIAN*. It was during those days that Edward Fudge was connected with the *GUARDIAN* operation. Because of the influence of Edward Fudge, many young men lost their bearings and some made shipwreck of the faith. Brother Wallace defended Edward Fudge in "pulse feeling" trips around the country. He did so here in Louisville about ten years ago. Under brother Wallace, the *GUARDIAN* sought to further brother Tant's "peace offensive" and ended up promoting the grace-unity movement. The scars of that misguided adventure are yet apparent and even at the present hour there are latent evidences of deeper damage than some had first thought. I am not sure that we can afford another such "peace offensive" or "gap narrowing" engineered in the same mind and promoted by the same generals which led to such a spiritual fiasco as the last one. In that conflict brother Wallace made some of the most slanderous charges that anyone could make against some of us who were speaking out against this error in an effort to salvage some young men we loved and who were being influenced in the wrong direction. Here in Louisville, before a large audience including many preachers, I publicly called on brother Wallace to apologize for what I regarded then, and still do regard, as the ugliest article written in the whole controversy ("The Political Mr. Willis"). He refused to do so, has not done so yet, and thus the matter remains. Brother Wallace has been in a meeting within the past few months where Charles A. Holt preaches and just recently Charles A. Holt was in a meeting at New Bern, North Carolina where brother Wallace now preaches. Charles Holt left the truth during the time brother Tant edited the *GUARDIAN* and has much to do to clear himself from the views of Carl Ketcherside with whom he has been associating in some of the "unity" forums around the country. Now, we see material in *VANGUARD* being furnished by William Wallace. Brother Tant, many of us still bear the scars from the end result of the last "peace offensive" and "gap narrowing" to which your compatriot, William Wallace, contributed with such devastating results. We know not how some of the "conservatively minded" institutional brethren may react, but the prospects of wide-spread support from some of your "quarantined brethren" are not very promising. Some of us are not like the drunk man who backed into the bankers new car. The banker was understandably angry. The drunk put his arm around the banker's shoulder and said "ole buddy, lesh jus' forget

the whole thing." We sigh for peace, but not at any price.

As always, we continue to be ready to discuss the scriptures with any honest soul. We have done this privately and publicly in the past and shall take advantage of any such future opportunities. But, as in the past, there is no element of truth which we are prepared to barter. We love brother Tant and feel personally indebted to him for many things. But based on past performances we want to see the mechanics spelled out before we can bid him Godspeed and forthrightly tell him now that if they are the same as his prior effort with its extension under the editorship of William Wallace, we will not only NOT join forces with him, but will actively OPPOSE his efforts. As Moses told Pharaoh "Not an hoof shall be left behind." The last "peace offensive" ultimately descended to the Ketchersidean "plain of Ono" and along with Nehemiah we have no intention to stop what we are doing to hold "dialogue" with those who have given no indication that they have any different perception of the nature, work and organization of the church than they had thirty years ago. Upon a "Thus saith the Lord" all of us can find common cause. We dare not even consider it a possibility on any other turf.

EDITOR'S MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 1982

March—Metairie (New Orleans), Louisiana
Middlebourne, West Virginia

April—Gulfport, Mississippi Olney,
Illinois Sheperdsville,
Kentucky

May—Northside, Conway, Arkansas
Kettle, Kentucky

June—Southside, Pasadena, Texas (lectures)
Highview, Bloomfield, Kentucky
Bancroft, Ontario, Canada

July—Pound, Virginia
Central, Dyersburg, Tennessee

August—Eastside, Russellville, Alabama
Clinton Blvd., Jackson, Mississippi

September—Round Hill, Kentucky
Harrison, Ohio

October—Nicholasville, Kentucky
Spencer, Indiana Glen
Burnie, Maryland

November—West Lafayette, Ohio
Warner Robins, Georgia

We would be pleased to greet any of our readers at any of these meetings. Watch local announcements for exact dates.

WAYSIDE GLEANINGS

James R. Cope
301 Green Castle
Temple Terrace, FL 33617

In one's studies he sometimes comes upon a line of thought completely removed from a context where he would expect to find it. In a recent reading of the scholarly James MacKnight's *Literal Translation of the Apostolical Epistles With A Commentary, And Notes*, I was intrigued by the author's treatise regarding "Luke" on pages 499, 500 (1835 printing) as he made comments on the various persons mentioned by the apostle Paul in verse 24 of his epistle to Philemon. Since many who read these lines do not possess MacKnight's works, I submit here for profitable and enjoyable reading his observations. Before this presentation, however, I think it also proper to insert his comments on Colossians 4:14 to which he refers in the beginning of the Philemon observations. I therefore present the Colossian comments and then those in Philemon.

Col. 4:14

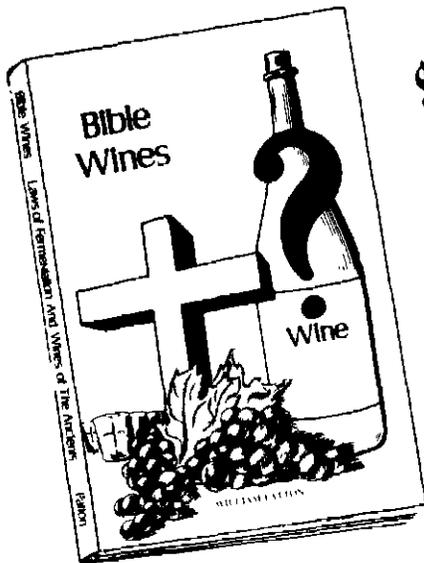
Luke, the beloved physician.]—Luke was deservedly beloved of the apostle Paul. He was not only an intelligent and sincere disciple of Christ, but the apostle's affectionate and faithful friend, as appears from his attending him in several of his journeys through the Lesser Asia and Greece. He likewise accompanied him when he carried the collections to the saints in Judea, where, during the apostle's two years' imprisonment at Jerusalem and Caesarea, he abode, and no doubt was present at his trials before Felix and Festus, and heard the speeches which he hath recorded in his history of the Acts. And when the apostle was sent a prisoner to Italy, Luke accompanied him in the voyage, and remained with him in Rome till he was released. Last of all, this excellent person was with the apostle during his second imprisonment in the same city; on which occasion, when his other assistants deserted him through fear, Luke abode with him, and ministered to him, 2 Tim. 4:11 note.

Philemon, v. 24

Luke.]—He is generally believed to have been the author of the gospel which bears his name, and of the history of the Acts of the Apostles.—Having in Prelim. Observ.

vii. prefixed to the Harmony of the Gospels, given an account of Luke's gospel, I think it may be useful to add here, concerning his history of the Acts of the Apostles, That setting aside the consideration of its inspiration, as an history of the first planting of the Christian religion in the world, it is a valuable work, both on account of the variety and importance of the transactions recorded in it, and on account of the manner in which they are related. For the circumstances of each transaction are selected with judgment, and told in a simplicity and elegance of language truly admirable. And the whole is comprised in a short but conspicuous narration, which cannot fail to give pleasure to every reader who is a judge of elegant writing.—Farther, the *Acts* being an history of persons who traveled through the most civilized and best known provinces of the Roman empire, for the purpose of preaching the gospel, the historian was naturally led to mention a variety of particulars relating to the geography of these countries, to their political state at that time, to the persons who governed them, and to the manners of the inhabitants. The learned, therefore, from the time of the publication of this history, have had an opportunity of examining all these particulars; and, on the most accurate investigation, they have found them confirmed by the contemporary heathen writers of the best credit, whose writings still remain. Nor is this all. in the Acts there are speeches recorded, said to have been pronounced by persons of the highest character and rank, which are not like the speeches in most other ancient histories, the production of the historian's own imagination, but the real speeches of the persons to whom they are attributed—such as the speeches delivered by the apostle Peter on different occasions; by Gamaliel, an eminent Jewish doctor; by the protomartyr Stephen, when arraigned before the Sanhedrim [sic]; by the apostle Paul in the synagogue of Antioch, and to the Lystrians, and to the senate of the Areopagus at Athens, and to the Sanhedrim [sic]: also a letter of Claudius Lysias to the governor Felix; and a speech of the orator Tertullus in accusation of Paul, before the same Felix; Paul's answer to that accusation; Festus the governor's speech to king Agrippa, the chief captains, and principal men of Caesarea, assembled to hear Paul; Paul's defence, pronounced in the hearing of that august assembly. In all which, the characters, and sentiments, and style of the different speakers, are so distinctly marked, that no one who reads them,

and is capable to judge of such matters, can doubt their being genuine.—These circumstances united, form a convincing proof that the history of the Acts was written, as it profeseth to be, by a person who was present at most of the transactions which he hath recorded. And with respect to such of the speeches as he had not an opportunity of hearing, they may have been made known to him by those who heard them, or by inspiration. However, not to insist on this, Luke's history of the Acts of the Apostles contains more internal marks of authenticity than any ancient history extant. So that, considering it merely as a human composition, it is by far the most valuable ancient monument of the kind which the world at present is in possession of.



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"Fear Not"

The first two words are: *fear not*. Although these words are directed toward the shepherds who were awe-stricken by the appearance of the angel and the glory of the Lord in the dead of night, they are most pertinent to all men who "through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:15).

Jesus partook of flesh that all may be delivered from the fear of death (Heb. 2:14-15). Sin, guilt and condemnation cause men to be terrified of dying, but those in Christ have no anxiety about their safety and eternal security as they can say with Paul: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1). Jesus' life and death made freedom from sin possible and removed its terrifying effects by destroying the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8).

"Good Tidings"

The third and fourth words are: *good tidings*. This is the good news of the gospel. "Euaggelion," which means "gospel" or "good news," is the heart and core of the Christian's faith. The word occurs 72 times in the New Testament.

The gospel is the "good tidings" of truth. ". . . whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" (Col. 1:5; cf. Gal. 2:5). William Barclay commented: "With the coming of Jesus Christ the time of guesses about God ended and the time of certainty begun. With his coming the time of groping after the meaning and the method of life is closed and the time of certainty is here" (*New Testament Words*, p. 104).

The gospel is the "good tidings" of hope. ". . . and

be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature ..." (Col. 1:23). The Gentile world had no hope without the gospel (Eph. 2:12) and Paul stated the gospel he preached (for which he was imprisoned) was the hope of Israel (Acts 26:7; 28:20).

The gospel is the "good tidings" of peace. "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Eph. 6:15). Man is estranged from God by sin (Isa. 59:2), but the gospel brings him back into a harmonious relationship (Col. 1:20-22).

This gospel of the resurrected Christ is the "good tidings" of salvation. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Eph. 1:13). It is good news of forgiveness of past sins, cleansing of present sins and power through faith and the blood of Christ to overcome future sins into which we fall.

"Great Joy"

The fifth and sixth words are: *great joy*. This is the antidote to the "great fear." "Joy" (*chara*) occurs sixty times in the New Testament and "rejoice" (*chairein*) occurs seventy-two times. Indeed, the Christian religion is one of joy. The kingdom is "righteousness and peace and joy" (Rom. 14:17).

The life of Christ on earth begins and ends with joy. The angel brought tidings of joy to the shepherds and the wise men rejoiced and were exceedingly glad (Matt. 2:10). The women returned from the empty tomb with fear and great joy (Matt. 28:8). After Jesus' ascension, the disciples returned to Jerusalem with great joy (Lk. 24:52).

Because of what Jesus did, man no longer has to suffer loneliness and despair, but he can now sing with jubilation: "Joy to the world, the Lord is come!"

"All People"

The seventh and eighth words are: *all people*. The coming of Christ was not just for the benefit of a few people. However, the believing Jews at first thought the gospel was for them, only. The Judaizers never did learn this lesson. But God had said a long time ago to Abraham: "___ and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). The gospel is for Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, male and female, rich and poor, strong and weak and black and white. It has no geographical boundaries or racial barriers. All are included.

Jesus said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15) and "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations ..." (Lk. 24:47). Paul wrote that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

"Unto You"

The ninth and tenth words are: *unto you*. Although the gospel is universal in scope, it is personal in application. The writer of Hebrews said of Jesus: ".....

that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:9).

The Calvinian doctrine of limited atonement is completely devastated by this text. Calvinists teach that Jesus died for only the elect, and that his atonement was limited to them. But Jesus died for every man, that is, every man has access to the benefits of his blood.

"This Day"

The eleventh and twelfth words are: *this day*. Man had waited so long for the Messiah. The Bible states that Simeon was "waiting for the consolation of Israel" (Lk. 2:25). The prophets enquired and searched diligently, searching what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify (1 Pet. 1:10-11).

It is no wonder that Andrew rushed to find his brother, Simon, and tell him: "We have found the Messiah" (Jn. 1:41). When Philip discovered that Jesus was the Christ, he findeth Nathanael and said: "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (Jn. 1:45). The Samaritan woman returned to the city telling the people: "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ" (Jn. 4:29).

The Christ has come! Truly, "now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2; cf. Isa. 49:8).

"A Savior"

The thirteenth and fourteenth words are: *a Savior*. How they needed one! How we need one! Man is lost without Christ the Savior. We cannot be saved through any other person. "Neither is there salvation in any other," Peter declared (Acts 4:12). John wrote: "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 Jn. 4:14). The Samaritans realized this fact after hearing Jesus. They exclaimed: "... this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (Jn. 4:42).

Our Lord was given the name, "Jesus," which means, "Savior." The angel said: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). Paul wrote that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15).

Zondervan's Pictorial Encyclopedia states that "Savior" is a word that "presupposes a danger, a disaster, from which the rescuer snatched the one whom he helped. The term in both OT (Isa. 53) and the NT suggests deliverance from the worst affliction and trouble known to mankind—deliverance from sin" (Vol. 5, p. 291).

What a change to the world was wrought by Jesus Christ the Lord, our Savior and Redeemer! Let these fourteen words change your world—today! Then you can sing:

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NEHEMIAH: LET US RISE UP AND RESTORE THE GENERATION IN WHICH THE CHURCH DIED

A Good Thing?

"Across the river, at the edge of the forest, near the big scrub, stands a frame meeting-house. Several years ago the saints of the Lacota community met there for worship. The songs of Zion which once echoed through the forest are heard no more; the prayers of the saints no longer ascend up to the throne of God. Its walls no longer ring with the preacher's voice, as he proclaims the message of salvation. There is silence,—deathly silence on the first day of the week. You see, the Woodmen Of The World do not meet on Sunday mornings. The church at Lacota died."

The above described scene is taking place far too rapidly in scores of communities across our land. It is taking place in the large muscle-bound cities and in the small rural communities as well. To try to prevent this type of spiritual death was the work and plea of Nehemiah as he sought spiritual renewal of the Lord's people. This is also the task before us in our generation. We are losing ground as faithful saints grow old and pass away. We are losing ground as the world attracts the "Demases" of our time. We are losing ground as the people we baptize fall by the wayside before they are productive in the Lord's kingdom. We are losing ground when our young people are bolting from the Savior in agnostic unbelief because of materialistic homes and dead, unproductive churches. Also, too many of us are like Samson who had lost his strength and didn't even know it until he tried to shake himself free of the Philistines' bonds and could not do so. Yet, we still ask the question: "What do we mean by the church dying?"

The Church Dying

In Daniel 2:44, the prophet said that the Lord would establish a kingdom which would never be destroyed. And, so it is,—the Lord's kingdom will never die. The Lord said that the gospel is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11), and so long as we have the word of God the kingdom cannot die. Isa. 2:1-4 speaks of the mountain of the Lord's house and all nations will flow into it. Rev. 5:8-10 speaks of the kingdom being purchased out of every tongue and nation. Yes, as Brother Adams aptly reminded each of us in the introduction to this year's material, the kingdom cannot die. But on the other hand, it does not mean that there will always be a

group of saints meeting in the building in which we now assemble each Lord's day. It does not mean that there will always be a group of saints meeting in the cities that are now so strong in the faith. Major areas like Louisville, Birmingham and Tampa may not always be the bastions of the faith as they have been in recent years. You see, there is no promise from God that the church is an American entity. The Lord's church could cease to completely be in America, and a restoration movement could begin somewhere else in the world, and maybe it would turn out to be a good thing.

A Good Thing?

Just as shocking as it is to hear that the future of many congregations is extinction, and with the real possibility that it could become so widespread that no congregation as we know it today would exist in our land, the most shocking statement is: **MAYBE THIS WOULD BE A GOOD THING!** How could such a tragic demise be a **GOOD THING?** Consider with me the possibility of a future scenario which will help us focus on such a shocking statement.

The Lord's commission is to go! So it was to the apostles in Matt. 28:18, and so it is with us today. Yet we know that we are doing a pitiful job of going with the gospel. Following World War II the Lord's people were one of the most aggressive religious group in the world in taking the gospel to foreign places. After the war many of the men who were sent to various places around the globe went back again. Not with the Army, however, but with the Word of God, and churches were established. Yet, these new churches were not grounded, and there were not enough mature and willing preachers to go nurture the tender babes in the gospel. Consequently, the newly established churches either died or went into apostasy. Now there is even a negative attitude toward foreign evangelism. We are far removed from the source of the Lord's work, and we do not know if the Lord's money is being spent wisely, and there is little contact with the foreign preachers. The result is we have backed away from foreign evangelism to a great degree. As a matter of fact, several years ago Brother James Needham made the general observation that to his knowledge, there were less than 10 men from the United States preaching on foreign soil. Of course, that observation is several years old and may have a margin of error involved, but what if the error was 100%? That would mean that we are talking about less than 100 American preachers on foreign soil. We are not doing the job of taking the great commission to the lost world! We do not want our daughters to marry preachers or our sons to become preachers because preachers always have so many problems with the brethren. If they insist over our loud protests, then we will let them preach, but we don't want them to move too far away because we could not see our grandchildren every day or so. We must commit our resources, both money and children, to the proclamation of the gospel to people who have never had the opportunity to hear it before.

Now that we see some of our failures and even

though we might not agree on the degree of failure, we all know in our hearts that improvement is needed, so let us consider how it would be a good thing for the church to go out of business. Several years ago while I was sitting in the Blue Boar Cafeteria in Louisville, Kentucky, a little fellow about five years of age was beginning to make himself obnoxiously apparent. He was singing at the top of his voice and splashing the mashed potatoes and brown gravy all over his father. The father never noted his activity at all. Finally the little fellow took a handful of mashed potatoes and gravy and smeared it all over his father's tie. Then, he hopped down and walked up and down the aisles of the restaurant, playing in everyone's food just as he had done with his father's. Finally, his mother stood up, saying to all who would listen, "I just can't do a thing with him." An Army Officer from Ft. Knox turned to me and commented that if the child's parents were out of the way, he believed he could do a great deal with the little fellow. Of course, all will recognize what he meant. So long as the ones responsible for the task of raising this child were in control, there was nothing he or anyone else could do.

And, so it is with the Kingdom. We are the ones sitting in the driver's seat in America today. But it might just be a better thing to set aside our brand of half-hearted, materialistic, "playing-church" religion and let the real disease break out somewhere else among a people who would do the job. The Lord's Kingdom will never cease to exist as long as there is the word of God and the heart of man. It just might be a good thing to let the kingdom explode in some other land, among some other people, who would take the commands of the Lord to "GO TEACH" seriously, and be dedicated enough to that cause to lay down their lives if need be. As long as we have the imitation, the true gem can never radiate its glory.

Consider with me for a few moments: what if the statistical projections were correct concerning our growth rate in the church today and that by the year 2010 the congregations in America were to become non-existent? Suppose that it took 50 years for another restoration movement to begin among some more dedicated and committed people? The Lord told the disciples in Matt. 24:14, 15 that the gospel would be preached to the whole world, and then the end (destruction of Jerusalem) would come. That would mean that in some 37 years the truly dedicated and converted people of the New Testament church would have preached the gospel in all the world. So, in less than 100 years after the extinction of the church in America, the Lord could see His gospel preached in all the world. Something like that could never happen at the rate we are going now!

Does It Have To Be This Way?

Of course not! God's truth will be taught. Sinners will be saved and His church will grow and not die. The only question is WHO! WHO will be the ones that will dedicate themselves enough to carry that word. "Oh, I'm too busy to visit that family who dropped in for one of the services of the gospel meeting last week."

Well, it won't be you that He is going to use, will it? Or, "I'm just too involved in Scouts, Little League, P.T.A., or the Band, to teach a Bible class." Well, it won't be you that He will use either. I have preached this lesson in several different meetings and various ones came with firm resolve and pronounced that the church "won't die here as long as I have anything to do with it". That kind of resolve is wonderful, but yet I somehow keep wondering HOW MANY PEOPLE DID THEY TEACH THE GOSPEL TO IN THIS LAST YEAR? Not, how many did we baptize! But simply, how many studies did we have with non-Christians this past year? It is one thing to utter words of firm resolve, but it is yet another thing to open your Bible with your neighbors, friends, employees and family or really do something about it.

Look around you. What about the congregation where you attend? Is it about the same size it was four or five years ago? How many have you baptized this past year? The average for those that are baptized and fall away is far too great, and uncovers yet another vast problem. How many of that congregation are elderly and by reason of three score and ten will not be with us throughout this coming year? We must undergo spiritual renewal in the coming days.

In future articles we will continue to talk about spiritual renewal from the book of Nehemiah.

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IN REPLY TO ED FUDGE

In the September 1981 issue of the paper, Ensign, Ed Fudge tries to reply to something I have said in my booklet, SET FOR THE DEFENSE.

Ed tries to make it appear that I deny the word of God. He lifts a quote from me in which I quote from him and says I call such "false teaching" and the quote contains a passage of Scripture. Thus, he concludes incorrectly that I am calling the passage he quoted "false teaching."

In a 1970 article in the Gospel Guardian, vol. 21, page 689 Ed wrote "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them (2 Cor. 5:19). Because of His obedience, those who are in Him can be saved although they never achieve perfect obedience themselves. They are not saved because they obey perfectly but because they believe on Jesus (read Rom. 5:15-21)" He is teaching the doctrine of imputed righteousness of Christ and is basing such false doctrine on 2 Cor. 5:19, but this passage does not so teach. I do not object to the passage; I object to his false conclusions from the passage.

In the church bulletin where I preach, I quoted him in **Walking In Truth**, July, 1974. However, Ed did not respond to that article. In *Searching The Scriptures* of December, 1974, this article was printed for the second time, but Ed said nothing.

SET FOR THE DEFENSE was published by the Cogdill Foundation in the summer of 1980, yet it is not until September, 1981 that Ed says anything about it. He waited seven years. Why? Then he quoted only one of six quotations I gave from his pen. Why did he not quote the other six to let people see his error? He quoted only the part that had a verse of Scripture so he could make it appear that I was saying that the Scripture was "false teaching." Such tactics are beneath the dignity of a man calling himself a gospel preacher.

Edward Fudge has been under fire for several years because of the false teaching he has done. This is as it should have been. Any false teacher should be exposed by faithful brethren. Ed should be no exception. He has complained about being exposed but he has never had the courage to enter a public debate and defend what he is teaching. I am ready to sign representative propositions with him on the questions that divide

brethren, but I don't believe he has the courage or the conviction to do so.

THE
"NO-SECOND-SUPPER"
DOCTRINE EXAMINED

J. Edward Nowlin
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From time to time this doctrine gains notice in the churches of Christ, largely as a reaction against careless brethren who abuse the privilege of partaking of the Lord's Supper at the evening service by willfully absenting themselves from the morning service to visit, hunt, fish, or just to be lazy. This writer offers no encouragement to those who abuse the privilege; but must speak out on behalf of the privilege for those who properly use it.

The Doctrine Stated

Those who argue against what they call the "second supper" base their arguments upon the following premises:

1. Only one assembly "to eat" the Lord's Supper recorded.
2. The church (via elders or business meeting) has the right to set only one hour for the Lord's Supper on Sunday.
3. If a member is absent through neglect he sins. If he is "providentially hindered" the Lord excuses him for the entire day.
4. Proof texts usually appealed to are: Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

The Doctrine Answered

1. There is only one assembly recorded—period! Hence, to be consistent, any other assembly of the church on the Lord's Day would have to be opposed. This proves too much, and what proves too much proves nothing. Actually, there is no such thing as the "second supper" for no member partakes of it a second time. It is the "first supper" for those who partake of it at the evening service.

2. There is no scripture that gives the church, via its elders or its business meeting, authority over the Lord's Table. The Lord put the Supper in the kingdom (Matthew 26:29); hence, the Christian is answerable directly, and only, to the Lord regarding it. The local church is not the kingdom into which souls are translated when born again (Colossians 1:13). The local church is made up of a few of those souls who hold membership in it by mutual consent, and each one is accountable to the Lord for his worship at that Table.

It is the Lord's Table; not the church's.

Brethren who espouse this doctrine seem to be obsessed with the idea that the "church" has authority over the Lord's Table and may legislate "the" hour of the Lord's Day for its observance by "all" the members of the local church, and may deny the Lord's Supper to any members who were unable to attend at that set hour. Although they would deny that the Lord's Supper is a "church ordinance," **in practice they make it a church ordinance** when they give the church authority to legislate these things. In a double-spaced, typewritten article of less than four pages, one brother used the word "church" thirty-two times, ten times on the first page! Luke told us all we know about the time for observing the Lord's Supper in Acts 20:7, and the word "church" is not even in the passage! It is obvious that somebody has jumped the track in assuming church authority over the Lord's Table. The church has no right to examine members regarding it, but Paul said to let a man examine himself (1 Corinthians 11:28).

3. There is no such thing as "providential" hindrance to doing God's will. Providence involves God—"3. In theology, the care and superintendence which God exercises over his creatures" (Webster). God does not hinder man in doing His will.

4. That God excuses the unintentional absentee for the entire day, when there are twenty-three other hours in that day, is a false assumption of the worst kind. It makes it possible for the Christian who could not be present for the morning hour to make no effort to partake of the Supper at the evening service. **This is the worst feature of the doctrine.** It allows him to willfully ignore the opportunity at the evening service. Where does the Bible say he is "excused?" The Jews who were unclean or in a journey were excused from the Passover on the 14th of Nisan, but not for the whole year. They could eat it on the 14th of Iyar, one month later (Numbers 9:6-13).

Consequences of the Doctrine

A position taken on a scripture obligates one to accept the consequences of his position; hence, we charge the "second supper" position with the following:

1. It perverts Acts 20:7 by applying to it an idea not found in the passage; i.e., an exclusive AM or PM hour for the Lord's Supper. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread. . ." "When" is an adverb of time incidental to the narrative and in no way limits the number of meetings during that day, nor the purposes of such meetings. If those disciples met that evening "to break bread," why could not other disciples who could not meet with them have met at some other hour for the same purpose? This is all that brethren who have not had opportunity to break bread before the night service are doing today when they break bread at the evening service. Only those who have the notion that they are "excused" for the entire day would ignore this—their first—opportunity. Furthermore, "to break bread" was simply a manner of speaking of the worship ser-

vice, and in no way limited what was done in the service. Break bread was not all they did.

2. It sets aside First Corinthians 11:28 ("let a man examine himself") and allows the church (via its elders or business meeting) to bar brethren from the Lord's Table because they were not present at the morning hour. This is exactly what the Close Communion Baptists do!

3. It makes the Lord's Supper a church ordinance by giving the church power to limit it to one service, ban it at the evening service and bar those who were absent at the morning hour from the Lord's Table. Note:



4. It places the church between the worshipper and the Lord's Table, as per denominational practice:



5. It causes the Christian to think he can ignore the Lord's Supper at night because he could not be there that morning.

6. It makes him inconsistent not to oppose all except one meeting on the Lord's Day, since only one meeting is recorded at Troas.

7. It makes the Lord's Supper a matter of controversy, instead of a symbol of love as the Lord intended.

8. It causes those who hold to the "second supper" notion to accuse and condemn their brethren who sometimes have to work at the morning hour of unfaithfulness, not putting the kingdom first and loving money more than the Lord. Such unwarranted judgments give them a feeling of superiority but do not impress the Lord with their charity.

9. It seeks to bind where the Lord has not bound. The only thing Acts 20:7 binds concerning the Lord's Supper is the day of the week. (See Next Page)

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The Passover a Type

That the Passover of the Jews was a type of the Lord's Supper is a fact ignored by those who condemn the "second supper." They seek to divert the force of this fact by claiming that the Passover was a type of Christ. This is not true. The Passover lamb was a type

of Christ, but the lamb and the supper were two different things. A type in Scripture is a person, thing or institution in the Old Testament which foreshadowed some person, thing or institution in the New Testament. Note the following comparative study of the Passover and the Lord's Supper:

THE PASSOVER	THE LORD'S SUPPER
1. Instituted by Moses—Ex. 12:21	1. Instituted by Christ—Mt. 26; Mk. 14; Lk. 22
2. Observed by fleshly Israel—Ex. 12:47	2. Observed by spiritual Israel—1 Cor. 11:23-29; Gal. 3:28, 29
3. Was a memorial—Ex. 12:27	3. Is a memorial—Lk. 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:25
4. Literal body & blood of lamb—Ex. 12:7	4. Symbolical body & blood of Christ—Mt. 26:26-28
5. Lamb without blemish—Ex. 12:5	5. Christ, our Lamb, without blemish—1 Cor. 5:7; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2:22
6. No leaven in house—Ex. 12:19	6. No leaven of malice, wickedness—1 Cor. 5:8
7. Observed annually—Ex. 12:6	7. Observed weekly—Acts 10:7
8. Day of year set by Moses—14th day of Nisan—1st month—Ex. 12:6	8. Day of week set by N.T. example—Sunday—Acts 20:7
9. Time of day set by Moses—at evening—Ex. 12:6	9. Time of day set by Christians as matter of convenience—N.T. does not set an hour.
10. Provision for absentees—14th of Iyar, 2nd month—Num. 9:6-13	10. Provision for absentees as matter of convenience as taught by O.T. example—Num. 9:6-13; 1 Cor. 10:6; Rom. 15:4. The Golden Rule requires it—Mt. 7:12
11. Reasons for provision—Num. 9:10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Unclean b. In a journey 	11. Reasons for provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In a journey, breakdown, too far away, etc. b. Illness of self—unable at AM; able at PM c. On duty: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Illness in family—one parent AM; the other PM (2) Military—Rom. 13 (3) Civil—riots, storm, floods, jury, fire, police—1 Pet. 2:13-15 (4) Economic—must work—Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:8 (swing shift, food service, nursing, medicine, transport, harvest, animal care)
12. If neither, guilty of sin, to be "cut off"—Num. 9:13	12: If neither, but absent wilfully, or ignore the opportunity—guilty of sin—Lk. 22:19

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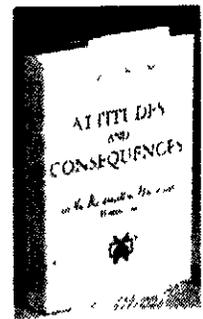
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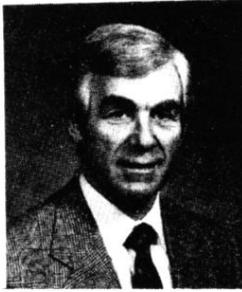


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“THE AWFUL SIN
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THE ‘PARTY SPIRIT!’”

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For thirty years or so the "party spirit" has meant, to me, the denominational attitude of dividing into sectarian groups and defending such action. Recently, the label of "party spirit", is pinned on just about anyone who opposes softness, compromise and liberalism. A publication called *"Ensign"* consistently engages in a campaign to label others as "legalists" and "patternists." They think it is evidence of the "party spirit" when one calls for scriptural proof and a "thus saith the Lord" in all religious matters. They appear to condone the denominationalist and condemn those who are opposed to denominationalism. Bob L. Ross, a Baptist preacher, is called a "brother" and gospel preachers are called something else.

Reading *"Ensign"* is an experience that is unique. Here in this small paper I find innuendo that complains against those things I try to stand for and criticism of my efforts to stand against other matters. I find my brethren ridiculed. I find the attitude of, "I feel sorry for those anti brethren, those legalists and patternists, for they don't really understand the Scriptures at all." And quite paradoxically, I find that *"Ensign"* and her devotees are really, in my mind, true denominationalists and wedded to the true party spirit. Perhaps my view of the "party spirit" is different than that of the editor of *"Ensign"* and if so, it would be quite advantageous to see which view is the right view. Therefore, I suggest a few characteristics of the true "party spirit".

1. **The Party Spirit is one of Denominationalism.** Denominationalism is a synonym for division and sectarianism. The denominational world is hopelessly divided and content to remain divided. It is the spirit of "you believe and do what in your heart you feel like, so will we and we will be brothers in Christ, no matter how much difference there is between us." Such a spirit is condemned. Paul pled, in Christ's blessed name that such division not exist (I Cor. 1:10). In this passage he demanded that all believers "be of the same mind and of the same judgment." Judgments are conclusions to which the mind comes. But the attitude reflected in *"Ensign"* releases all from such a divine duty. *"Ensign"* is wedded to the true party spirit.

2. **The Party Spirit is a Party of Prejudice.** For partyism to exist those who espouse it must be prejudiced. To be prejudiced is to pre-judge a matter before hearing all the evidence. Solomon condemned it. "He that giveth answer before he heareth, it is folly

and shame unto him" (Prov. 18:13). Prejudice, in the *"Ensign"* case, causes them to decide what they believe determined by what their opponents believe. A clear example of it comes from the editor. He said, in an explanation of why he had once criticized the "Crossroads philosophy" and later commended it,

"Since I had some critical things to say about Crossroads, this comes dangerously close to placing me in the same camp with Ira Rice, God forbid. So when I find myself on the same side with Ira, then I know I'm wrong! A re-evaluation of my thinking is in order." (*Ensign*. Dec. '81, p. 9).

Anyone can clearly see the ground on which the editor re-evaluates his thinking. It is not that someone pointed him to the Bible, it is because he got close to being in the same "camp" with Ira Rice. I have not seen a more blatant example of the party spirit prejudice than this. *"Ensign"* is wedded to the true party spirit.

3. **Partyism has an ungodly attitude toward Truth.** The theology of new evangelicalism has had more influence on *"Ensign"* than the New Testament. When one allows denominational theology to cause him to contradict plain passages of Scripture, he displays an ungodly attitude toward Truth. *"Ensign"* tells us,

"The great news of the gospel is that through Jesus Christ, God has elected to save us in spite of our sins (My emphasis, DRS)..."(Ibid., p. 10)

The editor goes on to misapply Romans 5:6 which says, "...for while we were yet helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly." Christ died for the ungodly, even while we were enemies of His, but He did not save us in spite of our sins. The expression, "in spite of", is a synonymous expression of "notwithstanding." *Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary* says, "in spite of indicates active, often violent opposition, and is the strongest synonym to 'notwithstanding'." The editor leads us to think that while men are in violent opposition to the Lord, His death saved them, "in spite of their violent opposition." The Lord calls men to turn from their sins before salvation is theirs (Acts 3:19). He promises that if men remain in their sins, they are destined to eternal punishment (Read Rom. 2:3-6). God's supreme act of goodness was exhibited and accomplished in the death of His son for our sins, and that, according to Paul, "leads us to repentance," and repentance means leaving our sins—not being saved "in spite of our sins." Nothing but pure denominationalism and the party spirit could cause an editor to make such a statement as he has. *"Ensign"* is wedded to the true party spirit.

4. **The Party Spirit has an ungodly attitude toward Opposition.** *"Ensign"* sends out her party line with regularity and when it is opposed, she does not join issue with scriptures, she rather hides behind a typewriter and calls names, misrepresents and shouts innuendoes. She is opposed to opposers. With editorial sanction, J. Ervin Waters was allowed to say,

"Brotherhood must not be determined by a willingness to oppose certain things. Rather it must be determined by a common and antecedent relationship to the same Father and therefore a consequent common relationship to each other. We must not remain committed to a program of brotherhood by counteraction and overreaction." (Ibid., p. 11)

Brotherhood is a term used sparingly in the Bible. The party spirit emphasizes the common and antecedent relationship humans have with the same Father and each other. Opposition to "certain things" has nothing to do with brotherhood. Waters and the Ensignites ignore such fundamental principles as, "and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). The party spirit of "Ensign" weds her to partnership with everyone and anyone, regardless of doctrinal differences. She will glibly ignore God's demands on the alien sinner and offer that sinner salvation on terms never intended or expressed by the Almighty. To prove this, I offer a test. Here is a statement that I firmly believe the Bible teaches and feel strongly that it can be defended scripturally. I ask the Ensignites if they believe it or not. **Water baptism, to a truly penitent believer, is essential to salvation, and without it, the alien sinner will be eternally lost.** I further believe the Bible clearly teaches that no brotherhood can exist scripturally between the baptized believers and the unbaptized believers. What does "Ensign" think about it?

Much more could be said, such as the party spirit's attitude toward proving what they teach and practice. They think such is "patternism" and "legalism" and call that bad. They feign a sense of the free and liberated life and exult, "Oh, to be free in Christ, by Him who died for us, and delivered from the bondage of sin and death... that is the only way to fly." This is a false sense of security. There is no freedom for people who take such liberties with God's Word as they do; there is no freedom for people who manifest so many traits of the true party spirit!

I deny that the party spirit is manifested by men and women who stand soundly for the truth and will preach and practice it at the cost of being cut off from others. I deny that the church of Christ, with which I am identified is a sectarian group that is more interested in kicking people out than in saving them. If the Ensignites would only think straight and let themselves truly be directed by the Holy Spirit's eternal Truth, revealed in the Word of God, they would enjoy the blessings of Christ, but alas, they say and do not.

Those of us who are labeled falsely as "legalists" and "patternists" honor the Almighty God. We have the deepest faith in Christ and implicitly trust Him for our salvation. This trust is so deep it has committed us to a life of total obedience to His word. As long as we remain in the flesh, we entertain the strongest possible hope of a future life of happiness. The difference that stands between us and those of "Ensign" and her ilk, is simple. We can prove what we claim and they can-

not. We are right and they are in error. They cannot show that they are not wedded to the true party spirit. I urge all who may have been swayed by the "great swelling words" that tend to "entice the unstedfast souls" to think straight. There is no more solid foundation for life here and hope for the future than living by every word that comes from God. May the Lord help us all to be free from this denominational party spirit of softness, compromise and liberalism.

Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Ken Green

2212 Jordan Lane, S.W.
Huntsville, Alabama 35805



THOU MAYEST BE NO LONGER A STEWARD

A steward was one whom the master of the house made ruler over his household. He was given charge of those things which were actually not his own. Joseph is not called a steward, but he was seemingly faithful in such a capacity (Gen. 39:4,5). The steward of Luke 16:1-8 was unfaithful to his charge. His master suspected this and called upon him to give an account of his stewardship, "For thou mayest be no longer steward", he was told (v.2).

Stewardship is a matter that vitally concerns you and me. God has placed certain things under our authority and He will one day call upon us to give account of our stewardship. Let us learn that a time will come when we may be no longer stewards.

In regard to our children, we who are parents should understand that for awhile we are stewards. There will soon come a time when we will no longer be stewards. "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord" (Psalm 127:3). The psalmist proceeds to point out that our children are to be pointed in the right direction: "As arrows in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth" (v. 4). Children are like guests in our homes. They only stay for awhile. And there are things we should willingly forgo that we might be good hosts. We only have a few years to pull this off. Then, we may no longer be stewards.

In regard to our talents, we are stewards. We have nothing that we have not received from God. But one day we shall be called to give an account of how we have used our God-given abilities. He will not require of us more than we are able to give. All God expects is our faithfulness in performing according to our abilities (1 Cor. 4:2). Are we using our talents faithfully? The time will come when we may no longer be stewards.

In regard to our bodies, we are stewards. We are not

our own. We've been bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19,20). Our stewardship is to glorify God in our bodies and spirits which belong to Him.

"But I can do what I want! It's my life!" you say? Listen to Solomon: "... **walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment**" (Eccl. 11:9). Yes, you live as you want to and do as you please. But be ready to face the consequences. God is going to call you to give account. Your body belongs to God. You have no right to join it to a harlot (1 Cor. 6). Your lips belong to God (Psalm 12:4). They are designed to praise God; not to curse your fellowman. Your hands, feet, eyes, and mind belong to God. But they are under your control. God will one day call you to give an account. The day is coming when "you may be no longer steward."

In regard to time, we are stewards. C. S. Lewis argued that the fact that we are constantly surprised by time is evidence that there is something timeless about us. "I can't believe how that child has grown!" exclaim uncles and aunts. "Has it really been ten years!" we cry in disbelief.

It seems that there should be plenty of time for everything as we look forward. But we find there never is, as we glance backward. Because of this, we are told to redeem the time (Eph. 5:16). Whether you are rich or poor, prince or pauper, you have twenty-four hours in every day. Every second is a gift from God. We cannot make a single moment. Each one is a precious gift. We are stewards. But one day we will no longer be stewards.

In regard to our money, we are stewards. Let us not say, "My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth." Rather let us remember "the Lord (our) God: for it is he that giveth (us) power to get wealth. . ." (Dt. 8:17, 18). We are stewards of our possessions, and God will hold us accountable. The only advantage of having money is the use we may make of it. The only wealth which we shall really keep is that which is invested in the Lord's work. Only God can give the true riches (Luke 16:10). The time will soon come when we will be no longer stewards.

In regard to our influence, we are stewards. No one is without influence (Rom. 14:7). Influence is probably the most valuable possession we have, next to our very souls. Not even death will bury one's influence. The good or evil we do will long survive us. Let us be faithful to this stewardship. We may soon be no longer stewards.

In regard to our souls, we are stewards. "In your patience possess ye your souls" (Luke 21:19). God has put salvation within the reach of each and every one of us. But it is up to us to reach out and take hold.

Are you a faithful steward? One day soon "you may be no longer a steward."

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Restoration Footnotes

Earl Kimbrough

2212 Malibu Dr.
Brandon, Florida 33511



A WORTHLESS SCRAP OF PAPER

It is not possible for us to know the extent to which seemingly insignificant events in early life can implant ideas that affect attitudes in later years. The reader no doubt can recall personal instances that testify to lasting impressions made by "little things" that happened in childhood. The memorable evangelist, T.B. Larimore, wrote of such an incident that he believed had much to do with shaping the course of his life. In a letter to a friend, he said:

"More than forty years ago, in her humble, little, log-cabin home among the hills and mountains of glorious old East Tennessee, a godly, devout, grandmother, one frosty autumn morning, was sweeping the ashes and coals from the solid stone hearth, after having cooked breakfast there; and her little barefooted grandson was stepping first to one side and then to the other, to keep out of the way of his grandmother's broom, while still keeping his feet on the warm stone. Suddenly she stooped and picked up a little bit of paper, which looked like it might have been torn from an old newspaper: more probably, however, from an old almanac. She brushed the ashes and dust from it carefully, laid it upon the mantle, and put upon it a pretty little pebble that had been taken from the beautiful brook near by. The little boy said, 'Grandmother, why did you pick up that piece of paper? What is it?' She said, 'I saw the name of the Lord on it, my son; and I couldn't burn it. I couldn't sweep his holy name into the fire.'"

Larimore had traveled the length and breadth of the nation telling thousands of the sweet story of Jesus and his love, as it is revealed in God's eternal word of truth. But in all those years, and to the end of his life, he "never ceased to revere the memory of that blessed grandmother." He paid her beautiful and loving tribute, saying that she "may, upon that very occasion, have fixed and settled his destiny for time and eternity, and through him, wielded all the influence for good that he has ever wielded, or may wield, till times knell shall be sounded and all the redeemed shall be gathered home." The memory of that frosty autumn morning was etched forever in his mind. The look and the language, and "even the quiver of the tender, tearful voice" of the grandmother as she said, "I couldn't sweep his holy name into the fire," was never forgot-

Parents and grandparents, of course, cannot remove the personal accountability of their offspring before God. But they can have more to do in shaping their destiny, "for time and eternity," than any other mortals on earth. Even the "little things" count. (Larimore's words are published in, Letters and Sermons of T.B. Larimore, Vol. 2, pp. 359-360).

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

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RADER—MASSEY DEBATE

May 10, 11, 13, 14

PROPOSITIONS:

1. "The scriptures teach that water baptism is for (in order to obtain) the remission of past sins."

Affirm: *Donnie V. Rader*

Deny: *Kenneth W. Massey*

2. "The scriptures teach that one is saved before and without water baptism."

Affirm: *Kenneth W. Massey*

Deny: *Donnie V. Rader*

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Building of the Manslick Rd. church of Christ at 4724 E. Manslick Rd., Louisville, KY 40219.

PLACE TO STAY: If any people from out of town desire to come and want a place to stay, contact Donnie V. Rader at (502) 968-6495 or 964-3624.

FIELD REPORTS

PAUL BROCK, Box 3555, Deland, FL 32720. After six and one half years with the church at Trilacoochee, I have moved to Deland to work with the North Blvd. church. Trilacoochee was a most pleasant and profitable work. The church experienced a gradual but substantial growth and they are blessed with great potential. Don Hastings will begin there January 1. Ron McRay was here at Deland for about six months as the last local preacher. Before that, the men of the congregation did the speaking. The work presents many challenges. There has been some turmoil in the congregation in the past. However, the people here have expressed their willingness to work and to work together. Our building is located very near Stetson University on the main street through town. Travelers on U.S. 17 and U.S. 92 will pass right by the building. We are also within one block of the northern and eastern by-pass of these two highways.

O. FRED LIGGIN, JR., 2019 Forest Avenue, Panama City, FL 32405. On November 15-20, 1981, I conducted a gospel meeting in Crystal River, FL. This is one of the fastest growing areas in the state and the potential for future growth of the church is excellent. The brethren there have asked me to come and work with them. At this time they are only able to provide about \$100 per week plus house and utilities. In order to do the work needed I am seeking an additional \$300 per week. If any of you brethren are in a position to help with the work it would be greatly appreciated. If sufficient support is obtained we want to leave Panama City the first of March or April, 1982.

This will bring to a close over five years work with the Beach church of Christ. When we came this church was not self-supporting, but within a few months they were able to take over our full support. Two fine elders and deacons have been appointed during this time and a new congregation was started from the Beach congregation in Panama City proper. The Lord has richly blessed this work with 44 baptisms, 104 restorations and 40 to place membership. Should you desire to check with the elders you may call Bud Hastings (904) 769-0409; or Gene Little 785-2294. Should any of you desire me to preach for you and discuss the work, please let me know.

FRED GOSNELL, PSC 2281, APO NY 09130. This completes two years that the Lord's church has existed at Sembach, which is in the Kaiserslautern area of West Germany. Five souls have been baptized in this period. Two have fallen away, with three returning to the states faithful. Five Bible studies were engaged in this year, with one currently in progress. We currently consist of 17 members, with a total of 20 in attendance. All are American military serving in the Air Force with their dependents except for one civilian employee. Preaching, teaching and singing assignments are rotated among seven men. We teach and admonish one another a lot! We are currently supporting two preachers on a continuing basis. This past year we had fellowship with two others on a one time basis as the need arose. We plan on expanding our support as our ability to do so allows. We solicit your help in locating brethren in the Kaiserslautern area of West Germany. Addresses and civilian telephone numbers for the contact can be found in any current issue of this paper in the church ads.

WILLIAM C. SEXTON, 1937 Judson, Manhattan, KS 66502. 1981 is history and we face 1982 as a challenge to do more in the service of the Lord. In 1981 we had two meetings with Marshall Davis in April, and H. L. Bruce in November. Both were good meetings. A debate was held here on the subject of instrumental music in worship. Brother Burt Lockwood defended the truth well. Installation of a DIAL A NEW TESTAMENT MESSAGE was made by the congregation in 1981. By calling one can hear a 60 second message from the scriptures. It works 24 hours and we change the message every day. Cable TV has run the ad for us free. We get several calls especially after it's advertised on television. We have also used a local paper, given out free in this area, to make known the service. We have received many calls, several comments of various kinds, requests, etc. Although we have not baptized anyone directly from this contact, we do know that a number of people are hearing the message. Plans for 1982 call for a meeting with Darrel Shaw in April. We plan to pursue every avenue we can discover to reach people in the area. We shall lose some more people this year but we are hoping for others to come and take their place. Any military personnel coming to Ft. Riley, or students coming to Kansas State, please plan to worship and work with us. We are the only sound congregation in this area. If you have friends in this area, let us know. Phone (913) 539-0458. We invite you to come, inform us of others, and pray for the work here.

NEW LOCATION

ALAN YEATER, 1245 Shady Creek Dr., Greenwood, IN 46142. The congregation known as the White River church of Christ, which previously met at 357 S. St. Rd. 135 in Greenwood, now assembles at a new location. We began meeting at this place on December 20, 1981. The building is approximately two miles south of the previous location. We encourage anyone traveling through central Indiana to make plans to stop and worship with us. The building is located at St. Rd. 135 and Stones Crossing Rd. We meet together at the following times:

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.		
		Worship	10:30 a.m.
		Evening	6:00 p.m.
		Wednesday Bible Study	7:30 p.m.

For directions call Richard Hunter at (317) 535-7616 or Alan Yeater at 881-9515.

PREACHER AVAILABLE

KEITH STORMENT, P.O. Box 591, Ravenswood, WV 26164. Due to financial problems of the church here I am going to have to relocate by July, 1982. I am 28 years old, married, with 13 years preaching experience. I have completed one year here with the Sand St. church in Ravenswood. I am wanting to relocate with a spiritually and financially stable church, preferably with elders. Size and location are not factors. I am just interested in a sound group of brethren willing to work with me in building up the Lord's cause. Anyone interested please call me collect. I will be happy to answer any questions and supply references. Call (304) 273-2467.

PREACHER NEEDED

UMATILLA, FL—The church of Christ which meets at Umatilla, FL is in need of a full time preacher. Some outside support would have to be obtained. If interested contact Bobby O'Neal at (904) 669-4100 or A.T. Latner at 669-2247.

NEW CONGREGATION

LONGVIEW, TX—A new congregation has been started in Longview, TX. The church which has about 70 in attendance, meets at 3104 E. Gilmer Road in Longview. For information call, J. N. (Newt) Beard at (214) 759-1518 or Harold Taylor at 759-1780. Mailing address is: P.O. Box 1894, Longview, TX 75606. If in the area worship with us.

BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA—After years of planning, praying and waiting (for the right time and circumstances to prevail), a new congregation began meeting in west Bakersfield—the Rosedale area. Previously we met with the Pioneer Drive church on 5300 Pioneer Drive in east Bakersfield. But due mainly to the growth of the Pioneer Drive work (including the former Rexland Acres congregation disbanding and identifying at Pioneer Drive), plus the fact that a majority of the members lived in west Bakersfield, some driving 25 or 30 miles, we thought it the right time to begin.

On Sunday, January 3, the Rosedale church of Christ began. We had 118 in our first worship service with 94 for Bible classes That evening 106 came. Our first contribution was \$1418. 92 attended our first Wed. evening service.

Elders and deacons have been appointed. Those chosen had served in that capacity while at Pioneer Drive and so were well known to the church and no objections were raised. The Pioneer Drive church continues to function with elders. Dan Melear is the preacher with Lalo Enriquez and Dick Millwee serving as elders. We have purchased property at 20955 Allen Road in Bakersfield and are working on plans now for building as soon as financing can be arranged. Until then, we are meeting in the Rosedale School Auditorium at 33567 Rosedale Hwy. See our ad elsewhere in this paper. Please remember us in your prayers and visit with us when in this part of California.

PREACHER NEEDED

OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA—The Westside church is in need of a full-time preacher. The church here is small and can only provide partial support. Those interested may write to: Westside Church of Christ, P.O. Box 1023, Okeechobee, FL 33472. Or contact: Franklin Varson 813-763-2023 (days) or 813-763-3462 (evenings). (Editor's note: Two families from Expressway in Louisville spend the winter here each year and have been able to help some in the work. They are Clarence Smith and Marvin Walker and both speak of the urgent need for help.)

ALLIANCE, OHIO—The Homeworth Road church which meets two miles east of Alliance, Ohio is in need of a full time preacher. We are a small congregation, but can give some support. The rest will have to be raised elsewhere. If interested, please call either Ervil Poland (216-823-8700) or Robert Bollinger (216-821-8773). Or write to Ervil Poland, 516 N. Freedom, Alliance, Ohio 44601. (Will the brother in Germany who responded to us earlier, please respond again to the address above. We no longer have your address.)