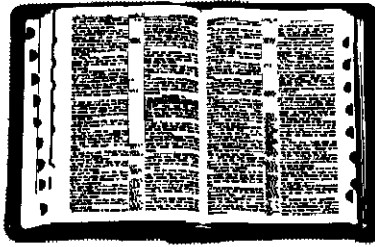


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"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

H. E. Phillips

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WHY CROSSROADS IS CALLED A CULT

(Author's Note: It is not possible to analyze every trait of a cult and note them one by one as they might apply to the Crossroads church in Gainesville, Florida. Suffice it here to give the main reasons for the Crossroads system being labeled a "cult" by the world, religious and non-religious, and by most churches of Christ we would call "liberal.")

It is my judgment that Crossroads church of Christ, Gainesville, Florida, has been and is now receiving far more recognition and attention than she deserves, both in the secular press and in publications by Christians. Perhaps the foremost reason for all this attention is the "cultism" most think they see at Crossroads. I am certain some who have made the charge do not actually know what a cult is; others have developed very strong feelings against Crossroads because of reports of treatment to many youth there. Truth lies somewhat under the rumors and wild charges. Truth is what we want. The truth will make men free! (John 8:32).

What is a cult? The question is difficult to answer because of the emotional barbs it creates in the mind. The dictionary says: "Cult: 1. a system of religious worship or ritual. 2. devoted attachment to, or extravagant admiration for, a person, principle, etc., especially when regarded as a fad..." That definition might get several religious groups not considered cults.

Why Do Cults Appeal to Youth?

Young people of college age are ripe for the type operation conducted at Crossroads. Chuck Lucas and the

Crossroads elders are well aware of that fact. A college campus is a very fertile field in which any cult embryo can develop and multiply rapidly. While I do not consider myself an expert by any standard, I do believe I have learned something about the susceptibility of youth to the kind of emotionally charged religion, energized by the bubbling, ignorant zeal of those who really want to do something to evangelize the world, just anything! (Romans 10:1-3).

Following are some of the reasons why young men and women are attracted to cult movements:

1. Youth of high school and college age have an insatiable curiosity for the unknown and the unknowable. Most are not satisfied with the sterile ritualism of religion today, and are seeking something with a personal meaning and application.

2. The gross ignorance of God's word by denominationalism and by many churches of Christ has driven youth to seek someone who "knows" the answers.

3. Youth has a drive for the new, different, even the bizarre, and they tend to discard the traditional and orthodox. This presents some problem of rebellion against the established authority of home, elders and civil law. It even reacts against the authority of Christ.

4. The failure of the home, school, government leaders and the church to provide a basic moral foundation for the youth of the nation has driven them to search for a way that will work without the hypocrisy that has characterized two generations of Americans. Generally speaking the home has been a total failure, and some of these are looking for a "father" and "mother" figure. Man has an underlying need for the security of family and social bonds.

5. Youth is looking for escape from all the financial, social and moral tensions found in the world today. The perennial threat of war, nuclear destruction, and political corruption is very discouraging. The increase in murder, rape, robbery, assault, drug addiction and every form of evil has inundated society.

6. Many do not find meaning and purpose to their lives anywhere in the framework of our civilization. Hope for the future is very dim. These all seek happiness by seeking a way to fulfillment for their lives.

Cult leaders recognize this and appeal to these people

with their special promises for this life and the one to come.

Why Cults Grow Rapidly

Anytime a church is growing abnormally fast, the question is always raised about cultism because that is said to be a mark of the cults. We are talking about what happens in the twentieth century, not in the first century. From several sources the following was found to explain the rapid growth of cults:

1. **Human need.** They meet the human need at a time when others do not notice the need. They give the down-trodden a reason for living and they promise a hope to these hopeless souls.

2. **Aggressive.** The cults are very aggressive in preaching their doctrine and ideology. They will teach any who will listen.

3. **Thorough indoctrination.** They are convinced of their doctrine and operation. They believe they are right. They are thoroughly indoctrinated with every part of it that concerns them. They have been trained to use the Bible, and they use it effectively to the un-learned. They cite history, quote scripture, speak some Greek and Hebrew words, and even define Bible terms in their favor.

4. **Sacrifice for his cause.** Every cult member knows what he believes and is ready to sacrifice whatever is necessary for it. That is one reason he will abandon all else and hold to it.

5. **Zeal for evangelism.** They have a zeal for evangelism—go from door to door—use any method to reach people with their message. The technique for "witnessing" their doctrine is learned as an actor learns his lines.

6. **Urgent.** The cult member has a strong sense of urgency. He speaks as if tomorrow will be too late. He eagerly presses his message upon the hearer to accept it TODAY!

7. **All work.** Cults involve every member in some way in the operation of the group. This is a part of the training. It cements each member to the group in responsibility and work.

8. **Willing to suffer.** Each one is willing and expects to suffer ridicule and hardship from the public and other religions. They interpret this as a sign of their holiness and acceptability with God.

The fact that you may have these qualities in your life does not indicate that you are in any sense cultish. These are the qualities that make a group grow, and most cults have all of them. That is why they grow so rapidly.

Some Reasons Why Crossroads is Called a Cult

No less than a dozen congregations have written letters and published extensive articles branding Crossroads a cult with all the destructive characteristics of any cult.

If I cited even half the quotes in the religious papers that brand Crossroads a cult, and gave their reasons for doing so, I would have enough material to fill this paper a dozen times.

(Continued on Page 4)

Searching The Scriptures

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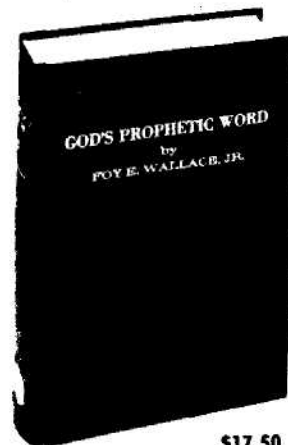
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By Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

A compendium on the Abrahamic Promises and the Mosaic, major and minor Davidic Prophecies, consisting of a complete exposure and refutation of the multiple theories of premillennialism, including a review of the claims of British Anglo-Israelism, and the Judaistic system of Seventh Day Adventism.



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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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THE COLLINSVILLE AFFAIR

A simple case of congregational discipline in Collinsville, Oklahoma has been propelled into national prominence when a member of that local church sued the elders for invasion of privacy after they publicly withdrew from her. They charged her with forsaking the assembling, the sin of fornication and refusing to submit to the oversight of the elders of the church. The wire services picked up the story and CBS did a segment on it on "60 MINUTES." It is remarkable that the woman in question complained about invasion of privacy when by her action she has become nationally known and her sin of fornication is known from one side of the nation to the other. Additionally, she has been approached by ten different groups, each wanting to make a movie of her story.

The jury awarded her a total of \$390,000 in the case. The decision has brought jubilation to the liberal press (*TV Guide* applauded the decision) and consternation to elders, preachers and other members of churches of Christ across the nation. The case has been appealed and we shall all be anxious to see how a higher court will rule in the matter.

Newspapers in Oklahoma and Texas have carried extensive information on the case. If all that has been reported is true, there may be some room for question as to how the elders handled this case. The legal battle centered around two basic things: (1) The fact that the woman delivered a letter to one of the elders in which she stated that she was withdrawing her membership from that congregation; and (2) the fact that while the church claimed to be autonomous, the elders sent letters to adjoining congregations notifying them of their action. The court interpreted this as a violation of their own stated belief in autonomy. They argued on the first point that she had a right to change her belief.

In carefully listening to the "60 Minutes" segment, it is evident to me that the woman did not have a clear understanding of the truth about the unique nature of the Lord's church nor of the role and relationship of elders to a local church.

Already, we have learned of a number of Christians who have been approached by fellow workers, relatives or neighbors about this matter. Some Christians have been ridiculed for believing the Bible teaches that the church can exercise corrective discipline against wayward members. People who do not know where the pas-

sages are found nor the context in which they appear have been quoting "Judge not, that ye be not judged" and "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." Indeed, the Oklahoma woman referred to these when interviewed for "60 Minutes." Her attorney said in the trial "He was a single man, she was a single woman, and this is America." He further argued that if she wanted to fornicate up and down the street, the church had no business to stick its nose into her business. That all may sound very democratic and enlightened to a jury of modern-day men and women, but it is a far cry from what the New Testament teaches.

What Saith the Scriptures?

Jesus said the time comes when a sin must be told "to the church" and that if repentance is not forthcoming, "let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18:15-17). Concerning the unrepentant fornicator at Corinth, Paul instructed the church when "gathered together" to "deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh." He warned that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" and said "Purge out the old leaven." He closed by saying "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:1-13). Paul also commanded the Thessalonian church to "withdraw" from "every brother that walketh disorderly" (2 Thes. 3:6). Further, the New Testament clearly teaches that elders have the oversight of local churches. Christians are to "know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you" (1 Thes. 5:12). Elders are to "feed the flock of God" among them, "taking the oversight" (1 Pet. 5:2). "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17).

These passages set out the parameters within which congregations function and in which the discipline of local church memberships must be managed. These principles are divine and no earthly tribunal has a right to set them aside. The social mores of the times which wink at sin, call evil good and good evil, do not alter the will of Him with whom we have to do.

Far Reaching Consequences

The Collinsville affair is a watershed decision. If this ruling is not overturned in a higher court, then churches of Christ will be in for trouble from disgruntled worldlings who want the respectability of the congregation without accepting the incumbent responsibilities for godly behaviour. The legal implications of the case do not end with local churches of Christ. The Roman Catholic Church has for centuries excommunicated members. The Mormon Church has a form of censure. Many other religious bodies exclude members for their conduct. Some lawyers have commented that if each church of Christ had a set of bylaws which spelled out such matters, then the danger of such litigation would be minimal. But we do have a guideline. It is the New Testament. The court objects that the New Testament is capable of diverse interpretations. So are state and

federal laws. The underlying assumption of such a position is that the Almighty cannot state a law so that it may be understood while uninspired men can do what God Himself cannot do. Such is presumptuous, if not blasphemous.

The application of New Testament instruction to the practice of local churches is not a proper subject for the civil courts in a nation which guarantees religious freedom. In such a society, an individual enters covenant with a local church by his/her own volition. Such action presupposes a willingness to live consistently with the principles of the New Testament which bind those people together. Should one decide to violate those principles, he certainly has the civil right to do so (provided civil law is not violated), but moral right is another question. Elders and other Christians have the right to indicate their disapproval of sinful conduct and to take scriptural steps to restore the fallen brother or sister. To argue otherwise is to limit the field of rights to the transgressor while stripping the godly of all such rights.

We have always advocated that elders and all other brethren involved in corrective discipline should proceed with caution, take steps which are well thought out, keep adequate records, maintain pure motives which always seek the salvation of the wayward and take public action only where it is necessary and after all reasonable efforts have been exhausted. Times like these test the resolve and fidelity of those who shepherd God's people. Hirelings will flee before the wrath of the malicious. The timid will falter. Untaught members will exercise pressure to keep from being embarrassed before their unbelieving friends. Discipline has never started in some places, and this ruling may provide a pretext to avoid it in the future. Others will stop exercising such discipline for fear of reprisals. The Devil will have a field day. It is a time for elders to resolve to perform their God-given duties to each flock without fear or favor and with a willingness to go to jail, if it comes down to that, to lead the Lord's people in doing what He said.

It Is Getting Late

It is my judgment that it is much later in America than some seem to think. If this ruling is allowed to stand, then we are now at the cutting edge of the end of religious liberty in America as we have known it. When civil courts require that New Testament congregations write human creeds and by-laws to protect themselves, and when spiteful and malicious malcontents can sue church elders for doing what the word of God teaches that they must do to please God, and win huge cash settlements, and when movie producers can take such affairs and package them as entertainment to the further embarrassment and ridicule of Christians, then my friends, it is indeed late. It is a time to watch and pray. Pray for those in authority that just judgments may be rendered. Pray that the gospel may continue to run and have free course. The effectual, fervent prayers of righteous men avail much. The early Christians prayed the Roman Empire off its foundation and cell doors off their hinges. It is a time for prayer.

(Continued from Page 1)

The following practices at Crossroads are some of the reasons that church is labeled a cult.

1. **Cell-type indoctrination.** Crossroads uses the "soul talk" plan to indoctrinate and begin the "control" of new converts. Deny this as much as they wish, but the fact remains that reliable testimony from unimpeachable witnesses establish the fact. Many cults have the same type plan for the same purpose.

The Family Bulletin of White's Ferry Road church of Christ, West Monroe, Louisiana, January 5, 1980 advertised a seminar on Bible Talks and Prayer Partners by Chuck Lucas. It said Lucas "developed in the main the Soul Talk concept." It further said that his work was so successful at Crossroads that "the seminar plans were born." If this statement is true, Chuck Lucas developed the Soul Talk concept as it was used at Crossroads.

2. **Total commitment.** There is a "total commitment" required of every member at Crossroads. Lucas said, "Jesus said, 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.' That is total commitment!" There is no issue at all about what Christ taught, nor about the fact that it is a total commitment, but the issue is that Christ did not require a total commitment to a system such as Crossroads, nor to men like Chuck Lucas, his assistants and the elders at Crossroads. Cults want a "total commitment" but they want the commitment to the cult group, its leader and chief men, and to the doctrinal system.

A coerced commitment by guilt and fear methods to induce total submission and conformity is far from "total commitment" to Christ. The "total commitment" of Crossroads means to abandon parents, friends and all others if they disapprove of "soul talks" and special meetings of the system throughout the week. They equate devotion to the Crossroads system with devotion of Christ.

3. **Prayer partner.** The prayer partner concept is a trait of cultism. It is a religious gimmick for emptying the mind of the convert and holding him to the group through guilt, confession, intimidation and constant obligation to his superiors.

A system of spying and mind control of converts is the value of the prayer partner system. It is a manipulation of people by way of peer pressure, fear and guilt. Of course, Crossroads denies that anyone there makes any effort to control anyone, but the testimony of many from different parts of the country affirm the fact. This is one reason many brethren and the denominational world call Crossroads a cult.

The new convert may be compelled to sever ties with family members and friends and establish new relationships with group members, particularly the "soul talk" leader or senior "prayer partner." A new set of values and goals replace the original ones and a separate environment is created for the new convert which shields him from his former "sinful" life. He begins to adopt a new thought, new will and a new mind.

The prayer partner system is arranged so that the young convert must confess sins to the prayer partner,

and this means they must confess ALL their sins, even those of thought. Their most secret thoughts and weaknesses are known through the confessions to the prayer partner. A guilt, shame and fear complex is created through the prayer partner concept to compel obedience and thought control to a degree.

Chuck Lucas adopted "The Master Plan of Evangelism" by Robert E. Coleman and developed the Crossroads style "Soul Talk."

Charles Goodall said in his booklet, **The Crossroads Heresy**: "The sources interviewed from Sunrise com-plaind that their senior prayer-partners had shared confidential information with their soul talk leaders and the preacher. Specific identifying details were mentioned during public lessons by both the soul talk leader and the preacher, which revealed public knowledge of what they considered to have been private matters. Such an arrangement is totally unscriptural. It utilizes psychological behavior modification techniques used by professional psychologists." (page 13)

4. **Money schemes.** Money raising gimmicks is a trait of cultism. Crossroads has invited the criticism of both brethren and the religious world by pooling into the operation at Crossroads just about everything that religion could get into for the purpose of collecting money. They have a day school, family counseling services of various types, preacher schools, vacation camp-grounds, a professional entertaining choir with recording tapes and records to sell, a publishing and printing department, a recording tape department, financing various projects from student loans at going interest rates, and other enterprises by which the coffers at Crossroads are regularly fed.

In addition, Crossroads has followed the cultish image of separating as much money from as many members as possible. Reports are many that Crossroads has had students borrow on their savings, jewelry, from their parents or friends, and even made arrangements to help them make loans in order that they could "give" to the church.

5. **Superior leaders.** The "leader" or "teacher" becomes the "spiritual father" and "spiritual mother" to new converts. The cult form of getting and holding control over the minds and lives of the members is accomplished through a system such as Crossroads.

Members are taught not to question the wisdom or judgment of a "leader" of a program or a "soul talk." A strong word against a senior prayer partner is a very serious offense. The whole group must be obedient to their "leaders" and "prayer partners."

Crossroads may not be a "cult" in the strict sense of the word, but enough traits of cultism have become a part of her doctrine and practice to understand why so many charges have been made and are being made. God is not with all these opposing sects and cults who think opposition to them is His approval. Crossroads is no different.

The Crossroads system is a dangerous religious operation for all, especially for the young.

SPECIAL FEATURE

IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS, GRACE AND FORGIVENESS—NO. 3

by
Franklin T. Puckett

But our being forgiven and our being cleansed is conditioned upon our confession of that sin of which we are guilty. We have got to cease from it, confess it. Somebody may say we may not even know about them. Oh, we can confess unto the Lord our imperfections, even concerning those things of which we may not be aware.

Under the law there was a sacrifice offered for ignorant sins. But they had to offer that sacrifice. They could not disregard compliance with that condition on which God extended mercy, even for ignorant sins. And David prayed unto the Father, "Lord, keep me from secret sin." He was not talking about sins that he knew about and that nobody else knew about that he was keeping hidden from the views of others. He was talking about sins in his own life of which he was not aware. "Now, Lord, keep me back from that."

We can every day not only confess the sins of which we are aware, but recognizing imperfections, go to God in humbleness of heart and of mind and praying unto Him earnestly, "Lord, forgive me of any sin that may have invaded my life, even though I am unaware of it and keep me from secret sins, or sins of which I am not aware." Day by day we can come unto Him unceasingly this way, confessing our sins that we may be forgiven. We cannot just go ahead and justify continued practice of sins, that is, what some of these fellows are doing. They need to get their eyes open to what they are doing.

VII

Let me point out something else. When one is a baptized believer, one is baptized but once. That is point action. The action is begun, carried out and completed—point action. So, it's point action. It is not continuative action. You don't continue in the action of being baptized. It is point action. But walking in the light is continuative action, two different kinds of action. And I asked Carl Ketcherside one time, before an audience larger than this, to tell me whether these in the digressive Christian Church who have brought in the instrumental music and are continuing in it, and have for one-hundred years or more, are they walking in the light or in darkness?

I am not talking about somebody who in a moment of weakness may stumble, and who could come to the Lord for forgiveness of sin and obtain divine pardon, but what about these folks who begin that which is without

divine authority and continue in it on and on in continuative action? Are they walking in the light or darkness? Tell me? What about those who create their missionary societies and continue in them? Are they walking in the light or in darkness? What about people who develop all the things that have come to trouble the churches of our Lord in the past twenty years? And they have been continuing in them for at least two decades. What about them? Well, they are continuing to walk somewhere.

A walk is a mode of conduct. It is not just one step, but is progression. Now then, where are they walking—in the light or in darkness? If they are walking without divine authority, contrary to the will of God, my friends, they are walking in darkness! That is where they are. And only if they are walking in the counsel of God, according to His will, are they walking in the light.

I'm not talking about one isolated mistake. We're talking about a mode of conduct, and so, are they walking in the light or in darkness? Ketcherside never did answer. His only reply was, "Well, Frank you don't understand that passage you are talking about," and wouldn't give me a chance to say any more. Now isn't that what the passage is talking about? If we walk in darkness and say we have fellowship with God, we lie and do not the truth. If we walk in light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin.

Lest somebody think that means we are sinlessly perfect it says "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." But it does not stop there. "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." If we say, "We have not sinned, we make him a liar." Does that mean, is that showing, that we can go out here and God is so gracious that he will just take the perfection of Christ and put it over here on us, even though we are continuing to walk in sin? God forbid that any of us should reach that conclusion.

VIII

God called upon us to turn from our errors, quit our wrong doings, to cease our wrong practices, and come unto Him for the forgiveness of our sins, and start living day by day and all the way in the counsel and light of God's eternal truth. That is what He is talking about. I know that sometimes people want to picture God as being something like an ogre sitting there. But you say, "One has got to be obedient to the conditions; that you make God sitting there ready to pounce on you." No, God is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. God calls for repentance. God doesn't want anyone to be lost. And He will be patient and longsuffering with us. But the call is for repentance!

Paul tells us in his great letter to the Romans that we are to count the longsuffering of God as calling upon us to come to repentance. God's longsuffering, His patience with us, is leading us unto repentance and if we do not repent we are treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath.

Take the letters that the Lord dictated unto the seven

churches of Asia in Revelation, chapters 2 and 3. And even the church at Ephesus, which measured by the present day standards would be a pretty good congregation, but He said, "You have left your first love. Repent, therefore, and do the first works." He called for repentance! And even unto the church at Smyrna, whose character is far above that of many congregations today, He said, "Be thou faithful unto death." Faithfulness, He commanded and "I will give thee the crown of life." And then concerning that woman over in Thyatira, that Jezebel who seduced the servants of God and taught them to commit fornication, He said I gave her space to repent, but she repented not, therefore, I shall cast her into a bed of affliction".

Now then, don't get the idea that God doesn't call for his children, who err, to repent. The fact that He is longsuffering to usward does not mean that He is condoning our wrong practices. But it is a call for repentance. Repentance is a condition of forgiveness. So we are to come in genuine faith, and humble repentance and honest confession unto God for forgiveness, and when our sins are forgiven, then we are counted righteous because we do not have sin anymore. It has been blotted out, covered over. Not that He is borrowing something over here.

That always reminds me of the Catholic doctrine of the works of supererogation whereby they teach that some people have been so saintly, that lived so perfectly, that they did a lot more than the Lord even wanted them to do. They had some works that were unnecessary, and so God just took their extra good works and put them under the depositor over here, and when Catholics today fall short of what God requires of them, they can pray unto the saints, and God will reach in here and take it out of the saint's account and put it to theirs. This smacks at the same kind of concept.

My friend, the Bible teaches that you and I are individually and personally responsible for our own individual lives. I may stumble and fall but God calls me to repent of my sins and to confess my sins and pray God for forgiveness. Even if it be a sin of which I am not aware, I'm to be conscious of the fact that I'm not perfect before Him and come pleading for tender mercy. But God is the one who determines the extent of His grace and it is conditional, both to the alien sinner and to the erring child of God, despite the claims of some. And, so, we must comply with whatever conditions the Lord has laid down.

Romans, chapter 9, the apostle Paul said, as he quotes a statement that the Lord made unto Moses, "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion upon whom I will have compassion." God determines those upon whom He will have mercy and those to whom He will show compassion and He has determined on the basis of the conditions laid down in the book of God.

Somebody says, "Will there be no exceptions?" I can't tell you there will be. If God wants to make some exceptions, that is His business. But clemency is the right of the judge, not of the person who is proclaiming the law. And so preachers today cannot hold out clem-

ency beyond what God's law declares. They must stay within the scope of that. Now, if God wants to save somebody without their obedience, that's His business and I'll not complain about it. But I can't hold it out, and if I do, I would be holding out to you a hope that the word of God does not declare.

But they say, "Oh, you're judging." No, I am leaving all judgment in the hand of Him who is to be the Judge. I am simply telling you the principles upon which judgment will be rendered according to the revelation of God's word.

CAN
CONSERVATIVE BROTHERS
EVANGELIZE THE WORLD?

Dick Blackford

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A former treatise have I written on this topic. And now another like unto it, with the encouragement of the editor and others.

Is it possible that those of us who believe in letting the church be the church, who have not gone wild over the promotional schemes of institutionalism and such like,—is it possible that we can evangelize the world without becoming enamoured with the Crossroads movement, Jimmie Lovell, and such like? If I did not believe my brethren could succeed I probably would not bother to write about it. But if we were fully convinced that such is an impossibility, would that lessen our duty to try? Would it alter the Great Commission in any way? What of the possibility? If we could be convinced that it is possible, it might encourage us to make a bonified, serious effort.

Mathematically Possible

We recently gave some statistics which showed that if there was only one Christian on the earth and it took him a whole year to convert another, and then each of them a whole year to do likewise—that if this process continued, over 4 billion (world population) could be reached in 33 years—the same amount of time our Lord spent on the earth. (We are indebted to brother Harris Dark for the statistics and for his foresight and concern).

Now think of it this way. There is not just one Christian on the earth and it doesn't usually take a whole year to teach another. Consider that there are approximately 750,000 conservative brethren. According to brother Dark's statistics (which are mathematically correct), we are at year 12 on the scale. Conceivably, with a faith in God that works through love (Gal. 5:6) the world could be evangelized in 21 years or less!

A Prerequisite

We must be truly converted to Christ ourselves. It is He who gives the increase, we only plant and water. The one who plants and waters is nothing (I Cor. 3:7). If a man thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself (Gal. 6:3). We are unprofitable servants (Lk. 17:10).

When we come to appreciate the love of one who came to seek and save the lost (Lk. 19:10) we will also come to respect His authority when He says "Go." *It is not the imperative of an external command that sends us after the lost. . . We may be commanded forever to take the gospel. . . and it will never move us. But when we are fully possessed by him whose life it was to seek and save the lost, we shall go, command or no command. Back of all successful work for the lost is an inward spiritual impulse; and back of the impulse is Christ in the heart of the individual, and the brand mark of it all is the cross,...* (J.E. Conant, *EVERY MEMBER EVANGELISM*, preface). Yes, there must be the transformed life.

All Out for P.E.!

Many of us are gung-ho for P.E.—Physical Education. Can we be as enthusiastic about Personal Evangelism? How do we evangelize? Contrary to our suspicions there are no Top Secret, "yet-to-be-discovered" methods to reach folks with the gospel. There are no gimmicks, shortcuts, or tricks. Things are pretty much as they were in the first century—an abundant harvest with few laborers (Mt. 9:37f). Some tools may be helpful but you need not invest in numerous books, records, or other paraphernalia. A knowledge of the power of God for salvation, an awareness that life is brief and the need is urgent, and a compassion for lost humanity are the things most needed. We need not wait for the perfect situation or until we have mastered and memorized the whole Bible forward and backward. Most of the NT conversions were characterized by circumstances that seemed less than ideal.

Getting The Home Bible Study

Getting someone to agree to a HBS is the biggest part of the battle with Satan. This is why he steals the word away, "lest they should believe and be saved" (Lk. 8:12). Since we are dealing with the will of man and the influence of the devil, there is no guaranteed formula for getting a study. There are some things that may help.

1) **Become All Things To All Men.** Why did Paul do this? "That I may by all means save some" (I Cor. 9:22). He said he "pleased all men in all things" Why? "That they may be saved" (10:33). This doesn't mean become a hypocrite but to be as peaceable as possible (Rom. 12:18). It means not alarming your prospect's prejudices or needlessly exciting his opposition. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col. 4:6). Make your words palatable. "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Mt. 10:16). Sometimes we get that backwards. Don't bring out the wolf in a man by tactless remarks. Tact depends on understanding the feeling and situation of others. Great

causes have suffered at the hands of tactless bunglers, but none so great as the cause of Christ. Love is not rude. Sarcasm and harsh denunciation is often the first and easiest course to follow. In the life of the Master Teacher these were the exception rather than the rule and were used as a last resort to shake people who knew they were wrong but were dishonest and hypocritical (Mt. 23). While we should be ready to answer every man let us not forget the manner—"in meekness and fear," (I Pet. 3:15). Brethren, it does make a difference how you say it! We cannot be like a bull in a china shop when trying to save souls.

2) **Keep It Simple.** When trying to get a lost person to consider the simple gospel, a complicated or high pressure approach is not needed. It has been helpful to me to say, "Many people would like to know more about the Bible. I believe you are one of those people, Bill, and I would really like to study the Bible with you." Lest he think you are suggesting a never-ending arrangement tell him how many times, how often, and how long each study will take (be reasonable). It is also a good idea to let him know that you believe religion is the last thing one should get mad about and you try to make it your practice not to get mad even if there is an area of disagreement. If there is a difference that may prevent a HBS, you might say "If there is anything important enough to keep us divided, surely it is important enough to talk about without hurting each other's feelings. Don't you think so?"

A forthright approach is best and each Christian should find a way of asking for a study with which he is comfortable. If one resists your sincere approach it would be best not to try to "argue" him into it. You might say, "Bill, I hope after you have had time to think about it that you will reconsider the study. If you change your mind, please don't be embarrassed or hesitate to let me know. I will be glad to come." You never know when one may have a change of heart and this will leave the door open.

"The Gospel Is For All"

We sing. Do we believe and practice? Most congregations are composed of white, middle and upper class Americans. And they certainly need the gospel. But it is also for the downtrodden, the poor, the alcoholic, the person burdened with problems, other races, etc. Many of these will need a lot of attention. Are we ready to put our Christianity to the test? Let us be sure that we have not turned the church into an organization that primarily meets our social needs, with some religious flavoring thrown in. "My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons (Jas. 2:1).

Will We Evangelize The World?

We can be like the ten spies who said "We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we." Or we can be like Caleb who said "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it," (Num. 13:30,31). God blessed Caleb by allowing him to enter the promised land! With all of my heart, I believe my brethren can evangelize the world. We won't have to

compete with the promotional techniques or popular money-raising schemes. The Great Commission applies to all of us (Mt. 28:19, 20; 2 Tim. 2:2). When each one does what he can where he is, the gospel will spread. We can do all things through Him who strengthens us (Phil. 4:13).

The Mystery of Iniquity

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"CONFESSION?—ASK THE MAN WHO GOES THERE!"

The Knights of Columbus of the Catholic Church publishes material in newspapers and magazines over the country. One of their popular articles is on confession under the above heading.

The Catholic Article

"Catholics go to Confession to a priest for one reason only: to obtain divine forgiveness for their sins.

"But why, you ask, go to a priest? Why not confess our sins directly to God?"

"Ask the man who goes to confession and here's what he will tell you: Sin is an offense against God; it must be forgiven by God. It is God, not man, who determines how forgiveness must be obtained. Christ plainly pointed this out when He empowered His apostles and their successors to forgive sins or to refuse forgiveness.

"Whose sins you shall forgive," Christ said, "they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (John 20:21-23) Thus Christ authorized the apostles, and their successors, to pardon or to deny pardon as they judged the sinner worthy or unworthy. To do this they had to know what they were forgiving... the secret dispositions of the sinner... his sorrow and willingness to repair the wrong done to his neighbor by his sins. Who could make this known but the sinner himself—and what is this but Confession?"

"But Confession—the Sacrament of Penance—is only one of the seven Sacraments Christ left in His church. Yes, seven—no more and no less! Christ's religion is not merely a message to be accepted, but a life to be lived—from the cradle to the grave. Christ's seven Sacraments are the answer to man's seven basic needs _____

"Would you like to know more about each of the seven Sacraments? How they can help you to meet the seven basic needs of your life? Then write today for a free pamphlet which gives important information concerning them. Ask for Pamphlet No. 5-N."

Our Review

One of the first problems which we detect in this teaching is the failure to understand who and what a priest really is. The apostle Peter said that every Christian is a priest and member of the "royal priesthood"—the church of Christ (1 Peter 2:5,9). Jesus Christ is the Christian's High Priest to "make propitiation for the sins of the people" (Heb. 2:17). The Bible does not teach that any man can act as a priest between the Christian and the Lord today. The apostle Paul wrote, "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

We realize that under the Old Testament law priests offered up sacrifices for their sins and the sins of the people, but Christ made one sacrifice, HIMSELF, for our sins. "And there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:23-25). Since Christ lives to make intercession for us, and there can be only one mediator between God and the Christian, there is no place for the work of a priest to whom confession is made or through whom one may pray to God.

I John 1, verse 9, says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Christians confess their sins to God (not a priest) and God forgives. Under the Old Testament the people of Israel confessed to God (1 Kings 8:33, 34) and priests made atonement (Leviticus 5:5-13). Priests today do not make atonement by offering sacrifices. Christ is our atonement and means of reconciliation (Romans 5:9-11), and no other sacrifices are necessary. Since priests today cannot make atonement or offer sacrifices, they are not necessary to our forgiveness.

Another fallacy in the Catholic article is the reference to "the apostles and their successors." Where does the Bible say or teach that the apostles were to have successors? There is no more authority for such in the scriptures than there is for a successor of Christ on the earth today. Peter himself said that in order to qualify as an apostle of Christ one must have the knowledge "beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection" (Acts 1:22). Can any man on earth today meet that qualification? The apostle Paul affirmed the same thing that Peter said. While on the road to Damascus to persecute Christians the Lord told him, "I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you" (Acts 26:16). So Paul had to have seen the Lord in order to be an apostle, just as his fellow apostles had experienced before him. We repeat: No man on earth today can be an apostle of Christ!

And another thing is worthy of note. If the priests today are the successors of the apostles, as the article

said, then they should have the same power as the apostles of Christ had in the first century. If any man on earth today is a successor of Peter and the apostles, we would not have to confess our sins for him to be conscious of them. Read Acts 5:1-11. Here we read of a man and his wife who conspired to lie (not confess, but lie). Peter, guided by the Holy Spirit, knew of their sin without them admitting it. If men were in Peter's office and had his power today, they would know the sins of the flock without their confession. Therefore, we would like to "ask the man who goes there," WHY DO YOU GO?

Their use of John 20:21-23 is a perversion of what the Lord meant. In the first place, the apostles had power which no man has on earth today. But even then, they forgave sins by teaching people "how forgiveness must be obtained." For example, when people asked Peter and the other apostles what to do, or how to obtain remission of their sins, they were told to "Repent, and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). Were they then and there exercising the power which Christ gave them and doing the work which he authorized and commanded them to do? Yes. Where do we read of anyone coming to the apostles, confessing sins, and being forgiven by them without obedience to the commands of the gospel? We don't. Or where do we read of Christians confessing sins to a priest? We don't. Christians confess their sins to God, and pray for forgiveness through (in the name of) Jesus Christ, their High Priest and Mediator.

Yes, truly, "It is God, not man, who determines how forgiveness must be obtained."

Foy E. Wallace Jr. *Publications*

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SOCIAL DRINKING

One does not attempt to change the things with which he is satisfied. This statement is a truism finding application to our personal life and surroundings as well as to our culture generally. We often hear, perhaps without understanding, "the Christian is in the world but not of the world." This statement generally intends complement to a life set on a heavenly plane rather than on the earthly. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, not on things of the earth. For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:1-3).

The lofty code of ethics and morals, the way of life with the Christian, originates not on earth with man but in heaven with God. The true child of God can be satisfied with and comfortable in surroundings and culture resulting from submission to the way of the God. When circumstances, not of the Christians' making or choosing, those that are worldly and sinful, or at best questionable, surround and confine the faithful child of God, such will invariably make for discomfort and uneasiness. Certainly one who has pitched his life upon the heavenly plane would be uneasy and fearful of creating circumstances that are of the world rather than of heaven, of Christ. Surely the Christian would have no part or lot in the popular "happy-hour" wherein one is expected to unwind after the day of work is done, either as a drop-in observer or as a participant, regularly or occasionally. I trust most of our readers are conversant with the reference "happy hour" as it relates to the practice of stopping for an occasional cocktail or alcoholic drink in the local lounge or bar after work. Reason being, the Christian is sufficiently uncomfortable in this kind of setting and circumstance to avoid it, to say the least of it. Valuing his image and influence the faithful would surely flee every possibility that might tarnish or mar, or in even the remotest way reflect upon the name of the Christ he wears. While we recognize many things of a similar nature we wish more particularly to address the use of beverage alcohol in this writing. Not, mind you, in the habitual way which produces drunkenness but the occasional way commonly referred to as social drinking.

The question of social drinking, whether at home, in other private or public circumstances, has taken on greater prominence and proportions in later years. The history of God's people has generally reflected an intolerance of beverage alcohol demanding abstinence in any

circumstance other than medical. Not so today as our society turns more to social drinking as acceptable. Whatever restraint and opposition characterized of the past has disappeared. Social drinking is endorsed to the point that members of the church engage in it and more and more are asking "What is wrong with it?" as they attempt justification in some form or another. Maybe the attempt at justification is at first hypothetical as the situation is posed like this: "Can a man drink one beer at home and not sin?" "What about wine for special occasions? On and on it goes in the same vein in an effort to justify a questionable or sinful practice by placing the burden of judgment and indictment upon one unwilling to accept its use due to scriptural understanding and respect. The accuser, rather than the user, is charged with the burden of proof, just like the sectarian charges when his error is called into account. The demand is, "Where does the Bible condemn it?"

Admittedly, pressures of business and society have contributed to the problem even with many disciples. Some choose to stay on the fringe of social drinking, or as I prefer the reference, occasional drinking, reservedly arguing and practicing private use in home while attempting to distinguish this from social drinking. Others publicly admit and endorse all such. Still others take a lenient attitude which is intolerant of any open rebuke via teaching and certainly is intolerant of any corrective discipline in the matter among brethren.

We need to appreciate the need for being aloof from our culture and surroundings because of righteousness rather than being overwhelmed by it. Change attitudes and practices rather than conform to the questionable and sinful. Dare to be different! Is the use of beverage alcohol right or wrong in any circumstance or situation? I unhesitatingly answer that it is wrong. Medication alone when prescribed, administered and taken properly is precluded. Maybe we could see this issue clearly if we put it in the form of this question. **Is social drinking, occasional drinking, right or wrong?** We are seeing cultural influence affect a noticeable change in the lives of brethren causing in many areas an attitude and practice of worldliness which is destroying the purity and distinctiveness of God's people.

There is no case to be made for the intoxicating wine of today from the Bible. To the contrary, in the nine Hebrew and four Greek words referring to intoxicating beverage in the Bible not a single instance of use in any one of the thirteen is with God's approval. What kind of influence toward Christ can one have upon a neighbor when he learns you take an occasional drink? Try inviting him to dinner, serve him a choice wine and talk to him about becoming a Christian while you sip it. Where has even a single drink ever produced good of a lasting nature?

An aged "mountaineer" preacher friend of mine in the discussion of this issue offered this homespun assessment. "There is about as much difference in a dram drinker and a drunkard as there is between a big hog and a pig." I can relate to that, can't you? Obviously, the illustration sets forth the difference as being only in matter of size and not in fact. Maybe we need to change

our terminology as previously suggested, to more accurately denote this and begin to talk about the occasional drink, and or drinker, and the habitual drinker and or drunk. That after all is the fact of the matter. Now, isn't it? Paul warned, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5:21). Within the same context he adds that the sanctity which preserves blameless unto the coming of our Lord demands it.

We need to quit kidding ourselves about drinking and some other things and recognize that such worldliness is a major deterrent to growth and purity of the church and unity of believers even within the church. If we cannot discern good and evil we need to be more fully taught so that we can readily do so. Apply Paul's statement, "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14). Once we take care of any teaching deficiency which obviously exists, we will need to muster a little courage and conviction so that we can all be what we ought to be, Christians, in the world but not of the world. God help us!

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"PROVOKE NOT..."

As reflected in my earlier article there are relatively few New Testament admonitions directed specifically to Christians as **parents**. The Holy Spirit, however, need not say something a dozen times for it to be true. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath" (Eph. 6:4) occurs only one time in the entire New Testament. Likewise, "Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged," (Col. 3:21) is found only once. Truly these admonitions may be considered God's "no, no's" for fathers (and mothers) and both deal with such child sensitivities that to disregard either of them is to produce emotional wreckage in the child and heartbreak for the parent.

Obviously a child may become enangered without a parental provocation and just as readily discouragement may stem from persons other than parents or even from conditions of the child's own making. The fact remains, however, that both wrath and discouragement of a child may find their course in the speech or silence and/or actions or inaction of a parent. That a parent may be responsible for either provocation should put every father and mother on constant guard lest either or both may be a major cause for the development of those traits in their own flesh and blood offspring.

Since being a Christian is an around-the-clock responsibility, parents cannot have time for any unguarded moments of thoughtless attention involving their children. A misplaced word or deed may be the spark that provides a temper tantrum or a needed word unspoken or a deed undone may be the raindrop direly needed to build confidence in a child tending to bashfulness or withdrawal from society.

The ultimate effect of repeated provocation to wrath is rebellion against the provoker. The fact that God warns fathers against provoking their children is the best reason imaginable for parents to study carefully the disposition of their children and learn from what they observe in them not to "provoke them to wrath."

In Ephesians 6:4, the Greek work for "provoke" means "to irritate beyond measure" (Young's *Analytical Concordance of the Bible*, p. 783); Thayer says it means "to rouse to wrath," "exasperate." In Col. 3:21, "to stir up; excite; stimulate."—Thayer.

In his *Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*, pp. 115, 116 more than fifty years ago Charles Eerdman wrote the following regarding "provoking" a child:

"The word denotes not only the coming of irritation and exasperation by parental exactions and demands, but, farther, the awaken-ing of anger by treatment that is harsh and oppressive and unfair. This is not to say that a father is never to allow a child to have his own way, or must permit a child to do wrong for fear of arousing its anger. Nothing could be more unkind than to let a child believe that by an exhibition of temper it can secure anything it may desire. This is the abdication of parental authority. This is to make a child the constant victim of self-indulgence and caprice. What the exhortation does forbid is such unfair treatment, such cruel demands, such a selfish insistence upon authority, as to awaken in the heart of a child a rankling sense of injustice." William Barclay declares that "there are three ways in which we can do injustice to our children." He then observes:

"(1) We can forget that things do change, that the customs of one generation are not the customs of another. Elinor Mordaunt tells how once she stopped her little daughter from doing something by saying, "I was never allowed to do that when I was your age." And the child answered, "But you must remember, mother, that you were then, and I'm now." Parents can do infinite damage by forgetting that times change and customs alter.

"(2) We can exercise such a control that that very control is an insult to our own up-bringing of our children. To keep a child too long in leading-strings is simply to say that we do not trust him, and to say that we do not trust him, is simply to say that we have no confidence in the way in which we ourselves have trained him. It is better to make the mistake of too much trust than of too much control.

"(3) We can forget the duty of encouragement. Luther's father was very strict, too strict, strict to the point of cruelty. Luther used to say: "Spare the rod and spoil the child—that is true; but beside the rod keep an apple to give him when he has done well." Benjamin West tells how he became a painter. One day his mother went out leaving him in charge of his little sister Sally. In his mother's absence he discovered some bottles of coloured ink and began to paint Sally's portrait. In the doing so he made a very considerable mess of things with ink blots all over. His mother came back. She saw the mess, but she said nothing. She picked up the piece of paper and saw the drawing. "Why," she said, "it's Sally!" and she stopped and kissed him. Ever after Benjamin West used

to say: "My mother's kiss made me a painter." Encouragement did more than rebuke could ever do. Anna Buchan tells how her grandmother had a favorite phrase even when she was very old: "Never daunt on youth."

As Paul sees it, children must honour their parents; but parents must never discourage their children. Barclay, *Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, pp. 211, 212.

BREAD OF LIFE

"I am the bread of life... so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." Jno. 6:35, 57.

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BABYLON, NOT YET FALLEN

The fall of "Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" is predicted and described in Revelation 17 and 18. The saints of God are assured of her destruction and told to rejoice over her "for God hath avenged you on her" (18:20). She is pictured as a great harlot and the ancient wicked city of Babylon, involving the rulers of nations along with their subjects, all venting their anger against the Christians who refused and opposed their worldly and sensuous ways. "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth" (18:24).

The assured doom of Babylon, the Beast, and Great Dragon in the latter chapters of Revelation, along with the ultimate victory of the saints and their reward, was to give Christians comfort, assurance, and strength to endure unto the end. They would, in the end, be victorious and rewarded with eternal life in heaven. But until Christ comes and these enemies are destroyed and cast into the lake of fire, Christians must continue to endure harassment, physical, economic, and emotional persecution, even unto death... martyrdom.

In America Today

Some seemingly think that in America, with our Constitution guaranteeing religious freedom and where pride is taken in calling ourselves a Christian Nation, Babylon the great has already fallen. Such, however, is not the case. Such thinking reveals deception or wishful thinking.

For the past few decades America has been becoming more and more worldly, sensual, indecent, unmoral, vulgar, and ungodly. This is the result of Atheistic, Communistic, and Humanistic philosophy pervading the minds of Americans through our schools, the media, and even churches. All of these philosophies dethrone God, spiritual influences, and moral concepts, putting

in their place the belief that whatever pleases man-gives him satisfaction—is right.

Already, this philosophy has invaded the judges, courts, and law-makers of America to the extent that any reference in text books to a creator or creation as a theory of origin (though there is more scientific evidence for creation than there is for evolution) is illegal; a preacher being invited to a school chapel assembly to conduct a devotional or speak on spiritual matters is out; even some one uttering a spontaneous prayer at some school function is declared illegal; An officer who shoots a criminal in the act of committing a crime or fleeing from a crime is a greater criminal than the one shot; capital punishment is as great a crime as the murders committed. In all these things, the philosophy says the human rights of the infidel, criminal, and murderer are violated. Actually, it is evidence of Babylon's presence in our day.

A Recent Example

Just recently the press carried a story that illustrated this very vividly, and should strike terror to the heart of every Bible believing and spiritually minded person. A woman who was a member of the Collinsville church of Christ, near Tulsa, Oklahoma was guilty of fornication and after repeated exhortations and warnings on the part of the elders that failed to bring repentance, was publicly withdrawn from in accordance with Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-11; 2 Thess. 3:6,14-15. The paper reported that the woman resigned from the congregation in anticipation of the sanctions, but that the letter of withdrawal was ready anyhow. The woman sued the elders of the church for invasion of privacy and intentional infliction of emotional distress. Her lawyer, Thomas Frasier is quoted as saying "It doesn't matter if she was fornicating up and down the street, it doesn't give the church the right to stick their noses in." In his closing arguments to the jury, Frasier said "I demand the right, on behalf of Marion Guinn, to lead her life the way she chooses to lead her life... He was a single man. She was a single lady, and this is America."

The jury of seven men and five women "quickly agreed that the church had violated Ms Guinn's rights" and awarded her \$390,000. Some jurors wanted to award her much more. The case, of course, will be appealed.

Here is a clear example of Humanism vs God and the Bible (The Babylon of Rev. 17-18), "drunken with the blood of saints", manifested in our day. Believing and following the Bible is a crime, punishable by a heavy fine; at another time, maybe imprisonment or even death.

While the Humanistic minds are trained to reject every controlling force in their life (Parents, Schools, Law, Church, God) except Self, the spiritually minded actually desire and seek Christianity as a directing force in their private lives. It is in this area that Christianity (religion) operates. The gospel of Christ has to do with the "inner man" and teaches, influences, warns, and directs the one embracing it in every area of his private and public life. Citizens of this spiritual kingdom have

accepted the Lord and His Word as the directing force in forming or dissolving a marriage, in rearing children, in conducting business, in State matters, in worship, in manner of life-involving speech, dress, and actions. Discipline through a local congregation is part of the system. No one is forced to enter against his will. Every citizen is such voluntarily. . . "from the heart. . . willingly". Upon entering, one asks for the discipline as much as the prayers, fellowship, teaching and worship that is involved. Discipline is no more invasion of privacy than other teaching and actions that may be abrasive to a carnally minded one.

The fact that Ms Guinn resigned from the Collinsville congregation in view of the pending action did not loose the elders from their responsibility to "mark"—that others may fear, and urge other members to "withdraw—have no company with", that she might be "shamed" to repentance. To escape the discipline for her fornication, she should have withdrawn (quit the church) before she decided to engage in fornication.

That trial jury that convicted the elders of the Collinsville church of "Invasion of privacy" and purposely "inflicting emotional and mental stress" actually declared that practicing what the Bible enjoins is a crime.

Such a concept could bring on a rash of legal suits from many others who have been "withdrawn from", or in the denominational world, "banished"—"excommunicated", "turned out of the church"!

Is It A Crime?

Is it really a crime (illegal) for people to carry out Scripturally required actions (their faith) in America? Infidels say it is a crime for one to lead a voluntary, spontaneous, prayer, or conduct a devotional, at a school function, for it violates their right, and their children's, to not hear or observe it. Their sentiment, even this day, sits in our Federal Courts. I wonder how long it will be before a church building in a prominent place, with a bulletin board in front, will be offensive to infidel's children who have to pass by and see such a thing, and the Courts are petitioned to have it removed?

Have I really committed a crime in preaching from the pulpit, or from house to house, Matt. 19:1-9 and other passages on fornication, if such causes one to leave an adulterous union, so that the other one involved could sue me for "alienation of affections and invasion of privacy, or inflicting great emotional distress? Indeed, Babylon, the great harlot, is not yet fallen. She is still set on destroying the concept of God and His Word in America, persecuting and penalizing its exponents, and soon may once again be "drunk on the blood of saints".



ALL OF THE TRUTH
ON "ALL"

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In studying the word of God, or any other book for that matter, we should be careful to know the meaning of the words we read and use. We understand that words may have different meanings when used, depending on the context. For instance, The word "all" may be used (and often is used) to denote absolutely every thing or every body. If we don't know that we will be hopelessly confused as to the meaning of several expressions. For instance:

In Gal. 6:10 the Bible says do good unto "all men." That means we should do good unto everybody without exception. I challenge anybody to deny that everybody is embraced in the word ALL. But in 1 Cor. 9:13 we have the expression "all men" used. But the word here does NOT mean everybody without exception. I challenge anybody to say it does. The context shows that SAINTS is the subject being discussed. (See verse 1.)

If 1 Cor. 9:13 doesn't mean everybody without exception (neither Woods nor Totty, nor McCaghren, nor Highers would say it did) then it means that church benevolence is limited. But if church benevolence is limited, how are we going to find out just who the church can help? We must consider the context of the subject at hand.

The context involves a collection (distribution) which was expressly **raised for saints** (1 Cor. 16:1-3; Rom. 15:26). It was **sent to saints** (1 Cor. 16:3; Rom. 15:26). It was **received by saints** (Rom. 15:31). And it **supplied the want of saints** (2 Cor. 9:12). There is not a hint in the New Testament of money being raised for anyone other than saints, being sent to anyone other than saints, being received by anyone other than saints, or supply-ing the want of anyone other than saints. If so, **where is it?**

I say church benevolence is limited to **saints**. I further say it is limited to **faithful** saints. I further say it is limited to poor faithful saints. If it isn't limited to saints, then it is for saints and non-saints. Who wants to say it is for non-saints and cite a passage that says so? If it isn't for faithful saints, then it is for faithful and **un-faithful** saints as well as for non-saints. Who says so? Cite me a verse. If it isn't limited to poor faithful saints, then it is for poor faithful saints and also for rich **un-faithful saints**." Who can believe that?

Is church benevolence limited? I say it is! To whom is it limited? I say to faithful saints. I believe we should always be able to cite chapter and verse for what we believe. I can cite chapter and verse for church benevo-

lence to saints. For twenty-five years I have called upon my liberal brethren to cite a single verse of scripture for church support of those who are not saints. They have not come up with a verse yet. Thus they are somewhat like the little girl who was called upon to define the word faith. Said she: "It is trying to believe something you know isn't so." If God hasn't sent these brethren strong delusion that they might believe a lie that they all might be damned (2 Thes. 2:11-12), why don't they produce at least a single verse that says the church should help non-saints?

TOWARD MORE EFFECTIVE TEACHING

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Since the great commission our primary objective, as disciples of Christ, has been to preach the gospel. Such questions as, "How can I be more effective in teaching the gospel?" should be of special interest to all of us. The purpose of this article is to call attention to some things that will prove helpful in teaching the lost.

Be Converted Yourself

An individual who is not truly converted himself is going to have difficulty in being motivated to teach others. As he attempts to do so he will not be very effective. A teacher of the gospel must live a life that exemplifies Christianity morally and spiritually.

Paul condemned the Gentiles for their sins in Romans 1. In chapter 2 he condemned the Jews, who claimed to be teachers of the law, for practicing things they condemned in the Gentiles. Paul said the name of God was blasphemed because of them. The "Christian" who teaches one thing and practices another causes the name of God to be blasphemed.

The teacher of the gospel must be spiritually minded. True spirituality is not characteristic of the "Oozing Christian." An "Oozing Christian" is one who wears his religion on his sleeve. True spirituality is not a sort of syrupy attitude which goes around saying "Praise the Lord" all the time.

The faith of the spiritually minded man is more than an "Environmental Faith." It is deeper than what can be produced by one's surroundings. Second generation Christians are specially vulnerable to this kind of faith. Their environment has produced within them a semblance of Christianity. But it consists in outward formality only and is not genuine.

The spiritually minded man has a genuine desire to please God from the heart. He is totally committed to Christ. He is willing to sacrifice, to spend and be spent in God's service. He is not like the young doctor who volunteered to go overseas to serve God, but prayed not to go to Africa. His spirituality is meaningful to him. If your spirituality is not meaningful to you how do you

ever expect to make it meaningful to someone else? Perhaps you need to sit down and write out the reasons why you are a Christian. Are you a Christian because you appreciate the compassion that God has had on you? If so, develop this same appreciation in others and see them obey the gospel.

The man who is truly converted will have a genuine interest in those who are lost. He will not be motivated by a desire for the congregation to grow so that he can say "Look what I have done." Whatever we may do is only with God's help and he is the one who should receive the glory. We must be motivated by a love for the lost. If our motives are not right the man who is lost will sense it and close us and the gospel out. Young people convert those they want to marry because they love them and take a personal interest in their spiritual lives.

Seven Principles for Action (John 4)

1) *Contact others socially (4:1-7a)*. I am afraid that many of us limit our circle of friends to those who are already Christians or limit our association to our immediate family and do not have any friends. If we do not know any non-Christians how can we introduce them to Christ? It is good to be careful not to be influenced by others to do evil, but Jesus associated with tax-gatherers and sinners and explained his actions by saying, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick."

2) *Establish a common interest (4:7-8)*. Most likely this common interest will be something physical, flower gardening, children, etc. Jesus' common interest with the Samaritan woman was water. More often than not we would like to skip over this preliminary step and get on with the proclamation of the gospel, but our success will be greater if we establish a mutual interest first and then make a transition from the common interest to spiritual matters.

3) *Stimulate interest (4:9-15)*. Merely saying something, anything, may stimulate interest. The fact that Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman was unusual. The joy of our lives should spark interest in others. A discussion of world events might lead you to ask, "What do you think is wrong with the world?" After listening to what our friend thinks we might ask, "How do you think religion enters into this situation?"

4) *Don't go too far too fast (4:13-19)*. Jesus did not immediately introduce himself to the Samaritan woman as the Christ. I once watched my Dad walk up behind a bird sitting on a clothes line post and take hold of its tail feathers. The lesson I learned was that the accomplishment of some goals takes patience. Be careful about being too eager.

5) *Don't be harsh in your condemnation (4:16-18)*. Do not encourage sin, but be careful with your condemnations. In conversations with non-Christians they may talk of "the signs of the times" and explain that the end is near for the earthly reign of Christ. But this is probably not a good time for an hour sermon entitled "The Evils of Premillennialism."

6) *Stick with the main issue (4:20-26)*. The Samaritan

woman, upon learning that Jesus was a prophet, immediately brought up a controversial issue—where ought men to worship, Jerusalem or Mt. Gerizim? Jesus answered her question and brought her back to the main issue, namely the Messiahship. I have had many people try to divert attention away from their need to obey the gospel by bringing up questions on mechanical instruments in worship, the role of women in the church, etc. Having the right answers on these questions will not help me if I refuse to accept Christ and be baptized.

7) *Direct confrontation (4:26)*. We must finally bring the non-Christian to the point that he realizes he must make a decision. Jesus confronted the Samaritan woman with the fact that he was the Messiah. She must either accept him or reject him. We should be equally clear in our teaching. Those that we teach must realize that a decision must be made either to accept Christ or reject him.

Targeting Our Efforts

In order to be most effective in teaching the gospel we need to know where to spend the majority of our time and efforts. We are to teach the gospel to all the world. Great wisdom should be used in the accomplishment of this task. Statistics indicate that 70-90% of all conversions come from friends and relatives of Christians. The use of the media accounts for only .001%. The preacher for only 3-5%. All other means fall into the 1-4% bracket.

This does not mean that we should abandon our work with newspapers, radio and television. What it does mean is that members must be impressed with having their friends and relatives read our newspaper articles, listen to our radio programs and watch our television programs.

Note the many references to household conversions in the N.T. Let us place our emphasis upon teaching our friends and relatives the gospel. Let preachers, elders and Bible class teachers impress the congregation with the fact that the individual Christian working among his family and friends is the key to the growth of God's kingdom.

Conclusion

"How can you be more effective in teaching the lost?" Be converted yourself. Put into use the seven principles Jesus used. Center your efforts on your friends and relatives.

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IN NEW BUILDING

DAVID BEATTY, P.O. Box 293, Swansboro, NC 28584—This is to inform readers of STS that the church in Swansboro, NC is now meeting in a new building built primarily by members of the congregation. We are located at the intersection of Seaboston St. and W. Shore Dr. with highway 24. We invite all traveling in eastern North Carolina to stop and worship with us.

ROYAL HEIGHTS LECTURESHIP

CHARLES G. CALDWELL, JR., Franklin, Tennessee—The Royal Heights church located Highway 96 exit of I-65 at Franklin, Tennessee will conduct a lectureship July 22-26 on the theme: "Christ In You, The Hope of Glory." Three speakers will be featured: Ward Hogland, Colly Caldwell and Ed Harrell. Other gospel preachers will teach day classes. Rooms (not meals) will be furnished for out-of-town visitors in private homes. If you prefer a motel room, we will be glad to make reservations for you. There are two nationally known motels within walking distance of the building. We suggest you make reservations early. Franklin is just 20 miles south of Nashville where the summer months invite many tourists to the area. Why not spend some of your vacation with us. It will be a rewarding experience.

BEN PUTERBAUGH, 2269 34th Ave., Longview, WA 98632—After four good years in Casey, Illinois we have moved to Longview, Washington. Gale Towles will begin work in Casey June 1st of this year. The congregation is sound and zealous and should continue to grow.

Now we are set for the task of preaching the gospel in Longview. This is virgin territory. We are working with a small group of Christians, and as far as I know, this is the first sound work in the Longview-Kelso area where there is a population of about 75,000. We meet presently in the Lone Oak Grange Hall which is adequate for now for auditorium and classroom space. We number 25 and can presently provide \$700 a month in support. We are therefore short on support and lack some on our moving expenses. If you can help we would be grateful and will provide a detailed accounting of needs and funds. We also need contacts you may have in the area. Lloyd Barker, L. A. Stauffer, Harold Trimble, Bill Fain and Keith Burnett all know me well enough to give you an evaluation of my character and work. Our phone number is (206) 523-5360.

BOND ISSUE FOR BUILDING IN KILLEN, ALABAMA

JAMES B. THIGPEN, Brookhill Church of Christ, P.O. Box 208, Killen, AL 35645—In June 1983, six families established a new congregation in the Killen area 10 miles east of Florence. We currently meet in an apartment building with an average attendance of 30, with pulpit preaching by our members and other faithful preachers in our county and in Florence. We have acquired an excellent location and have the property ready for building. Due to high interest rates, we have chosen to use a Bond Issue to finance the cost of the building and furnishings. Our building will seat 180 with 8 classrooms, nursery and study. The bond issue is for \$126,000. Our own members purchased \$40,000 of that amount and other bonds have been sold to date.

Contact us for information about remaining bonds. Also, for information about us you may contact: Harold Comer of Florence (phones: 205-766-0403 or 766-9252); Johnny Richardson of Florence (phone 205-764-7611); or Olin Kem of Sheffield (phones: 205-381-2870 or 391-1497).

ALL DAY MEETING

JOHN W. PITMAN, 2730 Inca Lane, Winston-Salem, NC 27103—There will be an all day meeting on Saturday, July 21, 1984. There will be four speakers during the day. The time will be from 10-12 A.M. and 2-4 P.M. Brethren from out of town are welcome. We meet at the corner of S. Main and W. Wright Sts. Phone: (919) 768-9069 or 998-4002. Then July 22-25, Charlie Graham of Dayton, Ohio will be in a meeting here. The Winston-Salem area offers many opportunities for those wanting to relocate or retire. The small church would be glad to have the added help. My total support now is \$725 a month which is far from adequate these days.

PREACHER WANTS TO RELOCATE

STANTON SEE, 101 E. Pinecrest, McMinnville, TN 37110—After three and a half years with the West End church in McMinnville, I have decided to make a change. I would be interested in talking with churches who are looking for a preacher to work with them. References can be given. Contact me at the above address or phone (615) 473-8159.

PREACHERS NEEDED

UHRICHSVILLE, OHIO—The small church here is seeking a faith-ful preacher to work in this area. We can provide partial support. For more information call (614) 254-4066 or (216) 364-3090, or write to: Church of Christ, 638 Parrish St., Uhrichsville, OH 44683.

VERNON, ALABAMA—The Lamar church in Vernon need a full time gospel preacher to begin work immediately. The church is small with lots of potential and can furnish partial support. Please call or write Thomas H. Bobo, Rt. 2, Vernon, AL (205) 695-9646; or O. Y. Smith, Vernon, AL (205) 695-9547.

CROSSVILLE, TENNESSEE—The church at 127 South, Crossville, TN is looking for a preacher. Contact Riley Norris (615) 484-2089, or write Route 8 Box 559, Crossville, TN 38555.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI—The church which meets at 5825 Sterline Ave., Raytown, MO 64133, is in need of a preacher to work full time with a congregation of about 30. We can supply partial support. If interested please send a resume with personal references to the church at the above address.

SHOALS, INDIANA—A full time man is needed to work with the Main St. church in Shoals, Indiana. A younger man (20-40) is preferred, but any inquiry will be seriously considered. We regret that we cannot offer much support at this time, but we can offer a challenging

work with a group of Christians that have a good attitude. Can you help us? Write to us at P.O. Box 576, Shoals, IN 47581.

LARRY HOUCHEN, 3433 Studebaker Road, Long Beach, CA 90808—After 8 years and 8 months with the fine church in Tustin, California, I began laboring with the Studebaker Road church in Long Beach on February 1. Mike Wilson will begin work at Tustin in June. The Studebaker Road congregation has stood for the truth for a number of years. Jady Copeland, Brent Lewis, J. T. Smith and Mike Hardin have labored with the congregation in past years. The congregation is served by three elders: Dick Fulbright, Rex Fuller, and Del Scott. We anticipate a fine work together. When in the area, please visit us.

EDITORIAL LEFTOVERS

In April it was my pleasure to work again with the Hebron Lane church south of Louisville, Kentucky in Bullitt County. We had a part in starting that work in 1973 and live only three miles from the building. Donald Townsley began work there in January, 1984. The church is overseen by four good elders and they are blessed by one of the most impressive looking crop of young people you will find any-where. They fill about 1/2 of one side of the auditorium (down at front), come with Bibles and note pads and act like they came to learn. None of them are on the back seats. One young man was baptized.

Also in April, I worked with Harry Pickup, Jr., in a lectureship at Riverdale, Maryland (Washington D.C. area) where our older son, Wilson, preaches. The meeting was well attended, the enthusiasm high and the singing very good with the direction of leaders from Annandale, Virginia, Glen Bumie, Maryland and Riverdale. Harry was at his best, and I tried the best I could. The church at Riverdale is overseen by four very able elders. It was an added treat to be with our grandchildren and our younger son and his wife who also worship at Riverdale.

The following week, I was at Beaver Dam, Kentucky where Mark Moseley is doing such good work. The church is alive and growing. We had very good attendance and interest. Mark was well prepared for his first debate right after the meeting with a Baptist.

The last week of April Bobbie and I had the delight of hearing our son, Wilson, in a meeting at Expressway in Louisville. If there is any joy greater than seeing your children serving the Lord faithfully, then I have not discovered it in this world. I thank the Lord for elders who realize that young men can preach and who are willing to give them such opportunities. We certainly did not mind "keeping the preacher" and could barely stand to have our grandchildren with us for this week also! What a fringe benefit they are!

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	351
RESTORATIONS	121

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)