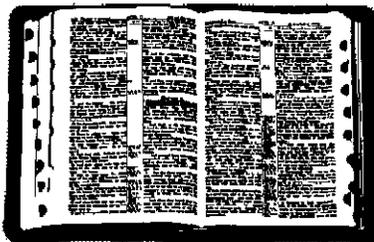


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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

JULY, 1982

NUMBER 7

THE CROSSROADS

"PRAYER PARTNERS"

P. J. Casebolt
313 S. 4th Ave.
Paden City, WV 26159

The practice of having "prayer partners" (a junior partner, and a senior partner), as advocated by the Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida, and as implemented into the curriculum of satellite groups throughout the country, is based on a perversion of Jas. 5:16. The practice has caused me to take a second look at a sermon which I have been preaching for some thirty years. I used to call the sermon "One Toward Another", but for the purpose of this article, only the title has been changed, and that not to protect the innocent, but to spotlight the guilty.

The philosophy in the "prayer partner" concept is for a new convert to be paired off with a senior "partner", and have the "junior" partner confess his (or her), sins and shortcomings to the senior confessor. Aside from the fact that such a practice is based on a blatant perversion of Jas. 5:16, I would encourage no one to be unequally yoked in such an arrangement. I would insist on such a partnership being equal—"you tell me your dreams (in this case, sins), and I'll tell you mine."

We could even use the following verses as a reference back to Elijah and Elisha, the older and younger prophets of 2 Kings 2, but we would find no such "prayer partner" arrangement as is inherent in the prayer partner concept of modern theology. The same could be said of other "partnership" examples found in the Bible, such as Paul and Timothy.

If the admonition of James to "confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another" requires (or even permits), such an arrangement as the modern

prayer partner concept, then just try to imagine the implications we face when making the same application to similar passages of Scripture. Maybe those who would pervert one passage of Scripture are not too concerned about what they would do with any other passage, but I believe there are still those among us who are not only concerned about a statement of truth in context, but are also concerned from the standpoint of consistency. Let us examine a few parallel passages which employ the "one another" concept.

We are to "have love one to another" (Jno. 13:35). Does this imply that we are to have "love partners" in order to carry out this divine injunction? We are to "consider one another to provoke unto love and good works" (Heb. 10:24). Does this sanction a "consideration partner" (junior and senior, of course), in order to provoke one another to love and good works? How about an "assembling partner" arrangement for Heb. 10:25? Did they have such a system in Old Testament times when "they that feared the Lord spake oft one to another" (Mal. 3:16)? Or, would these passages allow "exhorting partners" as we endeavour to "exhort one another"?

Now that we are beginning to get the hang of this "partner" business, it won't take us long to find "teaching and admonishing" partners in Col. 3:16, "comforting partners" in 1 Thes. 4:18, "hospitality partners" in 1 Pet. 4:9, "forgiving partners" in Eph. 4:32, "fellowship partners" (to go with our "fellowship halls") in 1 Jno. 1:7, "burden-bearing partners" in Gal. 6:2, and "care partners" in 1 Cor. 12:25!

We have by no means exhausted the possibilities of forming various partnerships based upon the perversion of Jas. 5:16, but these are sufficient to keep even our more liberal brethren busy for a few years, and discourage those who would not intentionally wrest a passage of Scripture to justify anything. And, I have no intention of backing off in my efforts to persuade people that we do have a wonderful relationship in the family of God as we do together those things which are designed for our mutual good. I would also advise other brethren not to become "gun shy" when quoting the above mentioned passages, and deprive themselves of the fellowship they enjoy one with

another, just because some among us are placing an unscriptural emphasis on the "one to another" phrase found in Jas. 5:16.

The following poem, which I wrote in 1961, expresses my sentiments toward my fellow "partners" in Christ, and I don't expect another twenty years to change that sentiment.

TOGETHER, WITH ONE ANOTHER

Let us "consider one another", "care for one another," too;

Hebrews ten and twenty-four, part of this tells us to do.

First Corinthians, Chapter Twelve, verse twenty-five the rest imparts;

Peter says, "Love one another", this we'd do with all our hearts.

"Bear ye one another's burdens", from Galatians we derive,

Assemble, we, ourselves together (Hebrews ten, verse twenty-five).

Exhortation for our brother, in this verse, our duty's seen;

Hospitality, toward each other (Romans twelve, and verse thirteen).

"Pray for one another", too (James Chapter Five, and verse sixteen),

Striving always all together, from Philippians this we glean.

Now, if we do the things here stated (James this knowledge also gave),

We'll have cause to be elated, for our brother we may save.

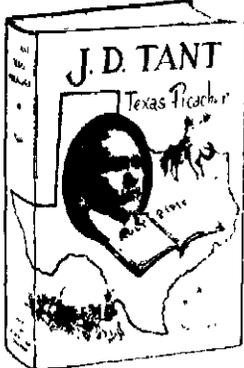
Some day, if faithful, we will be, caught up together in the sky;

(From Thessalonians this we see), there to meet the Lord on high.

Then heirs together we shall be, as here together we have been;

With Romans eight this will agree, so let us strive the prize to win.

P. J. Casebolt



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Searching The Scriptures

Volume 23

JULY, 1982

Number 7

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

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Editorial

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THE PUCKETT MATERIAL ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

With this issue we present the first of three lengthy articles by the late, lamented, Franklin T. Puckett on the subject of the Holy Spirit. We thought it good also to include in this issue a tribute to Franklin T. Puckett written by Hoyt H. Houchen. I consider my acquaintance with brother Puckett to have been one of the richest, most rewarding experiences of my life. He left us at the age of 66, long before we were ready to give him up. He left an example for other gospel preachers worthy of emulation.

He was a self-made scholar. His study was both deep and wide. His preparation, on whatever subject, was meticulous. He sought to know his subject fully and left no stone unturned when it came to refuting error. He stopped every leak, looked at every possible objection. He was eminently fair in his treatment of those who opposed him. His knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek text was extensive. His memory was remarkable and we have heard him quote whole chapters without ever opening his Bible. If you read along, you would find every word in place. We point out these things in case some of the younger men who did not have the pleasure and profit of knowing him, should think that his material was carelessly thrown together. While he was just a man, he was a godly, scholarly man who did his work well. What he said on any subject was worthy of serious consideration.

The subject of the Holy Spirit has always been difficult. Deity is infinite and we are finite. Historically, brethren for the most part have stood together in opposition to denominational dogma which demanded a mystical concept of the Holy Spirit and His work in the conviction and conversion of sinners. We have stood as one against the Pentecostal-type sects with their purported tongue speaking and claims of miraculous healing. But brethren have not always agreed on the subject of how the Spirit indwells the Christian.

For many years, I did not agree with the position occupied by Franklin T. Puckett on the subject of the indwelling. We discussed it many times, including the last few times we saw each other. I had always opposed the denominational concept of direct operation of the Spirit in conviction and conversion and the Pentecostal claims of miraculous gifts today. I have had three public debates with denominational preachers dealing with this subject and if the brethren were

dissatisfied with my work, they did not indicate it. But, in common with a number of men past and present, it was my conviction that the Spirit somehow indwelt the Christian separate and apart from the agency of the word. The last time I ever saw Franklin T. Puckett was about three months before he died. We had lunch together and once again the subject of the Holy Spirit and his work in the Christian came up. He said some things on that occasion which opened doors of understanding for me which I had not considered before and that resulted in a change of view once I had time to sort it out.

The material from him in this and the next two issues of *SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES* was presented by him in the Thayer Street Lectures in Akron, Ohio about a year and a half before he died. The first two articles were so thoroughly outlined, often with complete sentences, that it was not hard to put them in manuscript form. The third article was taken word for word from a tape recording. We will delete in that article some rather extensive personal remarks he made at the beginning of the speech. This we will have to do in the interest of space. We are indebted to Thomas G. O'Neal of Bessemer, Alabama for the suggestion that this material be printed in the paper and for much of the work in getting it ready. We also wish to thank Cecil Norman of Birmingham, Alabama for helping to decipher this material and for typing the manuscripts. Her work, as usual, has been expertly done.

The *GUARDIAN OF TRUTH* has published in booklet form the outlines of these three speeches and they may be ordered from them or from Religious Supply Center. In view of the recent interest among brethren in this subject, evidenced by rather extensive writing by some on the subject and by one written debate on the indwelling of the Spirit, it is our persuasion that this material not only ought to be preserved, but that it constitutes a worthy addition to our source materials in probing into the matter. The nature, person and work of the Holy Spirit is thoroughly considered and we ask the readers to study the material carefully. Franklin T. Puckett would have been the first to urge that nothing be accepted as truth just because he said it, but that each individual should weigh the subject in the light of the living oracles.

GOSPEL MEETINGS

Thus far (through the month of May) this year we have been privileged to preach the gospel in nine meetings. All of these meetings have been well attended. We have preached to a number who were not Christians. There have been fifteen to obey the Lord in these meetings with many doors opened for further study after the meetings ended. We have found some good brethren who are hard at work for the Lord. Every place is unique as to opportunities, attitudes and local problems.

In January we presented a series of lessons on *Dangers Facing the Church*. This was at Madison, Indiana where Gary Sandusky continues to do an excellent work. In March we worked with Frank Himmel

and the Metairie, Louisiana church. They have some talented members and are working together harmoniously. Some brethren came from great distances to support the effort and a good number of non-members attended. Also in March, we were privileged to work again with the strong and growing church at Middlebourne, West Virginia where Ronny Milliner preaches. There are four excellent elders who shepherd this flock. They have growing pains and have plans to erect a new and larger meeting house. I spoke 14 times that week.

In April I worked again at Gulfport, Mississippi where Glenn Melton is laboring diligently. While the church there is small, there is the most optimistic attitude there we have seen in that place. Telephone canvassing has produced a number of students for a Bible correspondence course and many home studies have grown out of that. Members worked hard and brought a number of acquaintances to the meeting.

Also in April I preached in a meeting at Shepherdsville, Kentucky, just five miles from our home at Brooks. Rick Christian is the energetic preacher. He ably directed the singing in the meeting. A good number of community people, including some business acquaintances, attended. This church is served by two elders. Also in April it was a pleasure to work with the fine church at Olney, Illinois in the southeastern part of the state. They have about 160 in attendance with four able elders and with Roger Hillis, who resigned his work as a Pharmacist, serving as a local preacher. Several men in that congregation are preachers of ability and do much good work in the surrounding area. I spoke 14 times that week, also.

In May we were with the Wildercroft church in Riverdale, Maryland, in the Washington, D.C. area. Our son, Wilson Adams, had just moved there to work as local preacher. They are served by three elders who are obviously men of knowledge and competence. Their attendance runs about 110 on Sunday mornings. They are blessed with excellent facilities for future growth and with a number of talented members. Again, in May it was my pleasure, along with Gene Frost, to present four lessons during the week of the Rader-Massey debate at Manslick Road in Louisville, Kentucky. Gene Frost presented four excellent speeches on Humanism and I was asked to present four lessons on Premillennialism. The debate was well attended, as were the morning sessions. Donnie V. Rader, local preacher at Manslick Road, had prepared well for the debate and ably presented and defended truth. The debate was a good one with perfect order prevailing. My last meeting in May was at Christian Chapel at Kettle, Kentucky. This is located a few miles south of Burkesville, Kentucky and about a mile from Dale Hollow Lake. Raymond Castillo left his advertising business to enter his first full-time work. He is capable and hard working. Three elders oversee this flock. This is the congregation with which the late Ross O. Spears was working at the time of his death. On Friday night of the meeting a severe thunder storm knocked out the lights just before service was to begin. We conducted

the whole service with only the light of two candles and a flash light. The lights came back on during the closing announcements.

The gospel is still the power of God to save the sinner and to build up the saint and I am thankful for every open door to preach it. We must work while it is day for the night cometh when we shall work no more.

Death Claims Two Excellent Preachers

CONWAY SKINNER

After a long struggle with cancer, Conway Skinner, beloved Florida preacher, passed from this life on June 2. Harry Pickup, Jr. spoke words of comfort and encouragement at the services in Jacksonville on June 5.

Though most of his work was done in the southeast (South Carolina, Georgia and Florida), brother Skinner touched the lives of many people for good. He left us while only in his early 50's. We mourn the loss and express our deepest sympathy to his good wife and children. A more extended notice written by James R. Cope will appear in next month's paper.

WILLIAM B. MURRELL

Our beloved "Billy" Murrell passed away while yet in his mid-50's. He had suffered with heart disease for some years but was thought to be recovering and had just returned to fulltime work with the Marrtown Rd. church in Parkersburg, West Virginia. His work in Indiana, Illinois, Alabama, England and West Virginia as well as other places, was faithfully and energetically performed. Funeral services were conducted in Montgomery, Alabama on June 11 by Bob F. Owen. He leaves behind two sons: Bill (who teaches at Athens Bible School) and Steve (who preaches at Steele, Missouri) and his beloved Thelma. Our hearts ache with these who grieve, though we sorrow not as others who have no hope.

We thank God for the faithful lives of these good men. Let us all work while it is day.

The Ranks of gospel preachers are being thinned. We must do more to equip young men to take up the torch so ably borne by those who have gone before. Let us watch and be sober.

—Editor

FRANKLIN T. PUCKETT—

WHAT HE LEFT US

Hoyt H. Houchen

1838 S. Fairplay St.
Aurora, Colorado 80012



Our beloved friend and brother in Christ, Franklin T. Puckett departed this life on January 16, 1975. Although seven years have passed since his departure from this world, those of us who knew him, loved him and respected him are still mindful of him. His body which lies in the silent grave had housed our dear brother in the Lord for sixty-six years. But this is not all of Franklin Puckett that remains upon this earth.

Franklin T. Puckett was a personal friend of our family, and our lives have been enriched by having known him. Sentiment makes it difficult to write about a true friend. He was kind, gentle, yet unwavering in his convictions.

Never shall we forget our earliest association with this great man. In 1953 I was preaching for the Central church in Amarillo, Texas. We invited brother Puckett to preach for us in a meeting. The church there was in a crisis over the issues of the sponsoring church arrangement and church supported benevolent institutions. Brother Puckett did his usual splendid job of preaching, and he devoted one night during the meeting to a study of the "issues." At the close of that particular service, a brother who had become most hostile because of what brother Puckett had preached, vented his contempt in the foyer by abusing brother Puckett in a loud and boisterous manner. Brother Puckett, the gentleman and Christian that he was, silently placed his finger over his own lips as a signal to the vociferous brother to hold his voice down. During all of the brother's ravings and rantings, brother Puckett was kind and smiling. This was an incident which exemplified his courteous demeanor and coolness of temperament under such agitating circumstances.

I shall never forget our farewell at the train depot on the last night of that meeting. Our firm hand shake, our tear-filled eyes and his words of encouragement stand out in my memory. We both knew that my time at Central was short. Across the nation the issues had reached a serious crisis. What a sad occasion it was as he boarded the train on that lonely night. As I watched the train pull slowly away I thanked God for such a man. Even after twenty-nine years, I choke with emotion as I recall that sad farewell. A few days later I was asked by three of the elders who were for the things I was opposing to leave. Two others elders were conservative and did not go along with their decision. Although brother Puckett's sermon was the climax of

what had already been developing, in the years that followed we would joke about him getting me "fired." In January of 1975 when the news of his death reached us, my wife and I sat for a few moments weeping together, sharing his memory.

Franklin Puckett left more than a silenced tongue in the grave. He left a lot of sunshine and happiness. He had a good sense of humor. When we would meet on different occasions he never failed to mention some humorous incidents concerning our boys when they were small children.

He left us the memory of a pure life, a noble character, and a true friend. He has left us the radiating influence of a Christian and the work of a faithful gospel preacher. Where this man lived and worked, souls have been saved and churches have been made stronger. He was a friend of young people and endeared himself to many of them across the country. All who knew him, young and old alike, cherish his memory. Yes, he has left us far more than a cold motionless body in a quiet cemetery.

Seven years have passed and Franklin Puckett is missed. The writing of this short tribute expresses some appreciation of brother Puckett's life but it also reminds us that the influence and work of a great character will continue to live long after he has departed. The examples of those who have gone before us should instill within us a greater determination to please our Heavenly Father as we continue our march toward "Zion, the beautiful city of God."

The spirit of Franklin T. Puckett has departed to be with God but he has left far more upon this earth than a decaying body. He has left a memory that will long continue in the hearts of us who knew and loved him.

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SPECIAL FEATURE

THE HOLY SPIRIT

by
Franklin T. Puckett

Introduction—The Person of the Spirit

Many different theories are taught concerning the Being and functions of the Holy Spirit. Until recently little has been said on the subject within our own ranks, leaving us with hazy, ill-defined ideas concerning the Spirit and His work. Now, we find ourselves rather suddenly drawn into all kinds of controversy over matters once considered fully understood among us. If anyone had suggested a few years ago that churches of Christ would be troubled by the alleged mystical influences, emotional experiences, inexplicable powers, and miraculous operations that have always characterized Calvinistically oriented sects, I would not have believed it.

Some are claiming and defending certain mystical operations of the Holy Spirit in the Christian which are separate from and in addition to that which He accomplishes through His teaching in the gospel. Consequently, we have been caught unprepared for the barrage of claims made and arguments presented in affirming these operations, and must now re-examine our concepts in the light of Biblical teaching. It is fitting, therefore, that we study this subject carefully and prayerfully.

I want to thank the elders of Thayer Street church for arranging this program and for inviting me to speak. In this first lecture, I want to discuss the Holy Spirit as a divine Person. This will necessitate some investigation of the godhead.

The Godhead

The term "godhead" is found three times in the King James version (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Col. 2:9). In Romans 1:20, the term is rendered "divinity" in the American Standard version. While three different Greek word forms are used in these passages, all of them are derivations of *theos*, and denote "Deity, divinity, the divine nature, the divine majesty, that which pertains to God, godhead." They define the quality or character of the essence, substance, or being of one who is God. The godhead (or godhood), therefore, is made up of such Beings as are of divine nature and possess divine majesty. Illustrate: Manhood, childhood, etc.

The term "God" is frequently used in the general sense of the godhead or deity. Things attributed to God are often attributions made unto deity rather than to some particular personality. The Scriptures reveal a plurality of beings in the godhead (Gen. 1:1). "Elohim" is plural in form. Plural meaning: "The gods." Singular meaning: "The deity." (Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon).

The plurality of deity is seen in the pronouns of Genesis 1:26.

The divine personalities constituting this plurality are Jehovah (The Father), Jesus Christ (The Word-Son), and the Holy Spirit (Mt. 3:16, 17; 28:19; Romans 15:30; II Cor. 13:14). Each of these individual Beings possess all the qualities and attributes of divinity, and each is individually called God (I Cor. 8:6; Titus 2:13; Acts 5:3, 4). The Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father, and neither the Father nor the Son is the Holy Spirit. Each is a separate, distinct Being possessing all the qualities of deity. All of these divine Beings together constitute the one God, or the godhead. As there is one man (humanity, or mankind), even so there is one God (divinity, or godkind); and as there are individual beings in that one humanity, so there are individual Beings in that one divinity. The Holy Spirit is one of these divine Beings.

The Identity of the Holy Spirit

(1) The Holy Spirit is not:

Some mystical, indefinite, undefinable, ethereal-like substance that enshrouds and permeates the universe like a fog or the atmosphere.

A mere "influence," or a vague, impersonal power released in response to human needs.

The mind, temper, or disposition of God or Christ.

The Bible, or the New Testament, or the written word of God.

The Holy Spirit revealed the Bible. The Holy Spirit is the Revelator; the Bible is the Revelation. The Bible is the product of the Spirit, but it is not the Spirit.

(2) The Holy Spirit is:

God (Cf. Acts 5:3 with Acts 5:4; Mt. 12:28 with Luke 11:20). Eternal (Hebrews 9:14). Omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-10; I Cor. 6:19). Omniscient (I Cor. 2:10,11; John 16,13,14). He possesses divine power. He creates (Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; Psalm 104:30). He works miracles (Mt. 12:28; I Cor. 12:8-11). He inspires prophets (I Peter 1:9-12; II Peter 1:19-21). He teaches men (John 14:26; I Cor. 2:13). He possesses divine attributes of power, holiness, grace, goodness, knowledge, will, judgment, and truth (Romans 15:13; Hebrews 10:28; Neh. 9:20; I Cor. 2:9-11; 12:11; Acts 15:28; John 14:16, 17; 16:13). These attributes are not the Being of the Holy Spirit, but the Being possesses the attributes and performs the actions which are affirmed of Him.

We must clearly discern this distinction between the attributes of the Holy Spirit and the **Being** of the Holy Spirit. Lying back of all attributes is the one to whom they belong. We have to think of the Holy Spirit as existing before we can attribute to Him modes of activity and qualities of character. He to whom these qualities and powers are attributed must of necessity be a divine Person, for such can only be attributed to one possessing both divinity and personality.

The Person of the Holy Spirit

Webster defines person as: "A being characterized by conscious apprehension, rationality, and a moral

sense." The Holy Spirit is an individual character, and possesses conscious apprehension, rationality, and a moral sense; therefore, the Holy Spirit is a person. Actions are attributed to the Holy Spirit which can only be performed by a person. He hears (John 16:13). He shows (John 16:13-15). He speaks (I Tim. 4:1). He bears witness (John 15:26; Romans 8:16, 17). He gives commandments (Acts 13:2; 16:6). He delivers law (Romans 8:1, 2). He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30). He can be vexed (Isaiah 63:10). He gives life (Gal. 6:8). He glorifies (John 16:14).

The Holy Spirit, therefore, possesses personality and is a Person. Personality requires individuality, and individuality demands locality, and locality necessitates separation and distinction.

The Scripture distinguishes the Holy Spirit from both the Father and the Son. He is a separate, distinct, individual Person in the godhead (Mt. 3:16, 17; 28:19), and as such possesses definiteness of Being and the distinctiveness of locality, or sphere of operation (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7).

In order that we may have a better understanding of what the term "person" means, I want to deal with its definitions more extensively. Person—Originally it designated a mask, and was derived from per (through) + sonare (to sound, hence, "to sound through." In its etymology, it developed through the following meanings: "Mask, actor, character acted, any assumed character, then, to anyone having character or station, and finally to any individual having rational being." Person—"A character, individual, body" (SKEAT, **Etymological Dictionary of the English Language**, p. 436).

Person—"A character or part, as in a play; a specific kind or manifestation of individual character." "A being characterized by conscious apprehension, rationality, and moral sense" (MERRIAM-WEBSTER, **New International Dictionary**, p. 1827). Person—"An individual substance of a rational nature" (Substance, Being, Existence). Substance is used to exclude accidents. Substance is used in two senses—primary and secondary. Primary substance—Concrete substance as existing in the individual (Father, Son, Holy Spirit). Secondary substance—Abstract substance as existing in genus and species (Godhead).

Person is predicated only of intellectual beings. A person has: **Substance**—Being, Existence, Reality. Completeness—whole, that which is a part does not satisfy the definition. **Self-existence**—Continue by, of, or in one's self—not in another. **Individuality**—Excludes the universal. **Rationality**—Excludes the non-intellectual. (A. VAN HOVE, **Catholic Encyclopedia**, Vol. XI, p. 726). According to this source, there are five marks which are necessary to make or constitute a person.

Personality—"Quality or state of being personal, or of being a person and not a thing or abstraction; that which makes a being a person: personal existence or identity" (MERRIAM-WEBSTER, **New International Dictionary**, p. 1828). It is "a term applied in philosophy and also in common speech to the iden-

tity or individuality which makes a being (person) what he is, or marks him off for all he is not" (**Encyclopedia Britannica**, Vol. XXI, p. 255). "The natural sense of the word 'person' is undoubtedly individuality" (Ibid.).

Personal—"Of or pertaining to a particular person; affecting an individual." "Done in person, without the intervention of another; direct from one person to another." "Exclusively for a given individual;; as a personal letter" (MERRIAM-WEBSTER, **New International Dictionary**, p. 1828). Notice the particularity and individuality of any being that can be defined as a person. In all of these definitions emphasis is placed upon a person being an individual, one possessing individual identity. The substantive term "individual" is defined: "A particular being or thing as distinguished from a class, species, or collection." "An indivisible entity" (WEBSTER, **Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary**, p. 428). "An indivisible entity or a totality which cannot be separated into parts without altering the character and significance of these parts" (MERRIAM-WEBSTER, **New International Dictionary**, p. 1267). Richard Whately, English theologian and logician of the XIX Cent., says: "An object which is in the strict and primary sense one, and cannot be logically divided, is called an individual" (Ibid.).

Now let us see what we have learned. The Holy Spirit is a divine Person. A person is an individual, rational being. That which is an individual is an indivisible entity.

So, the Holy Spirit as a person can no more be divided into parts and parceled out in bits among thousands of people, or diffused into an abstract force or impersonal power, and each portion still be the divine Person, than a man can be cut into pieces and scattered in chunks over the earth, or incinerated and the ashes thrown into the wind or sown upon the bosom of the seven seas, and each particle still be the human person. According to the meaning of the term person, any attempt to divide the divine Being (Person) among thousands of people will result in altering the character and changing the significance of every feature of the Holy Spirit.

There must, then, be an explanation of the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting and converting the alien sinner, and of His influence and power in edifying and comforting the saved, that will not call for a distribution or diffusion of the divine Person among all those affected. Without it a true concept of the divine Person (Holy Spirit) will be destroyed and He will be reduced to an impersonal power. The Holy Spirit as a Person is not and could not be a measure of the Spirit, whether "baptismal, miraculous, or ordinary." Unless we can see the difference in the person of the Spirit, and the gifts and powers which He bestows, we shall end up in total confusion.

The Person Of The Holy Spirit And The Omnipresence Of Deity

When this definition of the term "person" is made, someone is always sure to raise the question: "But what about the omnipresence of deity?" Omnipresence does not equate omniperperson. If omnipresence means

omniperson, and if the presence of God is everywhere and in everything, then, the person of God is everywhere and in everything. If the divine Being, or person, is diffused everywhere and found in everything, this adds up to the pagan doctrine of Pantheism. If Pantheism be not true, then, the divine Being is not omnipresent in person! May I point out that while God is omnipresent in some senses (Psalm 139:7-10; Proverbs 15:3), He is not omnipresent in other senses (Gen. 4:16; II Kings 13:23; 24:20; Jer. 23:39), and in no sense is the divine Person omnipresent.

The Presence of the Holy Spirit

There is a difference in person and presence. While there are circumstances and places where it could be said a divine Being was present in person, it does not follow that one's person must be in a place where it is said His presence is found. Illustration: Vespasian, et al. God's presence is found in many places through the medium and instrumentality of His creations, laws, works, agents, appointments, etc., while His divine **PERSON (the eternal Being Himself)** is in heaven.

God called unto Moses from the burning bush (Ex. 3:4), but He did it through an angel (v. 2). The Lord saved Israel (Ex. 14:30; Psalm 106:8), but He accomplished it through "the angel of his presence" (Isaiah 63:9). The Lord went before Israel in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to lead them in the way (Ex. 13:21), but He led them through the medium and instrumentality of an angel (Ex. 14:19). It was not God Himself who was in the pillar of cloud, but His angel whom He had sent; yet that which was accomplished through the angel of His appointment, was attributed unto Him. In the Mosaic dispensation, God was said to dwell between the cherubims (Ex. 25:21, 22; Num. 7:89; I Sam. 4:4; II Kings 19:14, 15), but who would say that the divine Being in person dwelt in that physical location? The Jews referred to this dwelling of God between the cherubims as the Shekinah, which is defined as follows: "Shekinah, she-kai-na (Talmudic Hebr., 'abiding (of the divine presence)');" (SHAFF-HERZOG, **Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge**, Vol. X, p. 389). This should be sufficient to show a difference **in person and presence**.

Christ promised to be present in every assembly of those who are gathered in His name (Mt. 18:20), but who would say the Person is literally in every assembly? The assembly is by His divine appointment (Mt. 18:20; Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:33; 14:23; Heb. 10:25). While assembled we are to sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord (I Cor. 14:26; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). In the assembly we pray unto God (Acts 12:5). There we observe the Lord's supper, which is a **communion of the body and blood of Christ** (I Cor. 10:16). When we contribute to the work of the Lord, we give unto God (II Cor. 8:1-5; Phil. 4:17, 18). When and wherever we serve the Lord, whether as individual Christians or as local congregations, we do so **before His divine presence** (Col. 3:17-24; Mt. 28:20), but He **in person** is in heaven at the right hand of God (Eph. 1:20; I Pet. 3:22; I Tim. 6:13-16).

Now, if both God and Christ can be present through the instrumentality of their agents, works, and appointments, without being present in person, why cannot the Holy Spirit also be present through the instrumentality of His teaching, influence, work, gifts, and appointments, without being present in person? More will be said about the unity and oneness of the Holy Spirit as a divine Person in subsequent lectures.

The Holy Spirit Collaborates In The Work Of Deity

In the physical creation God (Jehovah) planned it (Jer. 51:14, 15); God (the Word-Son) executed it (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:1, 2; Cf. I Cor. 8:6); God (the Holy Spirit) assisted in it (Gen. 1:1, 2; 2:7). He garnished the heavens (Job 26:13). He renewed the face of the earth (Psalm 104:30).

In the spiritual creation God planned it (Eph. 1:8-11); Jesus executed it (John 4:34; Eph. 1:3-7; II Tim. 1:9, 10; I Pet. 1:18-20); the Holy Spirit revealed it (John 16:13; Luke 14:49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; I Cor. 2:9, 10; Eph. 3:1-4).

Conclusion

The Holy Spirit is a divine Being—one of the godhead or godhood. As a divine Being, He is a **Person** possessing all the qualities of personality. Personality requires individuality, and individuality demands separation and distinction. As a Person, He possesses power and influence.

Power and influence are attributes of the Holy Spirit, but not the Holy Spirit Himself. His power and influence may be relative and distributive; they may be universal or local. Distributions of power, bestowal of gifts, and exercise of influence, may, by metonymy, be referred to as the Holy Spirit. Such references are to be understood in the sense in which they are used, and not made to do violence to the basic meaning of the terms employed. In such cases, **the presence** of the Holy Spirit through the medium and instrumentality of means is to be understood, rather than the **person** of the Holy Spirit Himself. As an individual Being, the Holy Spirit cannot be divided into bits or distributed in measures without destroying the very concept of personal identity. As a divine Being, He cooperates with other members of the godhead in carrying out the divine will.

NEXT MONTH—The Gift of the Holy Spirit

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S.B. HARTSELL

**Jefferson David Tant
350 Knollwoods Dr.
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As the years rush by, we are reminded time and again of the fact that our stay here on this earth is but a temporary arrangement, "for we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens" (II Cor. 5:1).

Early on the morning of April 21, 1982, S. B. Hartsell peacefully laid his armor down and went to be with the Lord, having spent nearly 84 years and two months in his fleshly tabernacle. I have felt honored to have this man as a father-in-law, a brother in the Lord, and a friend.

He was born to Alexander Bradford and Mary Frances (Crump) Hartsell February 23, 1898 in Haynesville, Louisiana. He lived in that small community all his life, but his influence reached into far places. He married Nicie Sue Davis May 21, 1921. Ten children were born: Ardece (Sanders), Anne (Iverson), S.B., Jr., Floy (Fitze), Huey, Earl, Horace, Flora (Tant), Glenn and Carmen (Allen).

Part of the godly influence of S.B. and Nicie Hartsell can be seen in the fact that three sons are (or have been) gospel preachers. Huey (Mt. Olive, Alabama), and Earl (Broadmoor, Nashville, Tennessee) now preach. Horace is now president of Pensacola Community College (Florida). Three daughters married preachers. Anne (to John Iverson, College Station, Texas), Flora (to this writer), and Carmen (To Cal Allen, who has done full-time work with the church). It was a dream come true when these six men worked together in a gospel meeting with the Haynesville church in 1969. A grandson, David Hartsell, and a grandson-in-law, Gil Johnson, also preach.

Papaw has always been a friend to men who stood for the truth, encouraging them any way he could. Such were oft the recipients of Hartsell hospitality. More than once have I sent some preacher and his family, traveling across the country, to the old homestead, knowing they would be well received. And although the records are in some forgotten drawer, we believe brother Hartsell's service as an elder spanned some 40 years.

Only God can measure the fruit of this man's life. The Haynesville church was a strong influence for truth when institutionalism swept away most area churches. He converted others to Christ (including his wife and others in her family), who have now brought forth other generations.

Among loved activities was attending gospel meetings, and though slowed by age in recent years, the Hartsells still went to meetings in Arkansas and Louisiana as they were able. Another great love was

story-telling. Papaw enjoyed gathering the grandchildren (42 in all), the great-grandchildren (24), and anyone else who would listen, to tell of the adventures of by-gone years, often adding a moral at the end of the story. These stories are so rich that our son, Jeff, recorded several a few years ago. There was no "generation gap" between this old gentleman and his descendants, but rather a mutual love and respect. Gospel singing also characterized family gatherings.

I was truly sorry that I was not with the family as Lloyd Atherton spoke to virtually all the family and a host of brethren and friends who gathered on April 23, but Papaw wanted me somewhere else—preaching the gospel to a small congregation in distant Chico, California. Eight of the grandsons (David, Scott and Steve Hartsell, George, Bill and Bob Sanders, Randy Smith and Jeff Tant) bore the earthly remains and placed them beneath the pine forests of northwestern Louisiana to await the final call. Papaw's faithful wife of over 60 years is now living with a daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. George Sanders at 300 Gary, Haynesville. These few words are wholly inadequate to tell of a humble servant of God, but I did want to share them with you. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord..." (Rev. 14:13).



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ANOTHER LOOK AT THE LORD'S SUPPER

J. David Powlas
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Many Christians believe that the Lord's supper may be served in both assemblies (assuming a morning and evening service) for worship on the Lord's day. However, after much study, I have reached a different conclusion on the matter. Now, I am convinced that only one serving of the Lord's supper is authorized by the Holy Scriptures.

Unfortunately, those of us who oppose the "second serving" are often misrepresented by the brethren who practice it. Therefore, before I explain my position on the issue, let me first state what my position does not require:

1. It does not require that the Lord's supper be served before the sun goes down on Sunday. In fact, my position allows it to be served anytime between mid night Saturday and midnight Sunday, i.e., anytime on "the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7).

2. It does not require that every member of the local church be present before the Lord's supper can be served in an assembly for worship on Sunday. However, it does require that every member (who is present in an assembly when the Lord's supper is served) be assembled for the purpose of "breaking bread", i.e., partaking of the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:33).

3. It does not require that the "second serving" of the Lord's supper be withheld from those who must partake of it to avoid violating their conscience. But, my conscience will not permit me to serve it to them in the second assembly (Rom. 14:23).

4. It does not restrict the number of assemblies, i.e., forbid more than one assembly on the Lord's day. The authority for more than one assembly on Sunday is established by other passages (Acts 2:46; 5:42).

5. It does not require that the "second serving" be discontinued because some brethren miss the 1st assembly for no valid reason knowing that they can partake of the Lord's supper in the 2nd assembly. That particular abuse is not the real issue; rather, the issue to be resolved is whether there is divine authority for the "second serving" (Col. 3:17).

Here are two arguments that support my conclusion that only one serving of the Lord's supper on Sunday is authorized by the Word of God. Please study them carefully:

1. ARGUMENT ON ACTS 20:7—

- a. Paul preached only one sermon ("speech"-singular) in Troas "on the first day of the week".
- b. He preached that sermon "when the disciples came together to break bread", i.e., when they assembled to partake of the Lord's supper.
- c. Therefore, the disciples in Troas assembled

only one time to partake of the Lord's supper. 2. ARGUMENT ON THE EXCLUSIVE EXAMPLE IN ACTS 20:7—

- a. Acts 20:7 records only one serving of the Lord's supper on the Lord's day.
- b. This is the only passage that establishes the frequency for partaking of the Lord's supper.
- c. Therefore, only one serving of the Lord's supper on Sunday is authorized by this passage.

Along with these arguments, please consider the following questions which have a direct bearing on this issue. It is my hope that those on both sides of this matter will diligently search the Scriptures to find the answers to these questions:

1. If more than one serving of the Lord's supper on Sunday is taught in the Bible, why were the Corinthian brethren commanded to "tarry one for another" (wait for each other) when they assembled to eat the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:33)?

2. In what way is the divine authority for the "second serving" established: direct statement or command? approved example? or unavoidable conclusion?

3. Why do some of those who practice the "second serving" appeal to the Old Covenant (Num. 9:6-13; etc.)—which has been done away in Christ (2 Cor. 3:7-14; Col. 2:13-17; etc.)—for their authority rather than to the New Covenant?

4. What passage authorizes one saint (or a few saints to partake of the Lord's supper in an assembly where other saints are present but are not partaking with him (or them)?

5. Does the phrase "the disciples came together to break bread" mean that only some of those assembled came to partake of the Lord's supper, or does it mean that all who "came together" did so for that purpose (Acts 20:7)?

6. If the brethren are obligated to serve the Lord's supper in a 2nd assembly for those who missed the 1st assembly on Sunday, why aren't they also obligated to serve it in a 3rd assembly for those missing the other assemblies who are still able to partake late on the first day of the week? How about a 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, etc., assembly for those unable to partake in the earlier ones? What passage authorizes two servings but not more than two servings?

7. If the brethren are authorized to serve the Lord's supper more than once on Sunday, why isn't each Christian also authorized to partake of it more than once on Sunday?

My position on this matter requires me to refrain from partaking of the "second serving" under all circumstances. Also, I cannot serve it to those who wish to partake of it in the 2nd assembly, lest I be guilty of helping them to do what I consider to be wrong (2 Jn. 9-11). However, I do not forbid others to serve it to them if they so desire.

I am not attempting to force my position on this issue on the brethren who disagree with my conclusions. In like manner, I do not wish to have them force their views on me. Let all of us follow the principle found in Romans 14:5—"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind"!

THE
"NO-SECOND-SUPPER"
DOCTRINE EXAMINED

J. Edward Nowlin
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Perry, FL 32347



LOOKING AT "ANOTHER LOOK AT
THE LORD'S SUPPER"

It is obvious that what we shall say has to do with an article by Brother David Powlas which is included in this issue of SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES. In the outset, please know that this writer has no enmity toward Brother Powlas, but counts him as a friend. In fact, we, here at Perry, helped support him from March-December, 1977, in preaching the gospel. He is a good, sincere Christian; but we believe he is wrong on this matter and wish only to help him to see his error, while at the same time hopefully helping others. We certainly have no desire to misrepresent him in order to make his position look worse. It is bad enough as it is when stripped of all the five points which he says his position does not require. In eliminating these five points he makes our task easier in replying.

We take our stand on this axiomatic statement: **ANY INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE WHICH ALLOWS A CHRISTIAN TO IGNORE AND DISOBEY A COMMAND OF THE LORD WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE, IS ERRONEOUS!** If Brother Powlas is unable to attend the morning worship, and is able to attend the night service, he will ignore that opportunity to commune with the Lord. In so doing, he puts himself in blatant disobedience to the Lord's own command, "This do in remembrance of me" (Lk. 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24), since he admits in his number one thing not required by his position that "... **it may be served anytime between midnight Saturday and midnight Sunday, i.e., anytime on 'the first day of the week' (Acts 20:7).**" Hence, the above axiom being true, David's interpretation of Acts 20:7 is erroneous because he says in plain English in his point number 3, "But, my conscience will not permit me to serve it to them in the second assembly (Rom. 14:23)." Also, in the next to last paragraph of his article he says, "**My position on this matter requires me to refrain from partaking of the 'second serving' under all circumstances.**" Hence, my brother's position on this matter forces him into contemplated direct disobedience, with a clear conscience, to our Lord's command. His interpretation of Acts 20:7 is erroneous!

We are glad to see that Brother Powlas did not in his article claim, as some who hold his position do, that he would be "excused" for the entire week if he could not attend the morning service. The scripture nowhere says so. Neither did he seek refuge in some imaginary

"providential hindrance," of which there is no such thing. God does not oppose God. (See my article in March, STS)

Now, to Brother Powlas' two arguments on Acts 20:7. He uses an old fashioned syllogism in his first argument to prove that the disciples assembled only **one time** to partake of The Lord's Supper. **This is all any disciples do today**, except in one place we heard of, brethren require all present at both services to partake. Only those who assemble for that purpose, do so. It is a first opportunity for all who assemble for that purpose. Hence, there is no such thing as a "second serving!" It is a straw man, easily demolished.

His second argument is another syllogism intended to prove the exclusiveness of the Acts 20:7 example. It is, in reality, proving the same point as his first syllogism, but calling it by another name, "only one serving" instead of "assembled only one time to partake." We object to the word, "serving," when applied to the Lord's Supper. It is the language of Ashdod, invented by these brethren to use in fighting a straw man. They know that we do not contend for a second partaking by anyone; yet, he speaks of being misrepresented. "Serving" is a confusion of terms implying a servant apart from a partaker, but since all assembled to partake are partakers, there is no servant. Some of these brethren try to make the church the servant, but the church is the sum of all the partakers. This makes the servant serve itself!

But syllogisms are tricky things and can be used to prove almost anything. A classic example is: (1) No cat has 8 tails. (2) One cat has one tail. (3) Therefore, since no cat plus one cat equals one cat, and 8 tails plus one tail equal 9 tails, one cat has 9 tails! Now, try this one for size:

ARGUMENT ON ACTS 20:7—

- a. Paul preached only one sermon ("speech"- singular) in Troas "on the first day of the week."
- b. He preached that sermon "when the disciples came together to break bread," i.e., when they assembled to partake of the Lord's Supper.
- c. Therefore, the only time a sermon can be preached on the first day of the week is when the disciples come together to break bread!

Who will buy this conclusion? Who needs a syllogism to prove that the disciples came together to break bread? Acts 20:7 says so; but the syllogisms are needed to get the words "all" and "only" in the text. This is sophistry, and illustrates the extremes to which brethren will go in an attempt to support an erroneous position.

Now, to Brother Powlas' questions as numbered by him:

1. We have already registered objection to the term "serving," but to answer his question, only one serving to each disciple is taught, and those in authority in the congregation have an obligation to provide the opportunity for every member. At Corinth, they were commanded to "tarry for one another" because he was rebuking them for turning the Lord's Supper into a common meal and eating like animals in a disorderly

manner.

2. There is no such thing as a "second serving" taught in the Bible. When absentees from the morning service assemble to partake at the evening service, it is the "first serving" for them. It is authorized by direct command (Lk. 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24).

3. The Passover was a type of the Lord's Supper. We simply provide for the absentees from the morning service, just as Moses provided for absentees from the 14 Nisan Passover. Why do these brethren appeal to O.T. examples of obedience in Abraham, Noah and others, to examples of disobedience in Adam, Cain and Israel, to the gopher wood in the ark in opposing instruments in worship, to the "strange fire" on the altar in opposing instruments in the worship and substitution of water for wine on the Lord's Table, and then balk at the example of Moses in Num. 9:6-13? When Brother Powlas answers this question, he will have answered his own number 3 question. We do not go to the O.T. for authority to do anything; we go there for example of methodology in doing what we are commanded to do in the N.T., just as Jesus did when he appealed to David's example (Mt. 12:3; Mk. 2:25; Lk. 6:3), and as Paul when he appealed to Israel's example (1 Cor. 10:1-11).

4. Communing with the Lord in the bread and cup is an individual duty for citizens in the kingdom (Lk. 22:15-19), regardless of the presence or absence of others.

5. Acts 20:7 says "the disciples came together" meaning the disciples who came together; no more, no fewer. To read "all" into it is to pervert the passage. The expression, "to break bread" is an incidental descriptive phrase used by Luke to record the events of the occasion, equivalent to "went to worship" or as some say, "went to church." Brethren err when they use it in an exclusive sense, for it is obvious from the context that in addition to breaking bread, they heard Paul preach and prayed in giving thanks for the bread and cup. Paul taught the Corinthians and Galatians to give on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1, 2), and since this act of worship is confined to the first day of the week the same as the Lord's Supper, who is to say that the Troas disciples did not contribute also? If so, singing would be the only one of the five acts of worship left off, if they did not also do that. Why exalt partaking of the Supper above the other four acts of worship?

6. Acts 20:7 does not limit the number of assemblies. No passage authorizes "servings."

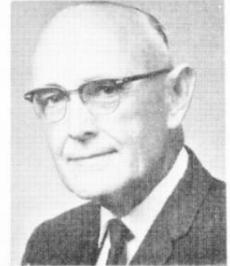
7. The "brethren" are not **authorized** to "**serve**" the Lord's Supper. "Brethren" has been studiously used by Brother Powlas instead of "church," with obviously the same meaning. It is not the **brethren's Table**; it is the Lord's Table. The scripture is silent as to partaking more than once on Sunday, and every argument in favor of such can be with equal force applied to giving. Those who do it should double their contributions!

In conclusion, we have no desire to force Brother Powlas to do anything. We would like to persuade him

to abandon an interpretation of Acts 20:7 which forces him to disobey Lk. 22:19 with a clear conscience. With Adam Clarke, we observe "how unbecoming this sacred ordinance to be the subject of dispute, party spirit, and division! Those who make it such must answer for it to God." (Commentary on First Corinthians, Vol. 6, 1843)

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

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"Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence" (Matt. 19:13-15). On one occasion the disciples came to Jesus with the question about who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. "And Jesus called a little child to him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:1-10).

It would be good if more faithful workers in the Lord's vineyard would remember that little children can be taught and encouraged to some day be faithful workers in the vineyard of the Lord. In fact, adults must have the teachable nature of the child to be reached with the gospel. It is a very serious thing to cause a child to be influenced to go astray as he matures. It is also very serious to cause a man with a child-like humility to be led into religious error or ungodliness. It would be good for us all to read the first ten verses of Matthew eighteen again and again.

Some fortunate little children have parents who are Christians. These concerned parents see that the little ones attend worship regularly. There are teachers to teach them the wonderful words of life. Why are so many of these children of church members lost when they become adults? Something goes wrong, and whatever it is is a serious error. Let us do a little searching for the rock of stumbling because we all want to know. We love our children, or do we?

Some parents may fail to teach at home, expecting teachers at the meeting house to take that responsibility. There is no way to take the duty from parents (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21; 1 Tim. 5:14). Parents have the children more. They must not get "too busy" to talk to their children about Jesus, the apostles and prophets, and all other Bible characters. Principles of righteousness and the facts of the Bible stories should

be impressed on each child's mind (2 Tim. 3:15). It is amazing what children can learn if they have a good teacher. It is very important that the teaching be done in those early tender years.

When should Bible stories be told? They can learn Bible stories as early as nursery rhymes can be learned. If not, why not? They can learn the stories and many bible verses before they are mature enough to grasp all the meaning that is there for them. They learn early to believe and love the stories, and the meaning and application to their lives will come when the need arises. Train up a child in the way he should go (Prov. 22:6). Let preachers, class teachers, and especially parents work to fill the young minds with truth.

If children have had stories read to them from pleasant little children's books they may object to your getting a Bible story book. They want you to read from one of their little books that they have heard so often. The Bible story book will become just as precious to the child if it is read from regularly. You are capable of turning your child's mind to such a book, are you not? Maybe you wish now that the happy reading period had first been from the Bible story book. Remember that you can tell Bible stories as well as read them. You may still read their other little books. Much reading to a preschool child helps him become a good pupil at school, and time thus spent gives the sense of awareness of your love. It gives the little one a wonderful sense of security. Talk to your child. Read to your child. Listen to his questions and comments. There is real joy for the parents in this, too.

Children grow up in a short time. They are soon old enough to go to school. What are you to do with them during worship? Many provide paper and pencils for them to take notes on the sermons. Please remember that this is a difficult assignment. Without parental guidance and oversight this will hinder their learning rather than help. I have seen some young people do an amazing job of grasping the thoughts and writing them. Mothers, you may not realize how foolish their writings may be as they entertain themselves rather than listen if you do not see their papers. Do you watch them as they look at one another's papers and laugh, missing the sermon and developing irreverence?

Some seem to think that sermons must be boring to children. Children listen to teachers at school, do they not? Imagine an adult class in which the pupils are given something to color while the teacher talks. Would the coloring hinder the learning process? I wish for the children's attention when I try to teach them. I have spent hundreds of hours in Bible drills with children. The children were encouraged to have nothing in their hands but to look at me and give me their undivided attention. If such a class keeps moving, the children can stay with you and learn much. It is my advice that children be taught to listen to sermons with open eyes and empty hands.

It would be a wonderful thing if children would sit in front of their parents if not with them. If children could form the habit of sitting near the front early in

life it could be pleasant on through their youth. In gospel meetings occasionally a church is found in which a fine group of young people sit at the front and listen. This is pleasant to see. When the adults, including their parents, are sitting behind them they are more likely to listen. Beware when the young sit at the very back. Remember that we all are to serve God with reverence and godly fear (Heb. 12:28). Young people can be good listeners.

THE COURAGE TO SAY "NO"

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Indianapolis, IN 46226

Indianapolis, Indiana, the city where I presently live and preach, has its share of drug problems. During the months of September, October, and November of 1981, an extensive campaign was waged to counteract drug abuse. An article appeared in the November 1981 issue of *Indianapolis Monthly* magazine, written by Sharon Pearcy. The following quote reveals the intent of the drug abuse campaign: "To curb abuse in the Indianapolis area, Marion County Prosecutor Steve Goldsmith and the Hook Drug Company joined forces on a 10-week public service campaign which began September 8 . . . Created by MZB, Inc., Advertising and Public Relations, the campaign message 'Drugs: It Takes Guts To Say No' has been aired on local television and radio stations, newspapers and bill boards. Estimated value of services and time given by the media is \$400,000."

Indeed drug abuse has reached astronomical proportions in our society—among young and old alike. Our youngsters have peer pressure exerted upon them on almost every front: at school, play, on the job, etc. It takes a lot of courage for them to say no! Perhaps here would be a good time to make a comment about the use of the slang word "guts," as is used in the slogan at the Indianapolis Campaign Against Drugs. It means *courage, stamina, endurance*. I shall not use it again but substitute it with one of the synonyms just mentioned. Gospel preachers, elders, deacons, teachers, Christians in general, need to be very careful in the use of the slang terminology that is so prevalent in our society today.

Not only does it take courage to say no to the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, etc., but a number of other things that Christians and their children are confronted with in this wicked society. We must learn to say no to a good number of things and teach our children to do likewise. The word *no* "expresses dissent, denial, or refusal." Observe with me just a few of the things we must say no to.

DRUGS

More needs to be said about this problem because of the danger involved with our children. As time goes by, younger and younger children are experimenting with all kinds of dangerous drugs. Sharon Percy stated in the aforementioned article: "Recent studies indicate that by the time Indiana high school students reach their senior year, 63 percent have experimented with illegal drugs. Many begin using drugs at or before the age of 11." It is interesting to note a word that Paul groups among *"the works of the flesh"* (Gal.5:19-21). That word is *"witchcraft"* (vs.20). It is derived from the Greek PHARMAKIA (English pharmacy). By definition it has the connotation of medicine or drugs used in conjunction with sorcery and the occult. With the increased use of drugs we have seen the rise in the occult and those who practice Satan-worship. By all means we must implore our children to stay away from such, saying no to drugs and the awful consequences they bring—both physical and spiritual. Paul said concerning the works of the flesh, *"that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God"* (Gal. 5:21).

TEMPTATION

It is an undeniable fact that we must learn to say no to temptation. James said, *"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed"* (Jas.1:14). We cannot blame God because He *"cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man"* (Jas.1:13). Temptation proceeds from none other than the Devil himself (Cf.Matt.4:3; I Thess.3:5). When our Lord was tempted by the Devil He said no on every occasion (Cf.Matt.4:1-11). We have the great example of Jesus in saying no to the temptations that arise in our lives. *"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"* (Heb.4:15). We also have the encouraging words from the pen of the apostle Paul. *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it"* (I Cor.10:13).

PLEASURES OF SIN

Paul revealed to Timothy several things that men would be doing in the last days, when perilous times would come. One of these was that some would be *"lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"* (Cf. II Tim.3:1-5ff). The majority of folks today are intent on fulfilling their sensual appetites and enjoying physical pleasures. "You Only Go Around Once In Life," is the modern rendition of the old Epicurean philosophy of "Eat, Drink, And Be Merry." Christians must learn to say no to the danger of participating in the pleasures of sin. We read in the New Testament a good example of someone who had the courage to say no to the pleasures of sin. *"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a*

season" (Heb. 11:24-25). Let us go and do likewise, having the courage and stamina to say no to the pleasures of sin.

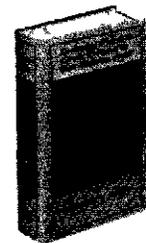
PARENTS TO THEIR CHILDREN

It is an awesome responsibility for fathers and mothers to rear their children in an acceptable manner, one that pleases the Almighty Father (Cf.Eph.6:1-4; Col.3:20-21; Titus 2:4-5). One thing that we as parents must learn to do is say no to our children when the situation warrants it. I see many parents who can not (or will not!) say no to their children regardless of what it is they want. This is a tragic mistake. Some parents let their children go *anywhere* and do *anything* they want. This is not good and such parents must learn to say no on certain occasions, if they are to *"bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* Do you have control of your children or do they have control of you? Do you have the courage to say no when you know something is not in their best interest? May God help us to wake up and say no more often.

ARE YOU SAYING NO?

It is a surety that Christians, those of us who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, must say no to many things in life. Are you doing so? Am I? Or, have we begun to give in and say *yes* to things that will surely bring about our spiritual demise? Let us not wave the white flag of surrender but have the courage to say no to the temptations the Devil hurls in our path. Let us instill in our children the courage and stamina to say no whenever they are tempted to do wrong. Let us strive to bring up a generation of young people who have the determination to resist the Devil. *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"* (Eph.6:11-11ff).

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Death is pictured in a variety of ways in the Bible. Often it is called a "sleep" which pictures the not so unpleasant aspect of death. But death is pictured in the scriptures as unpleasant and undesirable. Paul wrote, "The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law" (1 Cor. 15:56). There is an image captured in those words of a horrible beast that has a fatal sting. That sting, Paul called "sin". Sin is a poisonous stinger that kills. This is very similar to saying, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

Sin is the world's greatest fatality and at the same time it is the least feared danger men face. Men sin with impunity. Sinners continue their course of life, knowing the condemnation pronounced on them by God. Christians justify sin in their own lives and tolerate it in those they favor. But there is nothing worse than sin. Name all the illnesses and diseases common to mankind and nothing is as bad as sin. There are several ways it stings.

1. **There is the sting of physical death.** The sinner has no hope at death. He may hope that God will overlook the sins he or she has committed but there is absolutely no promise of such. Sadness and sorrow surround the death scene of a sinner. His loved ones and his friends, who pled for him to leave sin and get right with God, shed tears of sorrow, the bitter fruit of the sting of death. One who escapes the condemnation of sin by obedience to God eliminates the sting of physical death—for though they die physically, they live, their lives being hid "with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3).

2. **There is the sting of the fear of death.** There used to be an old song, "Everybody wants to go to Heaven, but nobody wants to Die!" How true that is. But all men will die. Death is the common and ultimate terminus of all humanity. There is a fear of dying that we all experience, at least at some time in our lives we do. Perhaps it is because it is an experience one has but once and none has the power to tell us what it is like. The fanciful stories of those who claim they were dead and were brought back to life have no more authority than human testimony of any kind. The word of God does not tell us. But it does tell us that we do not need to fear death. The Hebrew writer affirms that Christ destroyed the one who had the power of death, Satan, and delivered "all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime, subject to bondage" (Heb. 2:15). When one is right with the Lord, the fear of death is ob-

viated by the Lord Himself.

3. **There is the sting of a guilty conscience.** The sinner has a guilty conscience which results from sin. Paul affirmed that the whole world is guilty because of sin, saying that the world will "be brought under the judgment of God" (Rom. 3:19). The feelings of guilt in sinners eliminates any reply to God. No one can claim God is responsible for sin. Once an individual sins, the guilt of conscience begins to sting. This is God's arrangement for motivating the sinner to remove that sting. The conscience is cleared only by the blood of Christ and by obedience to Him. The Hebrew writer again said, "let us draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22). That washing of the body is the command to be baptized. Peter comments on this passage: "that aforesaid were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:20-21).

4. **There is the sting of spiritual death.** Sin stings with a poisonous effect on the soul, separating it from God, thus making life impossible. (See Isa. 52:1-2). This is the death of which Paul speak to the Ephesians. He said, "And you did he make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world" (Eph. 2:1-2). These are appropriately called "unburied dead," who are dead through the sins and trespasses they have committed. This death is not final. Men may receive life from God by obedience to the Lord's requirements. Paul spoke of those believers who turned from the weak and beggarly elements of the world as walking in a "new life." The act which turns man in to this new life is baptism (Rom. 6:3-4).

The sting of death is removed when sin is removed. The removal of sin from one's life is done by the Lord through the blood of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24-26). The conditions men must meet in order for the stinging poison of sin to be nullified include obedience to every command God gave. Starting with faith in Christ and culminating in baptism for remission of sins, one is free from sin. The stinger of death is removed and one lives anew. This is what Paul called "victory". "But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57).

Let each of us who read think long on the question of sin. Nothing is more final than death. Nothing is more sure than death and the judgment (Heb. 9:27). Nothing is sadder than one standing in God's divine presence filled with sin and iniquity. Remove the sting of death now.

Please Renew Promptly

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO "PSALMS, HYMNS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS"?

Ralph P. Atry
107 Belford Drive
Dickson, Tennessee 37055

It is not pleasant to recall the sixties when the "Hippie" element was rebelling against "the establishment." But there was coincidental with the youth rebellion, one against scriptural authority by the majority of our brethren in the church. True, the second rebellion had its guerilla tactics reaching back more than a score of years earlier. The spiritual rebellion came out with aggressive forces and joined battle with their opposition in the sixties. To me it is evidence there was another rebellion in the camp of "sound" brethren in the area of the caption of this article—a revolt against the hymn books published by "unsound" brethren resulting in the departing from scriptural guidelines of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. I shall cite a few examples from one hymn book.

PSALMS

A psalm is a "sacred song" used primarily in praise to, and to the glory of God. How does "I want a gold mansion that's silver lined" fit the definition and purpose of a hymn? The sentiment bespeaks the fulfillment of earthly cravings for material things that one has never enjoyed. Too many songs are light if not bordering on the flippant and do not meet the definition of psalms.

HYMNS

Hymns, too, are "songs of praise addressed to God". Songs focusing primarily on the self satisfaction and glorifying the singers miss the characteristics of hymns. Take notice of how many songs give more prominence to the singers than to God and Christ.

SPIRITUAL SONGS

"Spiritual songs are the songs of which the burden is that which is revealed by the Spirit". So the first demand of "spiritual songs" is that they must be totally scriptural. Too many songs are obviously unscriptural. "Saints Go Marching In" reminds us of the wickedness of the Mardi Gras and the athletic teams of New Orleans. I verily believe a few song leading brethren would lead "Yankee Doodle" if the publisher included it in its book. Too many songs have no scriptural lesson to "teach and admonish". Songs so fast and complicated the parts cannot keep up are fit only for quartets and other entertaining groups and are bereft of any spirituality.

Why Are So Many Unscriptural Songs Published?

Not even "poetic license" can make such songs meet the scriptural demands. Some attempts at editing unscriptural sentiments out of songs are often crude, and with a familiar song are disconcerting to one who knows the original wording. First, let us look at the

listed publishers and authors. In the hymnal I studied Stamps-Baxter Music Company are publishers and owners of seventy-nine of the songs. Since pre-television days these people have been public entertainers. Just have some hint of some scripture related thought for appeal to the public and they could care less whether their songs meet scripture guidelines. Consider their song, "Kneel At The Cross", verse 1, "Kneel at the cross and pray and 'begin life anew'" teaches salvation in answer to prayer. The fine print explanation under the title, "The Christian's prayer" just might be noticed by one in a hundred. "For my sin-sick soul Jesus heard and answered prayer, now I'm walking free as air", verses one and two. "Hand In Hand With Jesus", another Stamps Baxter production.

Using Other Publishers' Songs

Other song publishers noted in the book I examined are The Rhodeheaver Co., Nazarene Publishing Co., Church of God, E. L. Jorgenson, Standard Publishing Co., and other denominations and private publishing companies.

Other Unscriptural Teachings In Songs

"Why Do You Wait?", verse three, teaches feeling the Spirit. "Take My Hand And Lead Me", verse three, says, "Let me each day thy Spirit feel". Editing out the capital S does not change the message intended by the writer. "I am coming now to receive the anointing divine", a gift of the apostolic age, is found in verse four, "O To Be Like Thee". "It Won't Be Very Long" teaches (verses one and four), "It won't be very long till we all die, Jesus comes again, and the earth will be destroyed". This same message is sounded forth by pre-millennialists and denominational prophets. I do not have "Precious Memories" of angels visiting my soul (verse one). Little if any spirituality is found in such songs as this. "Just a Little Talk With Jesus", verse still says, "I was lost in sin and a little talk with Jesus made me whole". Jesus commanded to "preach the gospel to every creature" but the chorus of "On The Jericho Road" says, "There's room for just two, no more and no less". This is another example of antiscritptural sentiments. And no wonder when we consider the publishers.

Brethren, I do not write to be hypercritical. But I fear for the future of the Lord's church in respect to its vocal music in view of present day trends. The hymn book I reviewed has some wonderfully spiritual songs. But I decry what the unscriptural ragtime songs are doing for our worship now. And if such a trend continues I predict some one will ape the denominations in introducing "Hard Rock Gospel Songs" into worship by the saints to God. We cannot continue to borrow and adapt unscriptural songs from denominations and entertainment groups and have "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" in our worship to God.

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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FIELD REPORTS

DENNIS H. WILSON, Box 2740, Florida College, Temple Terrace, FL 33617. After quitting my secular job in Owensboro, KY last year, my family and I moved to Florida College so I could get some training in various Bible subjects. However, I financially cannot remain in College another year and must look to begin full-time work in preaching the gospel I am 24 years of age with a wife and two children. I have preached in the Tampa area at North Street and also in Florida at Lake Okeechobee and at Punta Gorda. For references please contact brethren: Dick Blackford, Owensboro, KY; Ken Green, Hunstville, AL; James Cope, Temple Terrace, FL; or Colly Caldwell, Temple Terrace, FL.

LYNN D. HEADRICK, 1503 Coffman Dr., Athens, AL 35611. Beginning July 1, 1982, I plan to leave secular work in order to devote full-time to preaching the gospel. Since August 1, 1969, I have served as Dean of Students at Calhoun State Community College. Concurrently, I have preached in the Athens-Decatur area. For the past ten years I have worked with the church on Jackson Dr. here in Athens. This faithful congregation is presently assisting fourteen preachers in various parts of the world. In addition to these preachers, the church will begin in July to support me so that all my time and energy may be used to teach and preach the word. For this I am thankful and pray for the wisdom to conduct myself as becometh a preacher of the gospel. I am also thankful for a faithful wife to encourage the work. Malcolm Andrews, Bennie Lovell, and Billy Lovell serve as overseers at Jackson Drive.

WENDELL M. POWELL, 2121 Edna Dr., Savannah, TN 38372. I desire to relocate with a sound work. I am 38 years old, married, and we have three children. I am in my eleventh year of full-time preaching. Contact me at the above address or call (901) 925-6006.

LESTER COMSTOCK, 1111 Hickory Lane, Cocoa, FL 32922. After completing five years with the church in Punta Gorda, FL, the decision was made to relocate. We left the congregation there in unity and good standing. We began our work on April 4, 1982 with the congregation that meets at 512 S. Plumosa St., in Merritt Island, FL. This is a sound congregation and the future looks bright. The work presents many challenges but there is harmony within the body and there is a willingness to get the work done. At present time attendance runs in the sixties. We have a fine meeting house that will seat upwards to 120. There is a classroom annex with rooms for all ages. With the help of God, our zeal and prayers, this congregation will grow. When in the area please worship with us.

DAVID PATTERSON, 9018 E. 74th Terr., Raytown, MO 64133. At this writing I am in need of \$400 per month support. We are a small church of about 35 just east of Kansas City. We are the only sound church in this city of 40,000. Due to the collapse of the auto industry, the church here is no longer able to continue my support at the present level. Although the work is small, much good has been done and we have high hopes for the future. Our goal is \$1500 per month total support. My wife and I live in a modest home in Raytown near the building. We have a daughter who is two years old and a baby on the way. I'll be glad to furnish references to anyone interested in the work. Please call (816) 353-3816.

KEITH CLAYTON, 55 East St., Bristol, VT 05443. After nearly two years of meeting in the living room of Jay and Marlene Vrooman (at 71 Mountain St., Bristol, VT), the Addison County church of Christ has moved to new, rented quarters. We now rent an upstairs room on Route 116, just east of Bristol Village, 4/10 of a mile from a landmark known as the Lord's Prayer Rock. Although we receive few visiting brethren, we felt that those who do come our

way ought to be made aware of the new location. We have signed a two year lease and expect to remain there until we outgrow the facility. Our worship and Bible study times are Sunday at 10 a.m. (worship), 11:15 a.m. (Bible study), 6 p.m. (worship), and Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

REPORT FROM ARGENTINA

FERNANDO VENEGAS, Casilla 122 C.C., 5500 Mendoza, Argentina, South America. We want to report that we had a good gospel meeting in February with Bro. Efrain Perez doing the preaching. As a result of this effort two persons were baptized. Then in March we had a weekend meeting with Wayne Partain from San Antonio, TX, We are happy to report that during this meeting three were baptized. Brother Partain presented good sermons that were of great spiritual benefit to all. I continue to have Bible studies in different homes.

A word about Argentina... Argentina is in a conflict at the present with Great Britain over the "Malvinas Islands." The nation is in suspense for the danger of war. Until now all is calm, and we pray that there will be peace. We have other problems that demand solutions such as unemployment and inflation. Please help us pray for our country and for our rulers.

PREACHERS NEEDED

SUCCASUNNA, NJ—The church which meets in Succasunna is seeking a preacher to work with them on a full-time basis. This is a small congregation with an average attendance of 30-35 and will be able to provide partial support. If interested you may contact the brethren here by writing to the church of Christ, P.O. Box 683, Stanhope, NJ 07874. Or you may call any of the following men: Clint Kingsley (201) 347-2046, Wally Ottersbach (201) 361-3357, or Mario Costa at (201) 398-7187.

MEMPHIS, TN—The congregation that meets at 3090 North Trezevant St. would like to have a full-time preacher. We are self-supporting with an average attendance of about 45. We prefer an experienced man who can organize personal work and devote a great deal of time to it. If interested please contact the congregation at the above address or call Richard Jackson at (901) 372-6187.

A NEW CONGREGATION

BILL DODD, Rt. 5, Box 142-A, Oxford, MS 38655. A new congregation was started late last summer at Glen Allen, AL, five miles east of Winfield. The attendance is running in the twenties. Their contribution is very good for a small group. Brother Carlos Barnes has resigned as an elder at Pleasant Grove in Birmingham, AL, and is now working full-time with the new group. He is doing a very good work. Glen Allen is my home territory, and I know of the tremendous need for a sound work there. Gus Nichols and V.P. Black helped to lead most of the area into apostasy.

When you renew, why not subscribe for a friend? All new subscriptions are \$7.

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