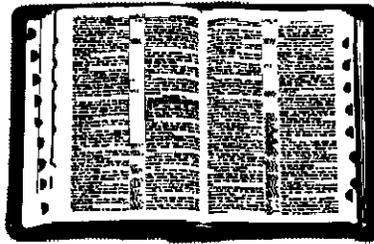


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

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CROSSROADS: ORGANIZATION OF HUMAN POWER

Every successful operation must be organized to produce exactly what the organizer desires. There is a close relationship between the creator, the organization and the work done. A major difference between religious systems is the difference between their organizations. These organizations differ because the nature and scope of their works differ. And the nature and scope of the works differ because the philosophy and goals of the founders of these religious bodies differ. I suppose, therefore, we should expect to find unscriptural organizations in churches where the doctrine has been corrupted to suit the fancies of religious zealots whose appetites for greater emotional thrills are never quenched.

Any church that undertakes a work for which it finds no New Testament authority will find it necessary to employ some additional organizational arrangement by which to do that work. Additional or perverted organizations signify corrupt doctrines; and, of course, doctrines of men mean practices that lead away from God rather than glorify Him.

Those who have been in the Crossroads church of Christ have made the charge both orally and in print that the real power in the organization of Crossroads is in the preacher, Charles "Chuck" Lucas, and his assistants, both locally and across the nation. It is further charged that the elders at Crossroads are puppets to expedite the programs of Lucas. Of course, Chuck

Lucas and the elders, Rogers Bartley and Richard Whitehead all vehemently deny this. About the only way we can be certain of anything of this matter is to read what Crossroads has been saying and doing for the past twelve to fifteen years and see who receives the credit for the good they claim to have done, and who is blamed for the evils committed. When we read the reports and records of both friend and foe, whoever is in power will receive the most praise or blame. He will be the chairman of the board, the chief of the system, the founder of this "strange" evangelistic system!

Thirty-five years ago churches of Christ across this nation began to create benevolent organizations, such as orphan homes, homes for the aged and other institutions through which to do benevolent work of all kinds. The fact that the Lord did not make provisions in the organization of the church to do such benevolence should be proof enough that it was not authorized in the word of God. But such evidence is not proof of anything to those bent on doing their own will. They require a "Thou shall not" before they restrain themselves from doing whatever they want to do. They argue that Bible authority allows them to do anything that is not specifically forbidden in the word of God. It does not register with many that God AUTHORIZES what He wants us to do; His silence does not authorize anyone to do anything.

I am not using the word "organization" in this article in the ordinary sense. We usually think of the term as signifying the process of arranging of the parts in order for function. It is the act of getting the body ready for action: putting the members in proper relation to each other. As it relates to the church, there will only be bishops, deacons and saints (Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). There is absolutely no organic tie of any kind that binds members of one congregation to members of another. Preachers have no more authority to direct a local work than any other member.

In this study I use the word "organization" to mean the work being done and the system of operation. What are in the unscriptural organizations at Crossroads? What is involved?

The Fascination and Disgust of the Crossroads Operation

Crossroads church of Christ is doing most of the things that other liberal institutional churches are doing. In addition it has launched into new areas of endeavor not before undertaken by churches of Christ.

This is not just another case of institutional digression; it is a well planned and zealously executed scheme to attract and excite college students and sensitive people who are emotionally disturbed by world affairs today. They are motivated by some promises and threats that drive them deep into the system.

One of the deceptive features of Crossroads church is that it appears to many not to be "liberal" or "institutional." Yater Tant seems blinded to everything at Crossroads but the number of baptisms per year and the "WORK! WORK!" of each member in their various Bible classes. His editorials in Vanguard glow with reports of the great work Crossroads is doing, and what an example she is for others of us, both the "institutional" and the "anti" churches.

Now if the number of baptisms is what we are after, why not mimic the Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses? I wish brother Tant would tell me if he would applaud the Vine Street Christian Church in Nashville, Tennessee (we both know this church) if they baptized 300 souls per year, and would he encourage all of us to imitate their pattern of evangelism to attain such results? Do you believe the members of the Christian Church will be saved if they stay in that denomination? I do not! They are not doing the will of the Father (Matt. 7:21-23). Do you believe those who are baptized there and continue with the Christian Church are any better than those who have never obeyed the gospel? (2 Peter 2:20-22).

I will assume that brother Yater Tant would not take the position that those who stay in the Christian Church will be saved. There is no difference in principle between the digression of the Christian Church and the Crossroads church of Christ. Both have abandoned the authority of Christ regulating the nature and work of the church. Both have proceeded to promote their own wills. I could not pray for the success of Crossroads anymore than I could pray for the success of Vine Street Christian Church in Nashville, Tennessee. The whole issue is the authority of Jesus Christ.

Now seriously, brother Tant believes that Crossroads church is wrong about some things. He has said so in some of his editorials in Vanguard. I wonder, however, if he thinks these sins are significant enough to cause the loss of souls? I believe all sins separate us from God; That is the nature of sin (Isa. 59:1,1; Rom. 3:23; 5:12; James 1:14, 15). If brother Tant believes Crossroads is in sin with their works, school, orphan care and recreation centers, missionary programs, school of ministry, campus ministry and religious days observance, etc., how can he encourage them in baptizing all those who will go right into the system and become worse than they were before? How can he encourage all "faithful" churches and brethren to imitate what Crossroads is doing?

(Continued on Page 4)

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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WHO IS GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM?

The "me first" concept is not new. Throughout the history of man the pursuit of preeminence has surfaced repeatedly. It festered among the apostles. They disputed as they walked by the way as to who should be greatest (Mk. 9:33-37). Even the mother of James and John requested that her sons should sit, one on the right hand, and the other on the left in the kingdom (Mt. 20:20-22). She did not want much!

On one occasion they came right out and asked "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus set a child in the midst of them "And said, Verily I say unto, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 18:1-6). The concept of a spiritual kingdom seemed hard to grasp. Their minds ran to the external trappings of power structures such as developed in the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon. The Roman Empire had its chain of authority with certain posts being regarded as greater than others.

The humility of a little child, innocent as to power and privilege, served as the appropriate rebuke to such ambition. The child was dependent on his parents for sustenance and protection. He was open, trusting and forgiving. Unless they could develop the spirit of humility manifested by the little child they could not even enter the kingdom, much less hope to be an "official" in it.

Greatness Measured By Service

"But Jesus called them unto him and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Mt. 20:25-27). Nothing more vividly impressed this lesson upon their hearts than the time when he girded himself with a towel and got down and washed their feet. Then he said "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you (Jno. 13:15). Jesus did not ask of them what he was unwilling to do.

The **apostles** had a ministry to perform. Paul said that Christ "hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18). They delivered the "word of reconcili-

ation" and in so doing fulfilled their role as "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor. 5:19-20).

Elders in the church have a ministry, a service or work. Paul told the Thessalonians "to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (1 Thes. 5:13). To Timothy he said "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (1 Tim. 3:1). And what a work it is! They watch for souls, guard the flock, stop the mouth of the gainsayer, and tend the flock of God as they that shall give account unto the chief Shepherd.

Deacons in congregations have a ministry to perform. The word "deacon" itself denotes a minister, a servant. These attend to special responsibilities on behalf of the church and in such way as to be identified before saint and sinner as servants of the church. They are to "use the office well" (1 Tim. 3:13).

Preachers of the gospel have a ministry as well. "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ..." (1 Tim. 4:6). Timothy was told to "do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:5).

All Christians have a ministry. We do not all have the same office (function) though we are all members one of another. Peter said "if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 4:11). In the verse before that Peter said "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." Paul said there must be an "effectual working in the measure of every part" to make increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Eph. 4:16). The ministry of every part is of vital importance to the health and growth of the whole body.

Plenty of Work For All

In light of the foregoing passages, not to mention many others which want of space prohibits, it should be evident that there is enough service to keep us all busy for a lifetime. It is a common fallacy that all spiritual work must be assigned in a congregational structure. Certainly there are areas where we pool our time, talent and money to function as a unit. Yet, the success of that depends on personal response to opportunity. But brother, don't wait for the elders to give you a class to teach, or honor you by having you to fill the pulpit. Find someone to teach and teach him. Occasions arise almost daily for all of us to "wait on our ministry." In painting the judgment scene, Jesus said he will say to those on the left hand "Depart" for they had not ministered unto him (Mt. 25:41-46). In feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, providing for the stranger, clothing the naked, attending to the sick, visiting those in prison, we are attending to our ministry. Do we have to call a business meeting of the congregation or wait for elders to call upon us before we can attend to these things? Are they not the daily opportunities of life?

The fulfillment of such ministry must be done because it is right and not to gain attention and qualify for awards. That was the gist of the Lord's rebuke of those who pray standing in the street or give alms to be seen

of men (Mt. 6:1-6). To serve in order to gain attention and recognition and make curtain calls before an applauding world is to pervert our ministry. God sees, knows and cares. He not only recognizes our action; he sees the motivation behind it.

No Matter Who Gets the Credit

Someone once said it is amazing how much good can be done when we don't care who gets the credit. Rivalry promoted by jealousy is an ugly thing. That is the meaning of "emulations", listed by Paul as a work of the flesh in Gal. 5:19-21. Has another brother accomplished something we either could not or did not? Then let us all rejoice in it. We need to stop looking at certain kinds of service as higher rungs on the ladder of success while other service is more menial and therefore less desirable. David expressed what should the sentiment of every child of God now when he said "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Psa. 84:10). Can you preach? Then attend to your ministry. Can you serve as an elder? Wait on your ministry. Are you a deacon? Then serve with diligence. Have you a box of ointment? Then break it and perfume your area. Can you sew garments for the poor? Then be a Dorcas. Can you speak words of encouragement? Then be a Barnabas. Can you tell someone you have found the truth? Then be a Phillip and find your Nathanael. Can you write teaching articles in a journal, the newspaper, a bulletin or a book? Then do it. Can you defend the truth in debate? Then do that. Can you open the door at the place of worship and greet all who enter with a cheerful countenance? Then remember what David said. It is a far greater rank to be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell among the wicked.

Let us all find our place of service and perform it. Let us forget about becoming generals, presidents, board directors and supervisors. The Lord sent out to hire "laborers" in his vineyard. Who is greatest in the kingdom? Greatness will be determined by Him who sits on the throne. But it will be measured by service. "To the work, to the work, there is labor for all."

(Continued from Page 1)

But if he does not believe that Crossroads church is involved in anything that jeopardizes the souls of men in Hell, why does he not fully endorse Crossroads and urge that we all unite on their terms and be brethren? Just forget our differences and accept each other as we are. I think I have heard that record somewhere before. I conclude that in the light of all evidence we have, brother Yater Tant is so enamored with the Crossroads system that he is willing to compromise all else. I do not know any other conclusion to which we can come in the face of all the evidence from both Crossroads and brother Tant's pen.

If that conclusion is right, I can understand why he twice addressed the Crossroads assembly when both

Chuck Lucas and the elders were present and he did not withstand them to the face (Gal. 2:11,14). If he believes they are walking uprightly according to the truth, he, of course, would not oppose them.

Ira Y. Rice, Jr. has appointed himself the chief umpire, head referee, field judge and commissioner of brotherhood activities. All churches and brethren who do not accept him as such are not worthy of the term "faithful" in the Lord. He says as much in his paper.

He is a professional, experienced man on "anti-ism" from its beginning, he claims. Ira Y. Rice, Jr. has a dream! He dreams that he is the shining knight in armour who is in charge of all forces against "ANTI-ORPHAN CARE," "ANTI-MISSIONARY WORK" and "ANTI-CO-OPERATION" of churches. Since he will not listen to anything spoken or written on the subject except that which agrees with his views, let him sleep and dream. He does not know that there is NO "anti orphan care" for him to fight. The issue was and is NO CHURCH SUPPORT of ORPHAN HOMES for this care. There is NO "anti missionary work" problem, but the issue was and is CHURCHES CONTRIBUTING TO CHURCHES AND SOCIETIES TO DO EVANGELISM. There is NO "anti cooperation of churches" issue to battle, but the issue was and is NO CENTRALIZED CO-OPERATION IN WHICH SEVERAL CHURCHES DO THEIR WORK THROUGH ONE.

If Ira Rice does not understand that "anti" refers to the human institutions through which they try to involve the church, and not the work for which the church is responsible, he is still sleeping and dreaming. When he awakes he will find that by every definition of the word he is about the strongest "ANTI" one could find. He is strongly opposed to the "Liberals" among churches of Christ. I believe he is right about them, but inconsistent with his own practice. He is very much against Chuck Lucas and the Crossroads philosophy! His paper tells that over a long period of time. I agree with many of his conclusions, but again I have a problem with his practice. Ira Y. Rice, Jr. is definitely ANTI! He is ANTI ANTI! That is a fact! He does not, however, define what he means by "anti" most of the time, and when he uses the word it results in a false charge.

Crossroads church is an organization developed from human power to promote the philosophy of the Crossroads system. *(To Be Continued)*

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PARENTAL DUTIES AND NEEDS

There are two areas of parental duties — the physical and the moral-spiritual.

Food, clothing, shelter and medical care are generally thought of as essentials of physical life. That the parents are to provide for the physical needs of their children is unmistakably clear from two New Testament passages written by the apostle Paul. In 2 Corinthians 12:14 he says that "the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." In I Timothy 5 he declares, "If any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever," That a husband who is a father able to do so has a responsibility to care for his children and his wife is implied in James 1:27 where exhortation is made to the Christian "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." There would be no need for such exhortation were the breadwinner alive and meeting these moral obligations. In the I Tim. 5:8 text obviously "the faith" demands its adherents care for their own families. Further, it is clear that even a self-respecting infidel recognizes that general society owes him nothing as concerns providing for his own.

Moral and spiritual functions are bound upon every Christian and some of these obligations relate particularly to a Christian toward his own children. Apostle Paul makes this point unmistakably clear when he declares, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4) and "Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged" (Col. 3:21). Hebrews 12:9-11 reflects the good which comes to the child whose father did not withhold chastening: "We had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed good to them. . . All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness."

Parental Needs are Two-fold

There are two general areas of parental needs — knowledge and wisdom.

Parental knowledge looks three ways: (1) toward God's will for the parents because they are parents, (2)

toward the parents' responsibility to understand each child's physical and mental abilities and emotional temperament and (3) toward each child's moral strength and weaknesses.

The second area of parental need is wisdom to deal with the various stages of the physical, mental, social and spiritual development of the child. Wisdom is a necessity for the parent who would have the child to be physically healthy and grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 22:6 admonishes parents to "train up a child in the way he should go" and promises that "when he is old, he will not depart from it." We need to be careful lest we jump to an unwarranted conclusion regarding the promise of this passage being peculiarly spiritual in its implication, i.e., that proper childhood training guarantees the eternal security of the child's soul. If one is not careful he may thoughtlessly be affirming that a child of God cannot sin so as to be lost in hell. I do not subscribe to this popular Calvinistic meaning which I have heard brethren place on this text. One needs to remember that while **Proverbs** is an inspired book of wise sayings that many of its expressions are not exclusively related to spiritual matters but often deal with principles which will aid one in the pursuit of everyday secular life activities apart from any religious implication. In my judgment Proverbs 22:6 is such a text and conveys the thought of training a child "according to his way," (Hebrew text), i.e., according to the natural gift or aptitude God has placed within him, if I correctly understand the literal meaning of the Hebrew text. Delitzsch, according to the "Critical Notes" of the **Preacher's Homiletic Commentary** on Proverbs, Vol. 13, p. 633, renders the passage "give to a child instruction according to his way, i.e., conformably to the nature of youth." To illustrate, I understand the divinely inspired writer to be saying that if a child has a natural aptitude or bent for music that this inborn trait should be exploited by the parent. If one has a natural aptitude to work effectively with his hands his training should capitalize on this quality. It will set him in a favorable position all his life. My mother often said, "Don't try to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." I think her proverb applies in the interpretation and application of Proverbs 22:6.

Parents cannot be overly knowledgeable about their children's nature or their acquirements. Their physical strengths and weakness, mental abilities, peculiarities, emotional reactions and general stability or lack thereof, will manifest themselves early in life. Parents, of all people, should be the first to discover and, therefore, have knowledge of their children's innate qualities and potentials.

Another important realm of parental knowledge is the environment in which their children live and move inside and outside the regular domicile. Though the child may not realize the impact of its environment any thinker knows that every person and every condition is playing a part in the molding of the child's understanding, attitudes and actions. It behooves concerned

parents, therefore, to be alert to every person and situation to which the child is or will be exposed because physically, mentally, emotionally and morally the child will be affected. Well did Tennyson say, "I am a part of all that I have met."

Think about some of those influences which affect for weal or woe. At home are to be found parents, siblings, possibly grandparents, other kinsmen and playmates. Constantly TV and/or radio blare forth their mental menus to eye and ear. Newspapers and magazines contribute their part. Outside the child's home are the parents of his playmates when he may be visiting and listening to their profane speech and observing their alcoholic consumption. Whatever happens in or about the school-house is a major impression factor. Parents should never forget that five days each week for 36 weeks each year the child spends more awake time in the presence of school teachers and other influences than he spends with either father or mother. It is here that peer pressure probably exerts its greatest power in terms of personal loyalties, thought development, speech, moral concepts, dress habits and sports. Unfortunately the impossibility of close supervision by school administrators and faculty helps the negative influences. If the child attends church services (he probably follows the parents' practice) he may well learn most of what he will ever know about the Bible and religious duty. If his parents are negative and critical of elders, teachers, preachers and what usually happens in the church services the child will grow up with the same attitude. The family influence for righteousness in a sea of secularism and immorality must indeed be a strong one if the child is to be spiritually able to cope with the environment in which he daily lives.

More is needed by successful parenthood than mere knowledge of the child itself and of its environment. Proper parental guidance calls for wisdom to implement parental knowledge. Everybody knows that none becomes wise simply by the accumulation of knowledge. Wisdom is the art of reaching a righteous means. A great Greek scholar defined wisdom as "that endowment of heart and mind which is needed for the right conduct of life." Every parent should heed the exhortation: "If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not" (Jas. 1:5). Parents should analyze carefully the treatise of James 3:13-17 on earthly and heavenly wisdom and study diligently all that the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes say on this subject.

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NEHEMIAH. LET US RISE UP AND BUILD The Place of Growth In Spiritual Revival Part 5—Reaching The Lost

In the 11th chapter of the book of Nehemiah, we have been studying the problem of re-populating the city of Jerusalem. We have said that it is much like the problem we face today of re-populating spiritual Zion which is the Lord's church. We are living in a day of declining baptisms, declining attendance, and declining interest. If we are going to be successful in a future generation, we, too, need to re-populate Jerusalem. We have said that there were four basic principles that we need to adhere to if we are going to re-populate Jerusalem. Number 1 is that we must know God; Number 2 is that we must become a people of joy; Number 3 is that we must become a people of love. We subdivided becoming a people of love into Part I, Loving One Another and Part II, Accepting One Another. Now we come to the fourth principle of re-population for the city of Zion. That is reaching out in evangelism to touch other people. It is so difficult to know how to do personal work today. That's why many are failing to re-populate Jerusalem.

Most means of personal evangelism today involve a person going and reaching for a person X whom he has never met, whom he does not know, and with whom he has very little, if any, influence or prior contact. Such means of evangelism reaches very few individuals and they do not bring the results that we would like for them to bring. If they did, we would not face the problem that we face in Jerusalem today. Let us share together some statistics of church growth that we find that should be very informative. We find that in a questionnaire given to basically fundamental religious people the question was asked, "How did you come to Jesus Christ?" These are the answers that were given. 4-6% just walked into a church building. 4-7% came as a result of the preacher or the minister. 2-4% came because they heard and liked a particular church program of activity. 1-2% came because of visitation. 3-6% came because of Bible school activity. .001% came because of television or evangelistic meetings or crusades. This represents a VERY SMALL MINORITY of people. The bottom line of this survey was that between 70-90% of the people that filled the different churches today came because of a FRIEND OR RELATIVE whom they knew, whom they trusted, and WHOM THEY RESPECTED SHARED THEIR FAITH WITH THEM. You see,

most of the means that we are using today are methods that seek to put in contact an unknown person and we wonder why we do not have any impact or any influence in the life of the person without the gospel. God's plan for salvation certainly involves preaching the gospel to people that we do not know personally. There are many examples of this in the New Testament. But yet there is also another concept of evangelism in the New Testament that we have almost altogether or completely ignored. That is the concept of a friend reaching another friend. If you will, **THE ANDREW PRINCIPLE**. When Andrew found the Lord, he reached for his brother, Peter, and brought him to Jesus Christ. As we begin to look at the method of reaching people today, we want to talk about the most effective plan and that is the plan that puts an individual in contact with someone whom he already knows and already respects.

God's plan for evangelism today is a plan of beauty. What God does is that He desires to build into us the beauty of His own character. That's why we studied these three prior concepts before we studied the concept of personal evangelism. We, ourselves, must know God and His character before we can share Him with anyone else. We, ourselves, must become a people of love before we can share the will of God with anyone else. We must become a people of joy before we can share that with anyone else. You see, first of all God wants to build into us the beauty of His character and then He wants to put us on display before a lost world. The idea found in Matthew 5:13-16 of being a light set on a hill is the exact principle which we are seeking to establish in these lessons. We are the light of the world. We are to reflect not our own light, but the beauty and the character of God in our lives. Then, God's means of communicating truth to an individual is always through a fleshly preacher or individual. We see this is true. He could have sent the angels to proclaim His gospel, but rather He sent his own Son. His own Son as an individual would come and live among men and proclaim it to His fellow man. Thus, as a result, we see that God always communicates to man through man, through life on life.

It is so unfortunate that the average Christian has no non-Christian friends and the tragedy is that the non-Christian has no Christian friends. The world outside today is seeing no alternate (Christian) life style. We hear a great deal today about the terminology "alternate life style". But, we are finding today that the world sees no alternate life style of Jesus Christ in any one else's life. The non-Christian has the right to see a Christian, a child of God, become a thing of beauty amidst his own imperfections and see the Spirit of God form in him the fruit of the Spirit so that they can observe the peace and the hope and the joy and the self-control in the life of him who is a child of God. Israel of old was to be this kind of nation. The command to love one another was given to Israel of old in the beginning of the nation. That is not just simply a new command given by Jesus Christ to His disciples.

We find that Israel of old was to love, accept, and care for one another. In all of their institutions and in all of

their relationships, they were to be a thing of beauty and the pagan nations round about them were to see this in their lives. Thus, leading the pagan nations to see that Jehovah, could produce something different than what their pagan gods could produce. The terrible tragedy with Israel of old was that they did not let the beauty of God become manifest in their lives.

Today, as a corporate body of believers, unless we know God, unless we have the joy of Jesus Christ in our hearts, unless we really become a people of love, we have no corporate beauty to share with the world at all. And so, as a result, we have concentrated on **METHODS** to use rather than what we are to be. Personal evangelism is much less what we do; rather it is much more what we are. The method of personal evangelism is very unimportant. As we have said before, it is unimportant because it is God that gives the increase. It is also unimportant because what we need to do is to establish a relationship with our friends and with our neighbors so that they can see Jesus Christ in us personally and then make a decision that they want to copy that life style. The key word in personal evangelism is the word "**RELATIONSHIP**". Many today do not want to recognize this fact. It is much easier to talk about how we are going to reach person X—by direct mail, by the radio, by the television, by a knock on the door—because we do not put anything on the line with person X. But, when we begin to build close relationships and invite people to come, not only into our homes, but into our hearts and to see exactly what we are, then we are putting our credibility on the line. It is much like a person that is always going on a diet, but never tells anybody. When you do that, you are not accountable to any one. We want to reach a person for Jesus Christ that we have never met, that we do not know. In doing that, we put absolutely nothing on the line. But, when we begin to build a relationship with someone in our office, with someone on our street, with someone in our P.T.A. group, we are inviting them to see how we cope with worry, how we cope with reversal, how we cope with frustration, how we cope with being ill-treated and passed over for a promotion or a raise, how we treat those that do not love us, how we respond to criticism, and as we invite them to see that in our lives, then they can see how Jesus lives upon this earth. Jesus came and walked for 3 1/2 years and was open to total scrutiny by those that were close to him and around about him. He built a relationship with them. We must, then, seek to develop relationship with those that we live around.

We have got to become a people conscious body of believers. We have got to become genuinely in love with the souls of people. We must first begin by realizing that we do not deserve the love of Jesus Christ. For while we were yet sinners, he died for us. He cared for us first before we ever deserved it or before we ever merited it. So, as a result, we have not earned the love that Christ has for us. We must learn then to become people conscious. We must understand that people do not have to earn our love or merit our concern for them. If this were true, you and I would still be unsaved and Jesus

would not have reached for us. We must take how God, through Christ, feels for us and apply that across the spectrum to other people. We must love people, we must care for people and we must seek to build relationships with people. It does not matter whether they are worth it or not. If we will simply love and teach people into Jesus Christ, we can find our effectiveness being far increased because this is the divine plan rather than the human plan.

It goes against our basic nature to try to love people that are not lovable, but remember, our God loves us and we often times are very unlovable. People must learn to see that we care about them, that we love them and that we are concerned about them. They must see that we care about them whether they will be baptized or not. It is not like here is a pie and here is a tract on baptism. Eat the pie and read the tract, leaving them with the full idea that if they are not baptized, we will come back and try to reclaim the pie. They need to understand that we are reaching for them in an unconditional, no strings attached, loving, caring attitude and relationship. This means going out of our way to take our time, our talents, our ability and to spend them in the lives of other people. This means that we must become an unselfish people rather than an extremely selfish group of individuals. We must be willing to give up our golf, our tennis, our hobbies and our recreation to spend our time working and building a relationship in the lives of those that are not Christians. When they see that we really love them, then, and only then, can we find that we can have a marked influence upon them in times of crisis, troubles, and reversals. Who will they turn to? They will turn to us because we have been a friend to them.

We need to spend time and prayer for the lives of other people. But, not only that, we need to spend time and prayer that we can meet their needs. That we can have the opportunity to serve them and to care for them in the daily activity of life. We might start with making concentric circles; circles that begin with those that are the very closest to us and moving out to those that are farther away from us. This is the exact point of Acts 1:8 where the gospel started in Jerusalem, the second concentric circle was Judea and Samaria and the third concentric circle was then to the outermost part of the earth. It started in Jerusalem and gradually went to the outermost parts of the earth. Thereby, we start with the inner circle of our closest friends and our closest relatives. We begin, first of all, by developing Jesus Christ in our own lives and then we begin to pray, "Lord, help me to meet the needs of my immediate family and relatives." Every day you pray, "Lord, help me to be able to meet the needs of these people. If they need something, give me the ability to know it and the ability to supply and answer their needs." Then secondly, you begin to pray, "Lord, help me with my close friends. When they have a need, let me be the one to respond to their needs and help them and care for them." And, then thirdly we move out to our neighbors and to our business associates, "Lord, help me meet the needs of this group of

unbelievers, of my neighbors, of my business associates. When they have a need, help me to be the one that responds to that need." Next is all of our acquaintance. These may be the fellow at the service station, the clerk at the grocery store, or whoever they may be. "Lord, help me to meet the needs of these people." And, finally, "Lord, help me to meet the needs of person X, whom I as yet do not even know." If we can establish in our own hearts and minds an attitude of meeting the needs of other people, we can establish a principle by which we will be looking for every single possible opportunity to reach and to care for other people. The key is "relationship". "Help us, oh Lord, to build relationships with those that do not know Jesus Christ.

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IS "THE EXCEPTION" APPLICABLE TODAY?

There are those who say that the "exception" that Jesus gave with regard to those who divorce and remarry is not applicable today because it is nowhere repeated after Pentecost. This is to say that unless instruction given by the Lord during his personal ministry is repeated after Pentecost (Acts 2) it is in no way applicable today.

Those who have taken this position, however, would be forced, by consistency, to take the same position on many other things taught by Jesus during His personal ministry. But where is the Bible authority for such a rule? After all, the four gospels were written to Christians telling them of the life of Jesus, as well as setting forth some of His teachings that were applicable to the kingdom. Let's look at a couple of examples.

In John 3:3-5 Jesus tells Nicodemus that one must be born again in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus describes this "new birth" as a birth of water and the Spirit. All of us (including those who take the position on the "exception" of Matthew 5 and 19 not being repeated after Pentecost) understand and accept the fact that one must be "born again" in order to enter the kingdom. But where is the "new birth" explained as Jesus explained it in John 3, after Pentecost? Obviously it is not.

Second, just one chapter before Jesus' instruction on divorce and remarriage, Matthew 18:15-17, He gives instruction regarding the man whose brother has trespassed against him. He tells the man what should be done to try to correct the situation. Where is this in-

struction repeated after Pentecost? It is not.

Was Christ Explaining The Law of Moses?

Another objection to using the teaching of Christ in Matthew, Mark, and Luke on the subject of divorce and remarriage, is that Christ was not teaching something different from the Law of Moses, but rather was giving the proper application of the Law to the Pharisees. They tell us, for example, that the Lord had a specific purpose in telling the people that unless the "putting" away was "for fornication" they could not remarry. They then go to Deuteronomy 24:1 and try to make the "uncleanness" found in this passage mean that the bride was not a virgin, and had committed fornication before they were married. Thus Jesus was simply explaining this to these people. However, this is an assumption. There are a number of different opinions among scholars as to what the "uncleanness" was in the new bride in Deuteronomy 24. However, I believe this to be inconsequential. For, first of all, it is assumed, by those who believe this doctrine, that the word "fornication" always referred only to the unmarried. This is neither true in the Old nor the New Testaments. As we stated in a previous lesson, the word "fornication" is only found five (5) times in the Old Testament, and every time it is used, it is used figuratively to describe the spiritual condition of Israel which constituted those who were "married to" or belonged to God.

And even though it is sometimes used in the New Testament to describe those who are single, it is a general term that is also used to describe every kind of sexual activity. (It is used in I Corinthians 5 to describe one who had married a married woman which would usually be referred to by the word "adultery"; homosexuality and sodomy in Jude 7 which obviously could include those who are married, unless one wants to take the position that all homosexuals and sodomites are single persons). However, it is obvious in some passages where both the words, fornication and adultery, are used that sometimes a distinction is made. cf. I Corinthians 6:9. Thus we can readily see that in order for the above position to be true, the word "fornication" would always have to be committed by an unmarried person, and this is not the case.

Did Christ Change Moses' Law?

Second, the problem with saying that Jesus was trying to correct the Jews regarding the Law of Moses and was telling them that the only reason to put away under the Law of Moses was for fornication, cannot be substantiated. In fact, this would mean that the Law of Moses only allowed divorce "for fornication," and the one who was "put away" could not remarry; for that is what Jesus said in Matthew 19:9b. However, when we read the instructions in Deuteronomy 24, we find just the opposite.

Notice in Deuteronomy 24:1 that the man whose bride did not find favor in his eyes, because of the uncleanness, (which, as we have pointed out many brethren believe is fornication) gave her a bill of divorcement and sent her out of his house. But Deuteronomy

24:2 says when she is sent out, she may be **another man's wife**. However, this is not what Jesus said at all. He said, "whosoever marrieth her which is put away committeth adultery" (Matthew 19:9b). Also, under Moses' law, according to Deuteronomy 24:3, Moses tells us that if the second husband hate her, he may give her a writing of divorcement and send her out of his house. Thus we see that Jesus' teaching comes no where near describing Moses' Law.

We have already substantiated the fact that in both the Old and New Testaments the word "fornication" can include those who are married; thus include the adulterer. But notice why Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:32; 19:9 could not be discussing the Law of Moses. In Deuteronomy 22:22, Moses' Law described a man lying with a married woman. The consequences under Moses' Law was that both were to be stoned to death. Jesus could hardly have been giving regulations for remarriage regarding either of these, now could He? And, if He was, then he was changing the Law of Moses, which He denied He had done. cf. Matthew 5:17.

So, Christ's teaching in Matthew 5:32; 19:9 could not have been applicable **then**, for it would have changed Moses' Law. And if it is not applicable now, when was it applicable?



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HOW'S THIS FOR EXTRAVAGANCE?

The Tulsa World, Sunday, Sept. 11, reported on the building plans of the Garnett church of Christ of that city. With current attendance running 2,000 plus, the congregation plans to construct an auditorium complex that will seat 2,400 on the lower floor and 1,500 in the balcony.

Extravagance par excellence seems to be the name of their game.

"A baptistery near the pulpit will be surrounded by plants and flowers to recall times when baptisms were held 'in the crick.' Skylights and indoor trees and plants will highlight an entry mall by which the proposed auditorium will be tied to the existing building..."

"This addition will also permit an information desk for visitors and greatly enlarged toddler and nursery areas, available to both the auditorium and the fellow-ship hall."

"An existing auto turnaround will become a pedestrian mall and canopies on the north side of the educational building will be extended to provide covered walks to either parking lot on the congregation's 40 acre site."

All this is but "phase two" in their long-range plans. A housing facility for the elderly, a counseling center, and a chapel are being projected for the future.

The congregation is presently meeting in two morning services in the facility "originally intended as a fellowship hall in the educational building completed four years ago at a cost of 4.4 million.

Now instead of having "fellowship" (which to the liberal brethren means to eat a sandwich and have a socially good time, see I Cor. 11:34), they are reduced to using this space for worship (which is fellowship according to the true New Testament usage of the term).

The news article assures us, however: "With completion of the proposed auditorium, the meeting place in use now will revert back to its original purpose: a fellowship hall to seat approximately 1,000 at meals, with space for an already-planned commercial kitchen..."

The architect who is a member of the congregation, is quoted as saying, "We have studied every aspect of the church program, and we are trying some innovations we think have not been utilized in other churches."

He was referring to the facility, of course, but his words could well apply to the work and worship of the church as well, with the exception that one would find it

doubtful that any innovation into such is not being utilized by other churches.

The big news story in all this was in the more than \$1.5 million dollar contribution they were attempting to raise the following Sunday.

Marvin Phillips, "their minister", was so certain of success that he had accepted an invitation from an Oklahoma City congregation to address them on Sunday afternoon on "How We Raised \$1.5 Million In A Single Day."

"A helicopter will pick him up from the Tulsa church grounds following morning worship. It will return him to the 31st Street site in time to address a 5 p.m. worship service to be followed by a 'victory picnic' on the church grounds."

They had their victory picnic.

Monday's edition of the **Tulsa World** reported they had pushed the total to more than \$5,000 over the \$1.5 million mark. They thus shoved Robert Schuller's Crystal Cathedral out of third place in the running for the largest single day offering of any church in this country.

Many "collectible" automobiles were contributed. Diamond rings, even some wedding rings, and homes were donated. Many members borrowed up to \$10,000 to donate with the church backing the loans.

"A mission congregation begun by the Garnett church in Augusta, Ga., numbers 60 members. They took a collection last Sunday and sent \$1,105."

Sounds to me like they're mixed up on a thing or two, not the least of which is the New Testament authority for one church to send a contribution to another church for such an extravaganza as this.

And so it goes.

4.5 billion people are living and dying without the gospel while brethren spend their resources on perishable bricks and stones and carnivals.

They're competing with the denominations and it's a losing battle. Newsweek reports that Second Baptist in Houston's new building cost \$34 million, of which only \$3 million remains to be pledged. It will have eight bowling lanes. I suppose you really do try harder when you're second. But First Baptist in the same city has a Christian Life Center **"featuring two full-size basket-ball courts, a roller rink, six bowling lanes, four glassed in racquet-ball courts, a suspended jogging track, saunas, whirlpool baths, and a restaurant called 'The Garden of Eatin'."**

Mr. Fred Williams, a member of Second Baptist, is quoted in the Newsweek article regarding the church bowling lanes: "It makes sense to me."

That is apparently authority enough for most folks. It makes sense to them.

Another Baptist preacher in the city, however, is quoted as commenting: They're measuring themselves "with a different measuring stick than God has."

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CALVINISTIC SOVEREIGNTY AND ROMANS 9

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The classic passage to which Calvinists have traditionally appealed for the support of their concept of sovereignty is Romans 9:6-26. They find in these verses substantiation for the doctrine of unconditional particular election, and thus a deterministic mode of divine rule as well. They focus primarily upon the following: verse 11 and what is stated there about God's choosing Jacob over Esau, "Though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls. . ."; verses 15 and 18, "He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion'... So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires"; verse 23, "And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory."

No passage can be correctly understood isolated from its context. It is especially disastrous when the isolated passage is then used as the standard proof text for an entire religious system. Calvinists have customarily regarded this section of Romans as a definitive and comprehensive explanation of what the Bible has to say about election. But these verses need to be looked at objectively, keeping in mind always the immediate context of this part of Romans and the overall teaching of the epistle.

Romans 1:16-17 gives the theme of the letters: "(the gospel) is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Chapters 1-3 demonstrate the total helplessness of both Jews and Gentiles to attain righteousness on their own merits, and show how justification can come only through God's grace. Chapter 4 presents Abraham as the classic illustration of justification by faith. His being justified without circumcision proves that faith is the condition for salvation and not meritorious works or physical ancestry. Thus, salvation is offered by God to the Jew and the Gentile on the same basis. Chapter 5 glorified Jesus, whose atoning death makes possible man's justification. Chapters 6-8 discuss the justified individual's present relationship to righteousness.

Beginning in chapter 9 Paul addresses the practical problems which the Jewish Christian faced because of Justification by faith; namely, the rejection by God of the disbelieving Jewish nation and the acceptance instead of the Gentiles to the messianic hope. Were not God's promises to bless the Israelites left unfulfilled? The Jews were God's chosen people; did they not de-

serve better treatment than pagan nations? It is important to realize that what Paul has under consideration in Romans 9 is the circumstance of the Israelites nationally, not the matter of the personal salvation of individual men. The truth regarding the latter had been already discussed.

Thus, Paul begins the chapter with a solemn affirmation of his personal grief at the rejection of the Jewish nation (verses 1-5). "But," he stresses, "it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants" (verses 6-7). Paul shows how the Old Testament scriptures testified that the intended recipients of the messianic benefits were not those of a certain lineage, but those of faith. These were the "children of the promise" whom God had chosen (verse 8, 24-31). And the choice was God's own to make, for salvation is His gift and He has the right to bestow it to whomever He desires according to His terms.

Paul illustrates this divine prerogative by referring to God's choice of Isaac and Jacob, both of whom were selected over others also of Abraham's lineage. God chose them, not because of how righteous they had been or because of how wicked others had been, but because He, sovereign God, desired it that way. Paul's point is that God has every right to extend salvation to the believing Gentiles if He so desires. It is His prerogative to "have mercy on whom I will have mercy" (verse 15).

In verses 19-21 Paul harshly condemns the Jewish Christian who answers back to God and pompously says that God's final rejection of the Jewish nation was not right. God is the sovereign ruler of man, and He has every right to endure with sinful men (as He had done with the Jewish nation for so long) in order that He might finally bestow His mercy on others who would come to Him in faith—even if these others were Gentiles. Paul says, "God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction ... in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles" (verses 22-24). These verses are not speaking of a divine decree to save particular individuals and destroy others unconditionally. Verse 32 states that the reason the major portion of the Israelite nation was condemned was "because they did not pursue (righteousness) by faith, but as though it were by works." They rejected Jesus as the Messiah and "stumbled over the stumbling stone." Calvinists consistently overlook the clear sense of verses 30-33 which give faithlessness as the reason for some persons becoming "vessels of wrath prepared for destruction."

Calvinists also view reprobation as final; a vessel of wrath can never become otherwise. Paul teaches the opposite in chapter 11. Speaking of the divine rejection of the Jewish nation he says, "They did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be!" (verse 11). In verses 17-22 Paul figuratively describes the Jews as the

natural branches that had to be broken off of God's olive vine; but he adds, "They also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again" (verse 23). The Jews could still be God's chosen people if they would repent and believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Their rejection by God was not an irrevocable reality; it was contingent upon their continued unfaithfulness. Similarly, God's present acceptance of Gentile Christians was contingent upon their continued faith. Paul warns these Gentiles, "You stand by your faith. Do not be conceited but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you" (verses 20-21).

It is true then that Romans 9 strongly emphasizes the sovereignty of God. But it is not propagating unconditional particular election and a deterministic mode of divine rule. All men possess an independent will, and God expects each to respond voluntarily to the gospel in order to be saved from their sins.

Final Comments

As we have seen in this study, traditional Calvinism considers determinism to be a necessary aspect of sovereignty, and argues therefore that unconditional election must be true in order for sovereignty to be established. Not only is such a view unbiblical, it is a purely unwarranted assumption. Robert Shank's comments on this point are excellent:

The sovereignty of God does not need to be established. As an essential aspect of His being and person, it is in no way contingent. The sovereignty of God does not depend, for either its existence or its manifestation, on either the fact or the mode of election. God is sovereign, regardless of whether He elects, or does not elect... whether He elects some, or all... whether election is conditional, or unconditional. Neither the fact of election nor the mode of election nor the extent of election affects the fact of the sovereignty of God, and the assumption that unconditional election is necessary for the preservation of the sovereignty of God is a theological humbug which for generations has been used by Calvinists to beg the question.

(*Elect in the Son*, p. 144)

The assumption which Calvinists make regarding election they make regarding divine determinism generally. But determinism is not an essential facet of sovereignty. God could have chosen to rule the world which He created in an absolute, deterministic way, but He chose not to. He could have created men with no freedom of will, as robotistic creatures incapable of functioning except in accordance with their programming. Yet God chose not to do this. He made men autonomous, not automatons. That this is the case does not impugn God's sovereignty. It is because God is sovereign that He has the right to create men as He pleases. Ironically, in trying to magnify God's sovereignty by affirming determinism, Calvinism has actually limited God. Calvinistic theology restricts His rule by not al-

lowing Him the prerogative of creating independent beings if He so chooses.

The Bible affirms that God did give men an independent will. He does not force men to comply with His desires. He wants them to submit freely to His righteous mandates, not because foreordination necessitates it, but because morality compels it. That men possess self-determination does not diminish God's glory; it actually makes possible His greatest glorification. For when men decide for themselves to acquiesce to the sovereign's will, God receives the highest possible form of praise. This is what gives the apostle's admonition such import: "Whoever speaks, let him speak, as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified" (1 Peter 4:11).

Only when the errors of Calvinism are made manifest can God's sovereignty be elevated in man's heart to the highest plateau. And yet, this should also bring home to each of us the gravity of our personal accountability to God for our actions. If the reason for our being created as free agents is truly to glorify God by our submission, we must ask ourselves, how well have we carried out our function? God cannot be blamed for our failures, the responsibility is ours. It is not enough to understand how Calvinism has perverted the biblical presentation of divine sovereignty. We must make certain at all times to live in accordance with that truth we have come to understand. If we do not do this, then how much better off are we than the Calvinist?

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REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION

QUESTION: I recently heard a well known preacher say in a gospel meeting that all the Bible requires in the confession of an erring child of God is to say "I have sinned." A comparison was made to the alien repenting of his sins in a general way. Must the child of God be specific in repentance and in confession or will general repentance and confession suffice?—DVR

ANSWER: The answer to the above question can hardly be determined or appreciated without a clear understanding of 1 John 1:9, which reads:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness."

The verse begins with the word "If." This makes forgiveness conditional. Obviously, the condition is that "we confess our sins." It should be noted that the condition is not "If we confess sin." Again, it is not "If we confess that we have sinned." It reads plainly "If we confess our sins" (plural). The use of the plural ("sins") does not mean that one must be guilty of more than one sin before confession is in order, but it does mean that whatever one is guilty of is the thing that must be confessed. This throws a great deal of light on the question submitted.

Furthermore, the word "confess" is significant and enlightening. The Greek word for confess is "Homologeo" and is defined as follows: "(a) to confess, declare, admit, John 1:20; e.g., Act 24:14; Heb. 11:13; (b) to confess by way of admitting oneself guilty of what one is accused of, the result of inward conviction, 1 John 1:9; (c) to declare openly by way of speaking out freely, such being the effect of deep conviction of facts, Matt. 7:23, 10:32 ..." (W. E. Vine, EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS).

In the light of the full definition of "confess," we must conclude that forgiveness demands that one "speak out freely" the "inward conviction" of guilt. Since this "speaking out" (confession) is not the fact of guilt, but rather the thing of which one is guilty, it follows that one has knowledge of the guilt confessed. This excludes sins of ignorance from consideration here.

This does not mean that a child of God must confess specifically every sin of which he may be guilty. His confession may be generic to a degree and still comply

with the demands of our text. For example, one may confess dishonesty in the realm of business transactions without recalling and naming in particular every act of dishonesty involved. He would be confessing more than the fact of sin; he would be confessing what he was guilty of, namely, "dishonesty in business" without identifying all the specifics of the genus. If one were guilty of wholesale apostasy, then that is what he should confess, without naming all the specifics. One might be guilty of "riotous living," as the prodigal son of Lk. 15. If so, one could confess the same without naming all the specifics of the genus. If one's sin were more limited, so should his confession be. All such would comply with the demands of our text.

Concerning "repentance," it, too, demands a great deal of study. It should be obvious that repentance should precede the confession of 1 John 1:9, otherwise, it would be a hollow mockery. Repentance is a condition of forgiveness to both the alien and the child of God (Acts 2:38, 8:22). But what does repentance involve?

Basically, repentance involves a "change of mind" (W. E. Vine). This is confirmed in the parable of the two sons (Matt. 21:28, 29). The father said to the first, "Son, go work today in my vineyard." Verse twenty nine gives his response, "He answered and said, I will not; but afterwards he repented and went." Obviously, the son changed his mind, and by obeying his father's command brought forth the fruits of repentance.

The repentance that is related to the confession of 1 John 1:9 necessarily involves a change of mind with respect to that of which one is guilty. A good question to consider here is: How can one change his mind about any guilt of which he is not aware? In fact, such a person would not change his mind or turn from his guilt, but likely would continue in it. The very nature of repentance demands a knowledge of that of which one repents. The child of God is called upon to repent of and confess that of which he is guilty. This involves the specifics of the genus sin, i.e., specific enough to identify what he is guilty of.

The repentance of an alien is somewhat different. The difference is found in the object from which he turns or of which he repents. His repentance is not related to a confession of sins. This is not a part of God's law of pardon for an alien. The alien is in a state of alienation, and is a rebel against the divine authority by which one becomes a child of God. He must be brought to a knowledge of his guilt—see himself as a sinner—and turn from disobedience to obedience. His repentance relates to the whole genus of sin without necessarily recalling all the particular instances of sin in his life. His repentance is somewhat like that of a child of God guilty of wholesale apostasy (mentioned earlier in this article). There is a firm resolve in his heart to henceforth live in submission to the divine will. However, after one becomes a child of God, whenever he sins he must obtain forgiveness according to God's second law of pardon, namely, repentance, confession, and prayer (1 John 1:9; Jas. 5:16; Acts 8:22).

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Paul instructed young Timothy saying, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. 4:16). As Timothy would be preaching to others about how they were to live, he was to consider himself as well. He was to take heed unto the things he taught. Paul is simply saying "practice what you preach!"

Too often those who preach God's word do not take heed to their doctrine. That is what is under consideration in Matt. 7:1-5. Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (v. 1). He is not saying it is wrong to condemn someone, but you really don't have that right when you are guilty of the same things. Jesus further said, "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" Nothing wrong with trying to remove the mote out of your brother's eye. Yet when you have a beam in yours, who are you to say anything? Such a person is called a "hypocrite" (v.5).

The Jews of Romans 2 had the same problem. They were ones who would point their fingers at the Gentiles and cry, "Oh, what sinners!" They would instruct the Gentiles in the right way (vs. 21-23). Nevertheless Paul said, "Therefore thou art inexcusable O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doest the same things" (v. 1). They were not practicing what they preached. Believe it or not, they did the same things that they condemned. Paul goes on to give some examples of this serious problem. "Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal" (v.21)? They preached against adultery, yet they committed the same (v.22). They abhorred idols (in their teaching), however they committed sacrilege (v.22). They would boast of the law and yet by their actions dishonor God. What's the point? **THEY DID NOT PRACTICE WHAT THEY PREACHED!**

Now what kind of an effect would that have on the Gentiles whom they were trying to teach? Would the Gentiles just ignore their practices and follow their teaching? Paul answered that saying, "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles THROUGH YOU, as it is written" (Rom. 2:24, emphasis mine DVR). Israel could have no influence on the Gentiles as long as they lived as they did. This is no doubt why the Gentiles

did not come to salvation (as a whole) until these Jews had been cast off (Rom. 9,10,11,12,30). Would you listen to someone who doesn't endeavor to practice what he preaches?

Preachers, like everyone else, need to examine themselves, whether they be in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5) If preachers would judge (examine) themselves, then they would not be judged (condemned) (1 Cor. 11:31).

Let us consider just a few areas wherein preachers need to take heed unto their teaching.

1. **Pride and Arrogance:** All preachers at some time or another will find themselves teaching the Bible truths along this line (1 Pet. 5:5-6). It seems that we can so boldly tell others about how their pride is a great sin. Yet sometimes preachers can seem to be the most arrogant people of all. Because the work involved in preaching the gospel requires constant studying and a good knowledge of the Bible, preachers can easily look down their noses at those who have less knowledge than they. Are we willing to preach before large numbers but turn up our noses at the invitation to preach and work with the handful of brethren who meet in a rented hall? I see some preachers who can deliver excellent lessons on the Christian's attitude toward criticism, and then swell up when someone questions a point in their lesson. We sometimes urge people to discuss the Bible with us and show us where we are wrong. Then when they do, we often act as if we are infallible.

2. **Jealousy:** Nearly every gospel preacher that has been preaching very long has at one or another taught a lesson on envy and jealousy. That is as it should be for the Bible condemns such (Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 1:29-32; 1 Pet. 2:1). If there were a problem of this nature in a local congregation, the preacher would naturally become concerned and "lather up" a lesson on the evils of jealousy. In this also, preachers are not exempt from such a sin. It is possible to envy the success of another preacher, his number of converts, his number of meetings, his influence or even his ability. Naturally the envious hearted preacher will be tempted to defame the character and influence of his brother. Preachers should rejoice at another preacher's success (Rom. 12:15).

3. **Worship in Spirit:** Jesus commanded that we worship in spirit as well as in truth (Jno. 4:24). That is, we are to worship Him from the heart, inwardly as well as going through the motions (cf. Rom. 2:28-29; 1 Cor. 14:15). We as preachers need to warn the members of the body of Christ about the dangers of merely going through the acts of worship and not thinking upon what is taking place and having our minds centered upon the proper thoughts. Yet we too can find ourselves thinking on our sermons, etc. during the songs, prayer or Lord's Supper. Just because I am about to get up and deliver a lesson doesn't mean that I don't have to worship in spirit like the rest of my brethren.

4. **Fornication:** Fornication is a common problem in society and in the church as well. It is nothing uncommon to hear of an "affair" going on between those who are supposed to be the backbone of the church. When such is the case, any preacher who thought much of the

charge that has been given him would "lay it on hard" concerning what the Bible said about this sin (Gal. 5:19-21). However, preachers need to take heed and be careful of their actions and where they go without their wives lest they be guilty of the same. It is no longer shocking to hear reports of some preacher who is also engaged in an "affair". (I actually prefer to call it "fornication" or "sin".) When such is the case we are no better than those Jews who would teach the Gentiles not to commit adultery and yet they did the very same thing (Rom. 2:22). Preachers, lets all take heed to the doctrine!

5. **Divorce:** There are about as many divorces as there are marriages, even among "Christians". We as preachers find ourselves teaching what the Bible says about divorce (Mt. 19:9; 5:32). We warn that it is a sin, and try our best to keep couples together. And yet, as you can guess, a good number of preachers have passed before the judge in a divorce court. Some for reasons other than fornication. Would you be willing to listen to such a man as he labors to tell you what the Bible says about the sin of divorce?

6. **Time and consideration given to family:** Any man that is married and has children is obligated to give his family much consideration. He cannot come and go as he pleases or constantly stay away from home and be a good husband and father. What preacher wouldn't seek to correct the brother who ignored his wife and children? What would he say to the father who doesn't have time to spend with his children to make sure they are guided in the right way? And yet preachers at times can be the world's worst at the proper treatment of the family. Their wives get mighty lonesome while their husbands spend many many hours on the road in meetings and in the study. Children often wonder why daddy can't spend a little time at home. I have personally watched preacher's children beg their dad to just take five or ten minutes to answer a question or throw a ball, while he repeatedly refused. Preachers seem always to have time to straighten out everyone else's family prob-

lems but their own. Preachers, lets continue to preach on the home and family relationships, but lets apply a little at home when we do.

On we could go making application of this principle. The point is: **PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH!** Be an example of the believers (1 Tim. 4:12). In so doing you not only save yourself, but also those that hear (1 Tim. 4:16). Otherwise both may be lost (Rom. 2:23).

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THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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LECTURESHIP IN RIVERDALE, MARYLAND

WILSON ADAMS, 6334 Auburn Ave., Riverdale, MD 20737—The Wildercroft church of Christ in suburban Washington, D.C. will be having a special series of sermons the week of April 9-13 on "Striving As Saints." The speakers will be Connie W. Adams and Harry Pickup, Jr. At 7:30 each night Connie W. Adams will present a series on Colossians—Completeness in Christ: The Preeminence of Christ; Christ In You, The Hope of Glory; Established In The Truth; The New Man; and Complete in Christ. At 8:15 each night Harry Pickup, Jr. will speak on 1 and 2 Peter—Living As A Saint In A Modern World: The World In Which We Live; Becoming a Saint; The Testing of the Saint; Saints Demonstrating the Excellencies of God; "Receiving the End of Your Faith... In A Little While."

There will be congregational singing from 7:15-7:30 each night and also from 8:05 to 8:15. We invite all who have the opportunity to be with us during this week (a week normally noted by Washingtonians as being Cherry Blossom week) to worship and praise God. Our members will be more than happy to open their homes to folks from other places. For more information please phone me at 301-474-8133/474-7460.

FIELD REPORTS

JOHN GERRARD, 639 E. 56th St., Indianapolis, IN 46220—After four years with the church in Hamilton, Ohio (my second full-time work with them), I have moved back to Indianapolis. I will be available for preaching appointments in the area and for some meeting work.

JODY BROYLES, 375 S. 6th St., St. Helens, OR 97051—In March of this year my family and I will begin work with the church in Bremer-ton, Washington. We have been with the St. Helens church since January, 1982. During that time there have been 13 souls added to the body for which we thank God. There is much more that can and will be done in the future. The brethren at St. Helens will need a preacher to labor full-time with them. The congregation consists of 35 members and can offer partial support. Phone 503-397-6766, or Mark Wingfield at 397-0668. Or write the church. 1911 Columbia Blvd., St. Helens, OR 97051

GOOD NEWS FROM AFAR

RAY VOTAW, Box 801, Springs 1560, South Africa—"Holiday" periods are always busy times among the blacks in southern Africa. Brethren who live and work in the urban areas use this time well to return to their villages in the homelands to preach the gospel. Usually during these periods I travel with these brethren to these village areas. Over the Christmas season just passed I took Eric Reed and Hendrik Jourbert (up from the Cape) along with Ephraim Radebe and went into Kwandebele for preaching work. I thrilled to hear these good men tell the "old, old story" so effectively among these Swazis. Some were baptized and the churches were certainly strengthened. One very promising young man from Tembisa in this area was baptized in the efforts there.

The church in Alra Park is making good progress on their new building—the first to be constructed by a non-white church in South Africa. The building will seat comfortably around 200, has been built by the members and without any indebtedness. They should be in this new house by June of this year.

Brother Paul Williams did a very fine job of exposing the error of the Moslems and teaching the truth concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ in his recent debate with Ahmed Deedat. There were between two and three thousand present at the stadium where the discussion took place and there was rapt attention. Although Mr. Deedat ignored Paul's affirmation of the gospel was simply and powerfully presented. Christians from as far afield as Zimbabwe to the north and Capetown to the south were present for the debate, but the Muslim people were by far in the majority.

REPORT ON TRIP TO COLUMBIA

ROYCE CHANDLER, 3891 Bunell Rd., Lebanon, OH 45036—I have just returned from 11 days in Columbia and am happy to report the churches in Bogota and in Manizales are doing well. Herman Genton, an elder with the Lockland church in Cincinnati, went with me, as that church has had a strong and consistent interest in those works for several years.

BOGOTA: There had been reports of some possibly severe problems relative to the idea that apostolic examples and necessary inferences are not binding as a part of the law of God for us today. Two or three of the young men had been studying this issue and we were fearful that they might reject these two means by which the Lord has revealed His will, but I am happy to report that after several hours of discussion on these things, that these men expressed their acceptance of the things I taught and said that we were all in agreement that these things are all means of divine revelation and, therefore, cannot be ignored or rejected as means by which we establish authority. The last night of my stay there, Santiago Castro, the full-time preacher there, apologized for all the trouble he had caused over the questions he had been raising and for the fears caused in those who have been close to that work over the past six years. We had a delightful week with those brethren.

MANIZALES: another wonderful week with Herman Urdinola and the brethren. He continues to be "the cream of the crop" in my judgment so far as overall maturity, stability and Bible study goes. He is doing a very good work and we rejoice in our visits and studies there. Lord willing, I will leave February 20 for a week in Chile, with Efrain Perez, and then a week in Buenos Aires, Argentina, for a week-long lectureship planned by those brethren. Later in the year I hope to do some preaching in Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic.

* * * * *

FERNANDO VENEGAS, Casilla 122 C.C., 5500 Mendoza, Argentina—Another soul has been added here by baptism. Valente Rodrigues of Laredo, Texas was with us for three days in November on his month long trip to Chile.

CARLOS A. CAPELLI, Casilla 83, 1665 Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina—The Lord continues to bless the efforts in Jose C. Paz with two more souls added to the body of Christ. One was formerly a Jehovah's Witness and the other formerly a Catholic. The church in Boulogne has been blessed with three more souls converted to Christ. Two of these were Pentecostals. One man came 15 blocks in his wheel chair to be baptized. After Bible studies with the San Miguel church, two persons were baptized. February 20-24 there will be a lectureship in Presidente Derqui, Buenos Aires with these speakers: Bill Reeves, Royce Chandler, Efrain Perez, Marcos Morgan, Ivan Valdez, Raul Caro, Roberto Perez, Nestor Sanchez, Fernando Venegas, Waldo Sanchez, Tommy Holly.

CAN YOU HELP?

DEAN BULLOCK, P.O. Box 35, Nacogdoches, TX 75963-0035—The Northside church in Georgetown, Texas, began meeting some three or four years ago. They began with eight persons and now number about twenty. Their collection averages about \$200 per week. They are sound in the faith and zealous for the cause. The Georgetown area is growing. Roy Fields, a retired military man, recently moved there to work with them. The local church provides about \$300 a month. The bulk of his support comes from faithful churches elsewhere. Three in the immediate area (Wonsley Dr., Austin; Oaks-West, Burnet; and Southside, Temple).

The Georgetown brethren have no central meeting place. They were renting a place but had to vacate it, and have been unable to rent or lease anything else. They are meeting in homes, but every house is far from where they need to be. They have about \$7,000 for a down payment on lots and are searching for a suitable location. A few contributions from individuals would mean much to them. Address: Northside Church of Christ, c/o Bill Kenas, 803 Cavu Rd., Georgetown, TX 78626.

DEBATE IN PHILIPPINES

Romeo S. Quesada of Ipil, Zamboanga del Sur, Philippines will debate Cyrus Gesulga this spring on Premillennialism. Cyrus Gesulga seems to be the chief man relied upon by the premillennial folks to subvert preachers and churches. It is odd to see American premillennial churches of Christ aid and encourage a henchman in debating when they would not touch a debate here with a ten foot pole. Here they think it is beneath them. They will hobnob with W. Carl Ketcherside and fellowship the Christian Church and fraternize with the sectarians freely. But they could not get very far in the Philippines unless they are willing to publicly debate their cause. I suppose necessity is the mother of invention. An all-out effort is being made to infiltrate as many churches in Mindanao as possible. Thank God for faithful men who are willing to stand up for the truth and be counted.

ITALIAN PREACHER NEEDS SUPPORT

DUDLEY ROSS SPEARS, Rt. 1, Box 121A, Alvaton, KY 42122—Brother Francesco Fosci is a very capable dedicated young man who wants to devote his entire time the remainder of his life to preaching the gospel. At present, he is able and willing, but must limit the preaching he does in order to support his family. He has a wife and two children. He comes highly recommended by brethren Rudolfo Berdini, Allesandro Corazza, Roberto Tondelli and this writer. Any congregation who is able and wants to support a worthy work should give serious consideration to supporting this man. His address: Francesco Fosci Via Leopardi, 5 0411 APRILIA (LATINA) Italy Or you may write to: Rudolfo Berdini

Via Giusepee Perego
58-H
00144 Roma
Italy

The faithful brethren now at work in Italy are men of good character and are doing as much or more as is being done anywhere on the globe. I urge brethren to consider helping this man add to the work force in Italy.

(Editor's note: I also know brother Fosci and highly recommend him. He is mature in the faith, well prepared in study and practical experience and badly needed on a full-time basis.)

DAVID FRASER AT REST

David Fraser (age 48) succumbed to a malignant brain tumor on December 2, 1983. About two years ago he began work with the Middleground Rd. church in Savannah, Georgia. In May X-rays revealed the tumor and an operation confirmed the severity of his condition. On November 27 he lapsed into a coma and died the same week. He was married to Judy Tate of Bessemer, Alabama and preached there for two years. His was a brilliant mind with a phenomenal memory of the scriptures and a fine, clear voice to deliver the word of God in the many meetings and congregations where he proclaimed the word of God for 28 years. Judy is left with three children: Jonathan (15), Hamilton (11) and Elizabeth (8). They presently live at 933 Black Weiner Rd., Savannah, GA 31419.

The funeral was conducted in Bessemer by E. Ray Coates with Huey Hartsell and David Tant assisting. A son, a husband, a father, a preacher, a saint has departed this life and is really missed by all who knew and loved him.

—E. Ray Coates

DEBATES

ROGER L. SHOUSE, P.O. Box 903, Greenwood, IN 46142—April 23, 24, 26 and 27 there will be a debate between L.A. Stauffer and Ben Vick. April 23 and 24 the sessions will be held at the Shelbyville Rd. Church of Christ in Indianapolis and will concern direct support to an evangelist and also the sponsoring church arrangement. On April 26-27 the sessions will be held at Greenwood Church of Christ with the subject being church support of orphan homes. For further information call 888-8288.

HILLSBORO, ALABAMA—A public debate on "Unconditional Salvation" will be conducted on March 12-13 and 15-16, 1984, between Eddie K. Garret (Primitive Baptist) and Thomas N. Thrasher (Christian). This will be the third debate between these men since 1971. The sessions will be held in the building of the Piney Chapel Church of Christ, Alabama Highway 20 (Alternate U.S. 72), Hillsboro, Alabama. This is about 8 miles west of Decatur. Sessions begin at 7:30 P.M. For additional information, call 205-353-3085.

PREACHERS NEEDED

HARRISON, OHIO—Congregation seeks a faithful gospel preacher. We are a small work located 15-20 miles west of Cincinnati. We can provide partial support and would assist in locating possible sources of outside support. We especially are interested in someone with personal work skills. For more information contact: Jim Farris, 102 Circle Dr., Harrison, OH 45030. Phone 513-367-6153.

SHEBOYGAN FALLS, WISCONSIN—Mature preacher needed for a challenging work. Contact: Church of Christ, c/o Mabrey Tayse, Route 1, Bridgewood Rd., Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085.

FRED R. SMITH, P.O. Box 31, Telford, TN 37690—I will be looking for a new location as of April 1, 1984, Anyone interested may contact me at the above address or call 615-257-6215.

----- EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS-----

A NAGGING QUESTION

After six months of sowing seed without seeing any harvest in Norway in the late 1950's we rejoiced in the interest of a young man who became the firstfruits of that work. In the course of our study one day, he fixed his gaze on me and asked me a question which terrified me then and yet disturbs me. He said "If you are teaching the truth, and it is clear that you are, then I am lost and so are all my countrymen. WHY HAVE YOU WAITED SO LONG TO COME AND TELL US?" He accepted my answer but I am not sure it satisfied me. For a long time I awakened in the night thinking about it.

All right, brethren, I'll just drop it on the rest of you. WHY ARE WE WAITING SO LONG TO PREPARE AND SEND MEN TO REACH THE LOST OF THIS WORLD? While there are native preachers at work in Canada, India, South Africa, Nigeria, Italy, the Philippines, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Columbia and perhaps a few other places, do you realize how pitifully few men are currently in the fields of the world from this country? If I am correctly informed, we have about 7% of the world's population and yet about 90% of what gospel preaching is being done to that 7%. Why is this? How many men are preparing to go? How many congregations are seeking men to send and sustain in this work?

Before you lay this down and dismiss the question from your mind, just exactly what would you have said to that young man in Norway if he had put that question to you?

* * * * *

MEN OF CONVICTION

The great need of this, or any, hour is men of conviction. Men who know the truth, have counted the cost of discipleship and who cannot be intimidated, bought off or discouraged. Men who would rather dig ditches or work in a rice paddy, or as a carpenter's helper to keep life and limb together than to sell their souls to the highest bidder and be pampered by rich worldlings who have itching ears and desire only enough religion to appear respectable. Where ears itch, there are usually scratchers who are waiting to be hired. We had a down home expression for that in Virginia when I was a boy. We called such an one "anybody's dog that would hunt with him."

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