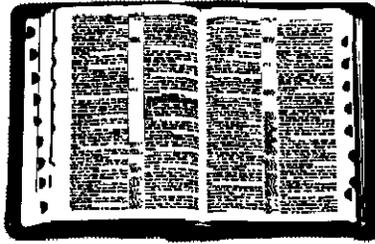


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

VOLUME XXV

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

H. E. Phillips

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Lutz, FL 33549



DESTINY OF THE CROSSROADS SYSTEM

The Crossroads religious operation has been climbing toward its summit in popularity and influence for the past few years, but now due to several factors we may see a decline in that which has been acclaimed as the most zealous church in evangelism in the southeast. The smoke rings will stay up just so long, then they will vanish. Any religious system based upon the philosophy of an emotional high of sensational thrills and rituals is destined to melt into the cesspool of denominational doctrines and works of men that have long ago been cast aside. The theological and religious systems of men have risen and fallen throughout the ages, and they will continue to do so. This is no less true of the Crossroads system.

The question naturally arises: What is the destiny of the Crossroads church of Christ and the philosophy espoused by it?

Someone will say, Crossroads is just another congregation of "churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16) doing a great work, and you are jealous.

No, that is not true. Crossroads is no more the church of Christ than the Christian Church is. It has far too much organization; it has the wrong gospel; it is engaged in the wrong work for the church; its worship is not in truth; its authority is not from Christ; and it seeks the wrong goals. It is another denomination in every sense of the word.

The Crossroads system actually had its beginning in 1967 from the design and work of Charles "Chuck" Lucas who moved from Miami, Florida to become

"Campus Minister" at 14th Street church of Christ. A well defined and smoothly operating organization was well on its way by 1978 when the name was changed to "Crossroads" because of its philosophy. From there it has developed a vast network of well trained "campus ministers" who are taught to infiltrate churches in whatever area they go and try to convert members to the Crossroads movement by perverting the word of God. They are skilled in this work.

At the most Lucas has been working on Crossroads seventeen years: from 1967, when he moved to Gainesville, until this present time. But from the time it was named "Crossroads" (1978) to the present time has been six years. Crossroads continues to spread its dangerous influence through propaganda over a larger area, but the disciples are getting so far from the truth that in many instances they do not resemble churches of Christ at all. Now the Christian Church is not hurting churches of Christ by their doctrine and influence. There was a time when it did, but it got so far from the truth that it no longer poses a threat of any kind to the church.

I am certainly not saying nor implying that Crossroads is about dead. To the contrary. The power already generated by the fervent zeal of Chuck Lucas, the elders and the leading personnel, plus the momentum and popularity of the movement, will keep it afloat for some time. I am saying, however, that the very nature of the system makes it destined to change and decay.

It does not take a prophet to predict that Crossroads will do much damage to the faith in many parts of the country before it runs the course. Already plans are made for Lucas to infect the churches in the Philippines with his insidious "soul-talks" and "prayer-partner" type evangelism which he developed from Robert E. Coleman's *THE MASTER PLAN OF EVANGELISM*. Other activities and training of personnel continue in many sections of the country and in Gainesville, Florida. We do not predict the immediate demise of this dangerous operation, but it will go the way of all the works of men because of its nature.

The difference between a religious movement such as Crossroads and the Lord's church, as it was in New Testament days, is the latter is organized with a simple local organization of "all the saints" with "the bishops

and deacons," nothing more. This is what the scriptures teach (Philippians 1:1). Contrast that with the "directors," "ministers," "leaders," "prayer-partners," and other official people who head "campus ministry," "forum," "seminars," Christian Family, Service," "Tape Ministry," "Crossroads Singers," "soul-talks," "confess and prayer sessions" and a dozen other such operations. The "Director of Social Services," for example, is both an office and a function unknown to the New Testament. All these must continue to change as the needs and demands change. But the spiritual need and function of the New Testament church remain constant through time; there is no need for change in anything. It will never pass away because it does not change! It is "a kingdom which cannot be moved," (Hebrews 12:28); built upon the foundation that cannot be shaken (Matthew 16:16-18; Ephesians 2:19-22).

Since most of the characteristics unique to Crossroads are based upon material and carnal values, there must be a constant change to keep up with changing values and to hold the appeal of its followers. There is no stopping. The more added the further away from the truth Crossroads goes. Such interests as the emphasis upon secular business, financial interests, entertainment, recreation, observance of religious and other holidays and education must keep changing both in organization and operation to stay alive. Every business man knows that. When an organization is tied to these interests, that organization is forced to change with the timely values. That is why Crossroads will not continue as it is.

The Crossroads concept of "bigness" is so constructed as to produce just so much momentum in the rapid growth for which it has become so famous. After that something else must be provided if the operation is to even come near its present and past record.

One reason why Crossroads will change in another generation is its almost exclusive appeal to the young and their needs. I am by no means opposed to giving attention to young people; to the contrary, I very strongly urge it. But it is not right to build programs of the church around youth and ignore others, and then call upon the young to provide the funds and zeal to promote the programs developed by the creator. The Crossroads system draws its fuel to feed the sizzling zeal of the founder and director, Chuck Lucas, from the young on campus of University of Florida primarily. When the zeal of these youth cools down, something new and different must be added. For that reason you can expect Crossroads to change over the next decade and it will keep changing. That is the course of denominations of this type. Just read history!

When the students go home, and when they reflect upon what the Bible teaches about the matters that they have been taught, they will either look for something more stable or they will return to what they were before Crossroads found them.

Human needs and wants change with seasons and generations. Since the Crossroads system is largely based upon the social Gospel, their programs to meet the social, emotional, physical and financial needs of the

(Continued on Page 4)

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

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MARKS OF A STABLE CHURCH

Paul rejoiced to learn of the steadfastness of the faith of the church at Colosse (Col. 2:5) and charged them to be "rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith" (Col. 2:7). "The faith" is that body of teaching which came from the coronated Christ by means of the Holy Spirit who guided his ambassadors, the apostles (Jno. 16:7-14; Eph. 3:2-6; 1 Cor. 2:9-16).

"Rooted" in him suggests the support of a great tree with its vast root system. The Psalmist described the blessed man who meditates day and night in God's law. "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psa. 1:3). "Built up" in him changes the figure to the realm of construction in which properly laid foundations are essential to buildings which endure. Paul said he laid the foundation in preaching Christ (1 Cor. 3:10-11). "And (ye) are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2:20).

Notice that they were both rooted and built up "in him." It is interesting in Colossians 2 to observe how many things are said to be "in him." Of Christ it is said "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (v. 3). He is the beginning point for true understanding and practical application. Paul challenged them to walk "in him" (v. 6). This required a continuing pattern of life. "In him" dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (v. 9). Deity was fully manifested in his bodily form. This was to the end that we might be "complete in him" (v. 10).

Threats to Their Stability

The church at Colosse was threatened by several systems of thought all of which were antagonistic to spiritual stability and its resultant growth. First, he dealt with philosophy (v. 8). World views which come down from human tradition are vain and useless. In nature they demonstrate "rudiments of the world" which are "not after Christ." The word "rudiments" was sometimes used for astrology and its attempt to read human fate in the stars. Then it was used for a file of soldiers. It also took on the notion of the A B C's of a philosophy, the basic elements of a system. It is my conviction that Paul here dealt with early Gnosticism which was later to have such devastating effect in unsettling those who were influenced by it. In this context Paul cut deeply

into the pride of those who subscribed to any such notion by contrasting this system to the fullness of knowledge and understanding we have in Christ. Since all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ and we are "complete" in him, then such a system as he warns against was most elementary and devoid of any real meaning when placed in contrast. They were of a different order, "vain", unsatisfying and actually were snares to catch them and rob them of their prize in Christ.

There was the threat of **Judaism** (v. 11-17). As Christians they had attained to a circumcision of the heart by being baptized into Christ in which act there was an operation of god which cut off sin and brought them forgiveness. The law was nailed to the cross, Christ had triumphed over death and now they were not to be judged regarding diet laws, annual, monthly or weekly observances which belonged to a system of shadows, now that the reality had come in Christ.

They were threatened by **mysticism** (v. 18-19). The appeal to boasted angelic visits, privy knowledge to secret things unrevealed to common people has always intrigued some. It yet does. Paul branded it as false and warned lest they be "beguiled" by it. If Christ fully supplies all spiritual nourishment in his body, then there is nothing left for this pretentious system to provide.

Asceticism was another threat (v. 20-23). Here was a system of human commandments of what to touch and taste and what not to touch and taste which operated on the assumption that there is some spiritual efficacy in punishing the body. Paul described such as "will worship" and said this "neglecting of the body" was without real honor. History has revealed many ascetics through the years. This is the spirit which produces monasteries and promotes the notion of penance.

As the church at Colosse faced these threats to stability, even so we are endangered by the same things and those of a similar order. Sectarianism of all sorts, secular humanism, materialism, astrology, immorality—these and more are modern threats to the purity of the lives of God's people and have a devastating effect on the stability of congregations.

Marks of a Stable Church

In the same chapter which dealt with specific threats to their stability, Paul also laid down principles which, if followed, would assure their stability as well as that of any congregation today willing to listen and practice what he said.

First, he said "that their hearts might be comforted" (v. 2). That means they were to be of courageous hearts. The forces of Satan are strong and well organized. It takes courage to be different, to shine light into darkness, insist on purity of character in a world intoxicated with lust, and to maintain doctrinal soundness before a world of false teachers.

There can be no stability without **unity**. They were to be "knit together in love" (v. 2). One reason the Jerusalem church grew so rapidly was because they were of one accord. There must be a common determination to

stand for the truth and a deep sense of concern for one another which recognizes the needs of babes in Christ and which draws upon the strength of the seasoned Christian. Feuding, fussing and fighting are not rooted in Christ.

A stable church is a **well taught** church. Paul said "unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding" (v. 2). Much of the feuding which occurs in local churches is directly attributable to the fact that for years there has been no balanced diet in the teaching, either in the pulpit, or the Bible classes, or both. What passes for Bible study in some places is a joke, and not a very funny one. Too many elders give too little time and effort to planning wisely for the whole truth to be taught to the flock. There are parts of the Bible which always are skipped. Teachers arise in too many places ill-prepared. Some think that if they can get everyone to "discussing" then that is great teaching. That all depends. If the "discussion" is from those who have seriously studied and who have something to say on the subject, as opposed to those who like to hear themselves talk when they have absolutely nothing to say, then that is one thing. Much of what passes for "discussion" is nothing more than a pooling of the ignorance. Compounding this problem is the fact that some teachers are not well enough informed to put out the brush fires that often start, and who leave serious matters hanging in the air.

Stable churches are **resistant to error**. They are aware that a false teacher might "beguile you with enticing words" (v. 4). They are willing to "try the spirits whether they are of God" (1 Jno. 4:1). They also stand ready to "mark them which cause offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" and realize that such teachers "by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:17-18).

Stable churches follow a divine order. Paul said "joying and beholding your order" (v. 5). The word here means that which is drawn up in order. It is used in 1 Cor. 14:40 in contrast to confusion in the assembly. Militarily, the term was used to describe a solid phalanx of soldiers, a bulwark of strength. There is a harmony between due arrangement, order and steadfastness in the faith. You can't have one without the other. The haphazard, hit-or-miss operation of some churches indicates their instability.

Stable churches are **steadfast in faith** in Christ (v. 5). "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). Improper worship, inactivity in evangelism, edification or benevolence, lack of discipline, all reflect a lack of faith in Christ.

Stable churches are **grateful** churches. "Abounding therein with thanksgiving" (v. 7). God has blessed us all far beyond what we deserved. We do not hesitate to **ask** but we are often slow to **thank**.

Stable churches find their **sufficiency in Christ**. "And ye are complete in him" (v. 10). We do not heed to update the gospel of Christ to make it relevant. It is forever relevant. We do not need to augment the gospel with fun, food and frolic. It is already powerful to save just as it is. We do not need to reorganize the church to

facilitate its work. God gave us elders, deacons, evangelists, teachers and all other saints so that each one may supply nourishment to the body thereby causing it to be increased in love.

How well does the congregation where you worship compare with this check-list of marks of stability from Colossians 2:1-10? Paul said that God proposes "to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel" (Col. 1:22-23). These are unstable times, but we are a part of a kingdom "which cannot be moved" (Heb. 12:27).

* * * * *

ABOUT OUR AUGUST SPECIAL

Once more we remind our readers of our special in August dealing with translations, and especially the New International Version. Donnie V. Rader and his father Dorris V. Rader have done excellent work on this translation which is being increasingly used by members of the church. There are some serious flaws in this translation as well as in some of the other modern speech translations. Some are substituting what they consider easy reading for accuracy in translation. The result is that more and more are becoming Biblically unlearned while thinking they are studying the Bible. Along with the material on the NIV by the Raders, there will also be articles by the editor and by H.E. Phillips, former editor, on translations. Extra copies may be ordered for \$40 a hundred, \$25 for fifty. Why not order a bundle and see that each member where you worship receives a copy. You will be doing them a favor. You may order these from: SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES, P.O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109-0069.

(Continued from Page 1)

members, as well as non-members, will have to continually change, together with the organizations to provide the programs. It has developed additional operations and the organizations by which to function, and gradually got into almost every social, domestic, financial, educational and entertainment area a religious operation could get into.

Crossroads relies upon "Total Commitment" as a major tool of discipline on every level. It is built upon a "Total Commitment" of its converts to the system and its leaders. I want it fully understood that I find no fault with the "Total Commitment" idea; I firmly believe it is required in the New Testament. It is like love: there is no question but that God requires man to love, but not to love just ANYTHING and EVERYTHING! The Holy Spirit teaches us to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world..." (1 John 2:15). As Christ, we must love righteousness, but hate iniquity (Hebrews 1:9; 1 Corinthians 13:6). We are not to love money, but we are to love our enemies (1 Timothy 6:9,10; Matthew 5:43-45). We are taught to love some things and hate other things.

With regard to "Total Commitment" we are to be

totally committed to Christ and his word without reservation, but we are not to be committed to any of the commandments and works of men. The names, ideas, schemes, doctrines, works and persons of men are not to receive any commitment from us, total or otherwise, when it is spiritually related.

A coerced psychological inducement to total obedience to the will of man or a select group of men who command an organization is far from "Total Commitment" to Christ. Whether by use of fear, shame or guilt, people are brought into subjection to a system; or if by drugs, hypnosis or peer pressure, the result of the "Total Commitment" exercise is exactly the same. In time it will give way because it is not based upon a foundation that is enduring. Only the deep faith in the person of Jesus Christ and his word will give the stability for a **TOTAL COMMITMENT!**

Such an operation as Crossroads must have discipline, and strict discipline. The "prayer-partner" function and the "soul-talk" group provide the spy network and the rigid control of the mind and life of every new convert to bring them into submission. This method is effective in keeping "Total Commitment" through intimidation, guilt and fear from senior prayer-partners and soul-talk leaders. They also offer a Catholic hierarchical method of indoctrination through this procedure. This is why Crossroads fell into so much disfavor with so many parents of new converts. Such rigid discipline and required dedication in a system such as Crossroads requires continual supervision and control to keep it alive and well. But the very structure of such a system will not continue unchanged for long.

Recently I was in Akron, Ohio in a meeting and I went through Grace Cathedral and listened to a woman explain the phenomenal growth of the work of Ernest Angley since 1955 when he began in a tent. At one time Rex Humbard was far ahead of Ernest Angley in radio and TV popularity as well as financial power, but now Ernest Angley has purchased Humbard's big church. That is what the guide told me as she took me through the beautiful and expensive plant Angley owns and controls in Akron. She told me Humbard kept his restaurant, which was connected to his religious organization. I asked if Angley and Humbard would join forces. She said, No. I inquired what the building would be used for, and she told me it would be used for making TV commercials for Angley's services and for duplicating his video and audio tapes for broadcast stations.

My point in reciting this is: What happened to Humbard? A few years ago most of his followers would have thought he would never lose his place, but he has. In time the same thing will happen to Ernest Angley. History tells us that this is the course of such movements.

Among "churches of Christ" Highland church in Abilene, Texas and the Herald of Truth stand out as examples. Those who are old enough to remember the power of that church in the mid 1950's when it had 12 elders, 21 deacons, over 300 teachers and 3 preachers. Over one thousand churches across the land sent regular contributions money to Highland to spend on the Herald of

Truth Radio and TV programs. This was an operation that required millions per year. Most people thought it would never die. It is now a much smaller, very liberal group. The men who are alive now and worked with the Herald of Truth oppose the ultra-liberalism of that church now as well as what is left of the Herald of Truth. The big unscriptural programs like the Herald of Truth usually last for a relatively short time.

Crossroads would disappear if those involved in its operation learned the truth, repented and came to obedience to the authority of Christ. It would lose every single characteristic that now identifies it as **CROSSROADS**. However, as long as it maintains these characteristics and engages in its present functions, it will remain a stranger to the Word of God. My prayer is that some, if not all, will come out from among them and be separate. It takes more than talking about truth to be saved; each of us must **OBEY** it from the heart.

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REFLECTIONS ON LIFE

*Wilson Adams*6434 Auburn Av.
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"It is better to go to a house of mourning than to a house of feasting, Because that is the end of every man, and the living takes it to heart" (Ecclesiastes 7:2).

I was extremely apprehensive about the trip, being uncertain of the reaction that the young man would have. We were going to the Wall—the 494 foot V-shaped wall containing the names of the 58,000 American servicemen killed in Vietnam. I had been there before. However, this visit was special, for out of those 58,000 names so carefully enisled in the polished granite one name, to this young person at least, would be more memorable than all the others—the name of his dad. It was his first trip to the Wall.

We parked our car just a few feet from the Potomac River. As an Eastern jet thundered directly overhead I pointed out the 14th Street Bridge and the approximate place where several people lost their lives in an air disaster just two years prior. We walked on, briefly turning our attention to the home of Robert E. Lee which gracefully sits atop a hill overlooking Arlington Cemetery, as we continued toward the Lincoln Memorial. There we paused momentarily, commemorating the great achievements of our 16th President who succeeded in piecing together the broken fragments of our once shattered nation. And there, just a few hundred yards to the northeast was the Memorial Wall.

I went on ahead as my friend lingered behind to find the name from the alphabetized directory. I searched until there on panel 25E, line 104 was found the reason for our trip. As he approached I wondered about his thoughts and reactions. I have seen both young and old lean against the giant wall and weep in uncontrollable sobs. I have read notes of affection scribbled by a young wife and left attached to the name of a dead husband. I have observed fellows in their forties wearing worn out fatigues staring teary-eyed as they thought about a buddy, a friend, a name on the wall. So naturally I watched with emotion as he drew near and as I pointed out the name that meant everything to him.

This is not a political statement nor is it intended to be a reflection of my own feelings toward the Vietnam campaign. Rather, it is a simple statement about life and about how we often take it for granted. At least I know I sometimes do.

Sometimes I get real busy, in fact, too busy. Do you have that problem? I'm often so engrossed in my daily labors (which never seem to be finished) that I don't have time to "stop and smell the roses," to enjoy the

good things of God and to take into account the many and varied blessings that He has so graciously bestowed upon me. That's too busy.

Folks, there never was anybody any busier than Jesus. There never was anybody sent on a more important mission than was He. There never was anyone who had more to do in less time than the Master. Yet, how many times did our Lord take the time to bend down and talk with the little ones, thus showing His affection for children? Once He even rebuked His followers for implying that the youngsters were burdensome, by saying, **"Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these** (Matt. 19:14). And obviously Jesus enjoyed the scenery of nature that He Himself had created. He often would leave the urban city centers and the crowds that were constantly pressing near to Him, hoping to see another miracle or possibly hear another grand declaration of truth from the lips of the Master Teacher, and escape for a few hours of quiet solitude on the Sea or in the mountains where He could be alone with the Father. He never got too busy to do that. And... he never was so overly preoccupied that He didn't have time for His friends. The hours our Lord spent at Bethany with good friends and good food must have been some of the rich-est in His short stay here below. Little things meant a lot to Jesus. He took nothing for granted. What a lesson for us.

Solomon well said, **"Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting; to eat, to drink and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun during the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward"** (Ecc. 5:18). Solomon's advice is to never become so busy that we haven't the time to enjoy the good things in life. "Count your many blessings . . . name them one by one. . ." Try sometime to catalogue your blessings. Such is but an exercise in futility, an impossible task for God has given us so much. Just the blessing of life itself—of being alive, of living, of being created in His image and in possession of an eternal soul that will live on even when this body wears out is an immeasurable gift. Let us never become so busy that we take life for granted or fail in our appreciation by not living it to the fullest. And may we always be aware of the fact that the quality life, the rich life, the abundant life begins with Jesus Christ.

I watched as he approached. He stared silently at the name savoring the moment and reflecting upon that which only he knows. And, then, a smile broke through—a smile of pride for a father he barely remembered and a good feeling of honor for a man his country appreciated. We took a few pictures then turned and walked away.

As we walked along in silence I couldn't help but think about the blessing and opportunities that God has so bountifully bestowed upon me and to reflect momentarily that as great as it is to live here—much more advantageous and enjoyable it will be to live with Him in the hereafter. I hope and pray that I never get too busy in living that I forget what life is all about. I'm trying hard not to. That day helped.

PHILIPPINES, '84

P. J. Casebolt
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The title of this article is neither exciting nor exotic, but I trust it will make for easy reference on the part of those who may be interested in the subject. The reader should not be bored with too much material on the subject, for thus far I am the only American preacher to make such a report. I know that there are brethren who are interested in the Lord's work everywhere, and some are especially concerned about the work in the Philippines.

I had no intentions whatever of going to the Philippines this year, but due to urgent requests on the part of some Filipino brethren, along with similar requests from American sources, I suddenly found myself getting ready to go about the middle of February. Anyone remotely acquainted with a preaching trip to the Philippine Islands knows that it generally takes several months to finalize plans for such a venture. Within about six weeks, I not only obtained a passport and visa, but someone lost them, I acquired new ones, had my plane reservations, and was on my way without even time to receive answers from the letters and telegrams which I had sent to Filipino brethren. In spite of such hastily made plans, I was able to accomplish far more than I expected. Credit is due those congregations who instantly came to my support, including Cedar Avenue in Moundsville, as well as my family, Connie and Wilson Adams, brethren Tibayan and Carino in the Philippines, and others, including my travel agency.

I mention these things by way of introduction for two reasons: (1) some American brethren may wonder why they weren't notified of my plans, and (2) some Filipino brethren may wonder why they did not have advance notice of my coming. For the most part, everyone has been more than considerate when they learned of the circumstances affecting my trip.

No other American brethren accompanied me, and while I would not recommend this procedure for all, it had its advantages in my particular case. Some plans had to be made or changed while on the go, and I had no one to worry about except myself. Sometimes I traveled alone, even in the Islands, but most of the time some Filipino brethren were with me, I was confident the Lord was with me, and I knew that hundreds of prayers were being offered on my behalf on both sides of the ocean. With such assurance, I could not feel completely alone, at least not for long.

The Church in the Philippines—An Appraisal

I left home on April 5, and returned May 17. I was

able to preach in thirty-two different locations, and travel some 3500 miles in the Philippines. I traveled by air, boat, bus, taxi, jeep, jeepney, tricycle, motorcycle, and when some of those vehicles on land had flat tires or ran out of fuel, I walked several miles. I was able to preach about sixty-four sermons, hold half as many "question and answer" sessions, preach three times on the radio, make a tape of songs for brethren to learn, and conduct one class in the rudiments of music. Thirty-one souls were baptized, mostly due to the efforts of Filipino preachers. My travels took me to Mindanao, Negroes, Panay (Iloilo), Mindoro and Luzon.

These things are mentioned for the benefit of any American brethren who may wish to inquire concerning the work in a particular place, and to show that any observations I may make, or conclusions reached, are not based on a brief tourist-like trip, or on hearsay information from some limited source. This was my third trip to the Philippines over a period of forty years, and I think I have a pretty good grasp of the situation there.

On the Island of Mindanao, the premillennial problem has done considerable damage, and the advocates of that doctrine are working their way north into the Visayas, and have their eyes on Luzon. By traveling among many congregations in a short time, I was able to obtain and dispense information that the brethren in some areas would not have obtained for months. The false teachers are just as active in their efforts to promote division and dissension, and I consider the need of providing faithful Filipino preachers with sufficient means to counteract these false teachers as the number one priority in that country. Many good preachers have lost either all or part of their support, have had to resort to secular work where available, and are being hindered in their desire and efforts to effectively offset those problems affecting the church.

At this point, let me emphasize the fact that **every problem** of a doctrinal nature had its origin in the United States, and has been introduced into the Philippine Islands by American preachers. Problems concerning the second coming of Christ, the Lord's supper, the covering, and liberalism have all arisen from the efforts of American preachers who seem to have no concern for the cause of Christ. And besides all this, Chuck Lucas, of Gainesville, Florida, renowned for his promotion of the Crossroads philosophy, was due in Davao about May 21. "For wheresoever the carcass is..."

The Economy

Several pages could be written on this subject, but I will spare the editor and the reader. I read article after article from politicians and recognized financial authorities, and I talked personally with brethren, taxi drivers, waiters, farmers, school teachers, and pump boat pilots. All were in agreement on one thing: the economy of the Philippines is in the worst condition ever in the history of that nation. Not a few experts predict that if the peso is devalued much further, that the entire economy of the country will collapse, and possibly trigger a loss of faith "in peaceful means of promoting our democracy."

The bottom line here is that while the American dollar is still strong, those Filipino preachers receiving it for their support are still going to face some hungry brethren in need of rice and other necessary commodities, as well as an economy that almost defies description. I paid P. 530 for a hotel room in Manila, and P. 180 for a comparable room in Davao. Yet, the same newspaper which cost P. 1.25 in Manila, cost P. 3.00 in Davao. How much should a Filipino preacher receive for his support? Some unmarried ones living at home in Mindanao (in the provinces), might exist on twenty-five dollars a month, while those with families in the larger cities of Mindanao or Luzon could easily use three hundred dollars per month. I would not be afraid to give some Filipino preachers five hundred dollars per month, and some don't deserve one dollar (just like some American preachers). It seems that our efforts to economize in the support of Filipino preachers has hurt the good ones, but not the bad eggs. Just as the criminal always seems to find a gun to perpetrate his robbery, so the unprincipled preacher finds a way to deceive brethren, while the one with principle becomes the innocent victim of circumstances.

The Political Climate

While the Filipinos approach politics with uncommon zeal, just as they do many other things, even they concede that the events surrounding the death of Mr. Aquino last year hurt their image. Several tourists cancelled their plans to visit the Philippines, and two American preachers did likewise. That is why I went. And, I would be the first to concede that at that time, faced with the circumstances which prevailed, they probably did the right thing.

Not a few were concerned with my safety, but knowing the customs of the Filipinos, and the desire of some reporters and editors (both Filipino and American), to capitalize on prospective headlines, I decided the risk was not nearly as great as the opportunity which came my way. Geographically, I know my way around the Philippines better than most, and several Filipinos will attest to the accuracy of this statement. I knew where most of the rebel bands were active, and put a lot of faith in the advice of concerned Filipino brethren. I changed my routes a couple of times when my better judgment told me to, and my decisions proved to be correct. By using my best judgment, the advice of Filipino brethren, and the prayers of concerned saints, I seemed to be in the right place at the right time. I also had confidence in the Lord whom I was trying to serve, and would not even enter Miami, Florida, without Him.

I know that the political situation in the Philippines could fluctuate any day, but in all fairness to the cause of Christ and the brethren there, I would not for one minute discourage other preachers from going, and would return tomorrow without any hesitancy whatever. I want no praise for one of the greatest opportunities of my life, thank my brethren, and give God the glory.

Building Better Families

James R. Cope

301 Green Castle
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"BUT NURTURE THEM..."

"The whole training and education of children (which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment.") These are words used by Joseph Henry Thayer, author of the great Greek-English Lexicon, to define the Greek *paideia* translated "nurture" in Ephesians 6:4 where Apostle Paul commands, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord."

There can be little doubt that the apostle laid the primary nurturing of children in the lap of fathers-fathers who are Christians. This admonition is in complete harmony with Proverbs 22:6 and Deuteronomy 6:6-9. Notice in the latter text the details **regarding repetition and insistence of constancy**: "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates."

Who would dare say that modern Christians have less obligation to their children regarding moral and spiritual revelation and regulation than did the parents in ancient Israel? The Lord lays the responsibility of "nurturing" children on those who bring them into the world. He charged neither civil government nor the church with this peculiar and personal duty. Whatever other responsibilities devolve upon parents who profess to love God, the one emphasized here is that of "nurturing" children "in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." The chief point in "nurturing" is **instruction or training**. "Admonish" means "to put into mind." The mind is the child's and the **admonishing** is the **parent's!** Every facet of the child's conscience belongs to the Lord. Truly both child and parent need to be constantly aware that "in Him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Not for one moment of one's accountability is he ever removed from responsibility "for we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be

good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). Neither parents nor children are exceptions to this rule.

Thayer's definition of *paideia*, i.e., of "nurture", prescribes the area of involvement—the **mind** and **morals** of the child. The cultivation prescribed is two-fold—education and training. Thayer's methodology is four-fold—commands, admonitions, reproof and punishment.

To **educate objectively** is to cause the mind to respond to intended stimuli. The result produced in the responsive mind is called learning. When words, objects, pictures and other impressive stimulants strike the mind impressions are formed and memory responds by storing or retaining the impressions made. Observable evidence of memory's role in moral and spiritual education is the "feedback" given by the words and deeds of the person stimulated by words and deeds of the ultimate stimulator (God). In the situation before us the parents are teachers or stimulators of the child's mind as they use the word of God. The ultimate desired effect is the moral and spiritual response of the child to the will of God in the child's own words and deeds. In a very real sense parents become God's aids in reaching the mind and moral nature of the child. Whatever commands, admonitions, reproof and punishment are used by parents in cultivating the mind and morals of the child should be so directed to the child's conscience that he ultimately understands his parents are God's conductors of his will to and for the child's knowledge and understanding of that will for his own moral and spiritual welfare.

The perfect illustration of the perfect child is the person of Jesus Christ who "advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk. 2:52). Viewed from any point Jesus is the ideal of balanced personality, for in him is the perfection of all mental, physical, spiritual and social qualities.

As reflected earlier Thayer's definition of *paideia* (nurture) involved four methods—commands, admonitions, reproof and punishment—by which a child's mind and morals are cultivated. I believe that there is one aspect or method of "nurturing" which should embrace all of these four and without which a child will seldom, if ever, develop the character which truly partakes of that of his Creator and Savior. This facet of nurturing by the word **encouragement**.

Certainly no child can develop without commandments (orders, instructions) as to what is expected of him or her. These must be unmistakably clear and the basic reason is found in the order given in Ephesians 6:1—"Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." When a command is obeyed "in the Lord" in the sense of this text, it simply means that anything the parent commands the child positively or negatively that harmonizes with God's will for that parent to require of the child, the child is to do it as if the order were directly spoken by God. God has never given an order which was not designed for the good of the person commanded for "his commandments are not grievous" (1 Jno. 5:3). So it must be with parental commands.

The scriptures abound in **admonitions**. To admonish

is simply "to put in mind." It is a sort of "**underscoring**" of what is commanded, an emphasizing of an order or expectation. "**Reproving**" may carry the thought of convincing i.e., "bringing acceptable evidence" or it may mean "convicting, i.e., "to tell a fault" or bring such proof as to point up or cause an awareness of guilt or erroneous action (Jno. 8:9, 46, Tit. 1:9; Acts 18:28). Punishment involves the execution of righteous wrath upon an evil doer. Probably the word "chasten" would serve better the thought of inflicting mental or corporal pain than punishment. Infliction of a penalty may convey a proper idea also. Consider Proverbs 13:24; 22:15; 23:13,14. Heb. 12:4-11.

No method of "nurturing" has more telling and far-reaching effects than "**encouraging**" of a child. The word "strength," which translates from the Greek *dunamis* (power), or "strength," from the Greek *endunamo* (strengthened) as reflected in the statement, "I can do all things in him that strengthened me" (Phil. 4:13), should be motivating thoughts for parents to convey to their children. Remembering the promise of Jesus, "Lo, I am with you always" undoubtedly was a major influence to lift the spirits of discouraged disciples at times and "I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5; Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:5) should serve parents well as they seek to build confidence in their discouraged children at many of life's crossroads when they are ready to surrender their ideals. Where, father and mother, would you now be if somebody—maybe a teacher, a friend, or your own parent—had not "stood by you" and strengthened you in your darkest hour? **Don't fail to encourage your own child!** He or she can be a winner, not a loser, because your love for him or her says, "You have it in you my child. God will help you succeed. I love you and will be praying for you!"

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BROTHER CHARLES HOLT AND REPENTANCE

"Repentance" is an interesting word. It means, a change of will that results in a reformation of life. In fact, both John the Baptist and Paul taught that we are to "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance." (Luke 3:8; Acts 26:20).

An alarming trend has come to my attention with regard to the above statement. Does time take care of sins without repentance? In recent weeks, brother Charles A. Holt has published a booklet entitled, "Is Baptism Essential To Salvation?" It is my understanding from those who have read the booklet that it includes excellent material. I am certainly not opposed to having excellent material on any Bible subject. In fact, I welcome it. However, I am amazed that brethren are not only commending brother Holt's booklet, but they are also commending brother Holt and leaving the impression that he is a faithful gospel preacher. **But where are the fruits of repentance?**

One brother, who is the publisher of one of the subscription periodicals among us said, "It so happens that Charles Holt is a long-time friend of mine... I am happy to see this work from Charles and am hopeful that there will be more of similar quality from his able pen in time to come."

I too would like to see more from brother Holt's pen. For example:

1. I would like to see an article from brother Holt telling us whether or not he has changed his views on what the Bible teaches about the "elder" question. Does he still believe, as he stated in the **Sentinel of Truth**, a paper of which he was the editor in the late 60's, that there is no such thing as the "office" of an elder, but that they are just the "older people" in the congregation?

2. I would like to see an article from brother Holt telling us whether or not he has changed his views on whether the local congregation is a functional unit. During his days as editor of the **Sentinel of Truth**, he took the position that the individual Christian is the largest "functional unit" taught in the Bible. Does he still hold this view?

3. I would like to see an article from brother Holt telling us whether or not he has changed his views about attending and teaching a class at the Brainard church of Christ, an institutional church in Chattanooga, Tenn. I was recently in a debate with brother Roy Deaver, and brother Deaver is under the impression that brother Holt no longer holds the same views that I do, and that

brother Holt once did, with regard to limited benevolence and the church support of institutional orphan home questions. And, in connection with this, it hasn't been that long since at least two false teachers, brother Leslie G. Thomas and Olin Hicks were asked to come and preach a series of lessons at the congregation where brother Holt now preaches. No wonder brother Deaver thought what he did.

4. I would like to see an article from brother Holt telling whether or not he has tried to make amend for dividing the church in Wichita Falls and Lufkin, Texas over his "no elder" "no local congregation as a functional entity" theory?

Brethren, I am not saying that a person has to be "cleared" with me before he is accepted as a faithful brother. However, I do think that before he is commended to the brotherhood as a faithful brother in the Lord, that brethren would like to know where the "fruits worthy of repentance" are after that person has preached false doctrine and churches have divided over it; when one has embraced and been a part of a congregation that is as liberal as the Brainard church in Chattanooga is; and when he has more recently had fellowship where he preaches, with false teachers. To my knowledge, there has been no correction of a single one of these things. If there has been and I am not aware of it, my apologies to brother Holt. I would, however, like to see the evidence. If there is none, where is repentance, and how can brethren commend brother Holt as a faithful gospel preacher?

(Editor's note: Before any of our readers get set to pounce on brother Smith for what he has written here, you might as well include this editor along with him in any such effort, for I believe what brother Smith has said needed to be said. I might add that I would like to see something from the pen of Charles Holt repudiating the Ketcherside movement since he has been a fellow-traveler and has appeared on some of the "unity fo-rums" around the country. I would also like to see some-thing from him expressing repentance for the bitter attacks he made against godly elders and faithful gos-pel preachers on the pages of SENTINEL OF TRUTH which he edited beginning in 1965. If any man ever dipped his pen more deeply in bitterness before writing than he did in those days, then I have not discovered it. For instance, he wrote:

"In recent years I have come to realize that, generally speaking, preachers (and I mean the 'full-time brand') are about the most suspicious, jealous, envious, backbit-ing, gossiping, unfair, and of ten-times the most vicious and malicious group among us! They are many times just plain nosy, busy-bodies, and meddling trouble-makers in the affairs of other congregations and in other people's business." (SENTINEL OF TRUTH, January, 1966, page 29),

This was said in a journal which complained that brethren had emphasized the "letter of the law" to the neglect of the "spirit" of it. Notice that Charles Holt did not say that these unholy traits were characteristic of "some" brethren, but he was "generally speaking." If you think he was hard on preachers, you should have

read what he was saying in that paper about elders. If one word of repentance has come from him regarding these unwarranted charges against preachers and elders, to say nothing of his false teaching about the church having no functional entity, then I have not seen it.

I, too, have read his book on baptism. It is well done. But while I can commend the material in that book, I cannot share the feeling of some these days who shower commendations upon him and who want to reopen pulpits to a man who has done such damage to the cause of the Lord and who has said or done nothing to correct it. The passage of time does not mitigate the seriousness of these offenses, nor is it a substitute for repentance.— CWA)

WHY THEY QUIT DEFENDING THEIR DOCTRINE (NO. 1)

A. C. Grider

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Shepherdsville, KY 40165



I have debated a number of my liberal brethren on Sponsoring Churches and benevolence among non-saints. They all decided that they had had enough of debating. Guy N. Woods and Alan Highers quit after only one debate. H. C. McCaghren quit after two encounters. Only W. L. Totty continued to try his hand in debate. Why? Why did they all decide to simply stop trying to defend what they were teaching? The reason is simple. It was not because I was smart. It was because I exposed their complete and one hundred percent lack of support for their propositions. The average person is still not aware that they lack even a semblance of support for their teachings. I will give you some examples:

Example 1. Thomas B. Warren wrote on "Sponsoring Churches." He is a prolific scripture quoter. He cited SEVENTY SIX verses of scripture to prove that one church could send money to another church to preach. HIS scriptures follow: Matt. 5:16; 28:18-20; Mark 12:29-31; 16:15-16; Acts 2:42; 11:27-30; 15:22-32; 20:7; 11:22-24; Rom. 15:25-31; 1 Cor. 13:1-3; 8-10; 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:1-15; 8:9, 24; 11:8, 13; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:13; 5:14,19; Phil. 2:13, 15-16; 4:15; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 13:7,17; Jas. 1:27; 1 Pet. 5:2; 2 John 9.

Just look at that array of scriptures! Surely he has proved that a church may send money to another church to preach the gospel! He has cited SEVENTY-SIX verses of scripture. But out of this great list of verses ONLY FIVE refer to churches doing evangelistic work. They are: Acts 11:22-24 where the church sent a man; Acts 15:22-32 where the church sent some men; 1

Cor. 11:8 where the church paid Paul; Phil. 4:15 where the church paid Paul; and 1 Tim. 3:15 where the church is the support of the truth. So, look again. Not one hint in any or all of the scriptures that HE used says anything that is a forty second cousin to a sponsoring church. Yet none of our liberal brethren ever questioned or ever doubted that he proved his point. But the same goes for all the rest of these brethren. They NEVER prove a thing by the scriptures THEY cite.

Example 2. Ben Taylor wrote a tract on "Potter Orphan Home, what it is." He set out to prove that the church could support an orphan home and cited the following scriptures. Acts 9:36, 42; 11:27-30; 1 Cor. 14:33; 14:40; 16:1; 16:15; 1 Tim. 5:16; Jas. 1:27. This is all he cited. FOURTEEN verses were used to prove that the church could support an orphan home. But lets look at these scriptures. ONLY ONE of them is talking about orphans and it neither mentions the church nor an orphan home. Read it in Jas. 1:27. TWO other verses have to do with church benevolence, but LOOK at THEM! Acts 11:27-30 has to do with church support of BRETHREN and the other one, 1 Tim. 5:16 has to do with church support of a WIDOW INDEED. So, Taylor's tract is a complete wash-out. Not a syllable in any of the verses that remotely touch the idea of church support of orphan homes. Now, I could go on, and perhaps I will in another issue of this paper, citing other men who have tried their hand in support of our liberal brethren, but all have drawn a blank. They CANT FIND SCRIPTURE for what they are doing. So they have about quit trying to defend such.



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EXPOSITION: TEXT and CONTEXT

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GOD HAS BEEN EXPELLED

America had a birthday recently. On July 4th, she was 207 years old, a relatively young nation as compared to other countries. It was in 1776 that the English colonies in America adopted the Declaration of Independence, declaring the colonies to be free and independent states.

The founders of our nation were very religious people. God was an intricate part of every facet of life, such as home, business, community and government. Though they did not want a State religion like they had experienced in European countries, they had no intention of divorcing God or religion from the new established government. Their aim was to separate Church and State—not separate God and State.

To the Colonists, God was near and an ever present help in time of trouble. "When the Continental Congress, faced with great problems and difficulties, knew not which way to turn, Benjamin Franklin called the members of the Congress to fall upon their knees and pray. . . . The picture of Moses was upon the first coin that was made in America, and today we still have on our money the grand old words, 'In God We Trust' " (*Simple Sermons for Special Days and Occasions*, Herschel Ford, p. 95).

Things Have Changed

But things are changing today. God has been expelled from our school system, prayer has been banned from our classrooms and atheism and humanism have been permitted to take their place. All of this has been done under the guise of academic freedom. Some academic freedom! The American people have been duped by the secular, humanistic, atheistic forces that are at work in this land. The ACLU (these letters stand for the American Civil Liberties Union, but the letters would better characterize the organization as the Anti-Christian Lunacy Union) has been leading the fight of these diabolical elements. The ACLU is the legal arm of the humanistic movement.

We are told that to have God and voluntary prayer in our state-supported schools is a violation of the First Amendment. This is a strange interpretation of the First Amendment in light of the religious convictions and practices of those who framed the Constitution and the religious inclinations of the general populace at that time. Can you envision our forefathers legislating laws that forbade prayer to God simply because it was a

government institution or was subsidized by federal money? How we have drifted. It is time for God-fearing people to let their voices be heard loud and clear or the Satanic forces are going to take over with hardly "firing a shot."

The First Amendment

Let us observe what the First Amendment actually says. We quote as follows:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

You will note that there shall be NO "prohibiting the free exercise" of religion. It seems to me when God, the Bible and prayer are censored from our schools, the First Amendment is clearly violated.

An article in *Educational Research Analysts*, Longview, Texas, stated, "The men who introduced the First Amendment wanted to prevent the establishment of a state church and protect the freedom of religion. They wanted Bible and prayer in government and public life. On September 25, 1789, the day the First Amendment was submitted in the U.S. House of Representatives, the House voted to establish an official Day of Prayer. They also voted for the re-enactment of the Ordinance of the Northwest Territories which included the statement: 'Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged.' "

The article points out that the U.S. House of Representatives 33rd Congress (1853) made a resolution maintaining that the U.S. is "dependent . . . upon Almighty God" and "the great vital and conservative element in our system is the belief of our people in the pure doctrines and divine truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ" and that "there can be no substitute for Christianity — that was the religion of the founders of the Republic and they expected to remain the religion of the descendants."

The article also states that in 1892, "the U.S. Supreme Court made a ruling very similar to the House of Representatives' resolution. The U.S. Supreme Court also ruled the United States a Christian nation in 1952 and 1961."

The article concluded, "Could not schools which fail to reflect that historic consensus be considered negligent? Could schools not be considered delinquent if they do not help communicate the national identity that we are 'one nation under God' and that 'In God we trust'? . . . Thus, leaving God and the Bible out of classrooms is indoctrinating students with a nontheistic religion, be it called secularism, atheism, or humanism. By distorting the meaning of the First Amendment, schools discriminate against the vast majority of Americans in favor of a tiny minority" (From *Pulpit Helps*, July, 1983).

Not Separation of God and State

Writing under the heading of Church and State, Tim LaHaye comments, "One of the chief reasons for the apathy of so many Christians today, particularly ministers, is a misunderstanding of an important concept: separation of church and state. By no stretch of the imagination was that doctrine ever meant to separate government from God. But if the church withdraws from all government involvement, that is exactly what will result" (*The Battle for the Mind*, p. 11).

LaHaye said in another one of his books, and quite accurately, I might add, "Our forefathers did not want government to establish a religion in this country, as European governments did in creating state churches. But in spite of our commitment to 'separation of church and state,' we have permitted the government to establish the state religion of humanism in our public schools and exclusively teach its religious beliefs to our children.

".... The Bible, prayer, and use of school facilities for church activities have been expelled from school. Now *academic freedom* means that humanists and other atheists are free to teach their atheistic beliefs, but Christians may not teach theirs. Consequently atheism has become the official doctrine of public education" (*The Battle for the Family*, p. 91).

There was an interesting article that appeared in *Temple Times*, East Point, Georgia, May 31, 1981 and reproduced in *Pulpit Helps*, July, 1983. It was entitled, "One Nation Under God." The article was written to show that our forefathers, as well as the framers of the Constitution, never intended a separation of God and State. We copy the following quotations from the article:

1620—The Mayflower Compact. "In the name of God, Amen, Having undertaken for the Glory of God and advancement of the Christian faith ... do ... solemnly and mutually in the presence of God covenant and combine ourselves together

1643—Constitution of the New England Confederation. "Whereas we all come into these parts of America with one and the same end and aim, namely to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and to enjoy the Liberties of the Gospel in purity with peace."

1681—William Penn. "If you are not governed by God, you will be ruled by tyrants."

1776—Declaration of Independence. Declaration of Independence. "... the laws of Nature and of Nature's God . . . that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights ... appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions... with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence. . . ."

1787—Benjamin Franklin. "Here is my creed. I believe in one God, the creator of the Universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped."

1787 —Alexander Hamilton. Soon after the Constitutional Convention: "For my own part, I sincerely esteem it a system which without the finger of God, never could have been suggested and agreed upon by such a diversity of interests."

1789—George Washington, Thanksgiving Day Proclamation. "Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection, aid and favors. . . . Now, therefore, do I assign and recommended Thursday, the 26th day of November next... that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks...."

1820—Daniel Webster in Plymouth, Massachusetts. "... more than all, a government and a country were to commence, with the very first foundations laid under the divine lights of the Christian religion... Who would wish that his country's existence had otherwise begun?" "Let us not forget the religious character of our origin."

1863—Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address. "... that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

July 4, 1913—Woodrow Wilson. "Here is the nation God has builded by our hands."

June 14, 1954—Pledge of Allegiance. Words "under God" adopted by Congress.

We can see that from the very inception of this great land of ours, a religious spirit has permeated its political, social and educational institutions. Only in recent years have there been efforts to divorce our government-operated institutions and government-subsidized institutions from God. Amazingly, these anti-God forces have been quite successful. Someone said in essence that in order for evil to succeed, good people only have to remain silent. And silent most of us have remained while wickedness has been actively at work. There are fewer than 300,000 hard-core humanists in this country but we have let them take control.

Louisiana State Senator Bill Keith wrote, "Experts who study the religion of secular humanism estimate that there are fewer than 300,000 hard-core humanists in this country. But millions believe in some of the tenets of humanism and tens of millions are being influenced by their religion every day.

"Though limited in numbers, their influence is far-reaching and permeates every facet of society. For instance, they:

Control public education in America today.

Wield a strong influence on the news media.

Influence most all textbooks used in our public schools.

Dominate many areas of state and federal government, particularly the programs governmental bodies carry out.

"Their humanistic doctrines are flooding this country today. It has a terrifying impact on the people in general and school children in particular" (*Scopes II, the Great Debate*, p. 57).

What Can We DO?

In order to get America back to where she used to be and save her from moral bankruptcy, what can we, as Christians and American citizens, do? Tim LaHaye sug-

gests 12 things we can do. Of course, two or three of his suggestions would have to be evaluated in light of biblical principles and then a judgment made.

LaHaye's suggestions are: (1) Pray for the governmental officials at all levels. (2) Continue sharing your faith. Convert people to Christ and get man back to God. (3) Continue to show your concern and compassion for humanism's victims. (4) Promote the national drive to register Christians. (5) Volunteer to help in the campaign of pro-moral candidates. (6) Work vigorously to expose amoral candidates and incumbents. (7) Become informed and enlighten your friends and neighbors, (8) Consider running for public office. (9) Join local, state, and national pro-moral organizations. (10) Speak out and write vigorously on moral issues. (11) Contribute to good, pro-moral causes, and (12) Assist other pro-moral organizations (*The Battle for the Mind*, —, 225-237). Mr. LaHaye finishes his book by saying, "Millions of Americans are waking up to the fact that we are facing a moral crises" (sic). We sure do need a moral and spiritual awakening in America. May God hasten the day!

May America learn before it is too late that "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).

A CASE FOR JESUS

Craig V. Thomas
 417 W. Nott St.
 Tomah, WI 54660

No individual in history has suffered more attacks on his authenticity than Jesus Christ. The prevailing opinions today concerning Jesus primarily fall into two categories. First, we have those who claim Jesus never lived but was a myth concocted in the minds of the first century writers. Next we have the rather large group of pseudo-believers who admit that Jesus really lived, but was nothing more than a mere man. This later group of detractors readily admits that Jesus was "a great moral teacher and leader of men", but place him in the same category with other greats of history such as Buddha, Mohammed or Gandhi.

The falsity and inconsistencies in these two arguments are blatant. First of all, even the unbelieving secular historians testify that Jesus was a real live, eating, thinking, walking, character of history. For example, the famous historian and skeptic H.G. Wells said concerning Jesus, "Here was a man. This part of the tale could not have been invented." (2) Therefore, one who claims Jesus really never lived will be made out mighty foolish by running counter to accepted historical evidence. Furthermore, not only do historians and skeptics admit the existence of Jesus, they also testify to his greatness. The historian Will Durant made the following conclusion about Jesus: "That a few simple men in one generation have invented so powerful and appealing a personality, so lofty an ethic and so inspiring a vision of human brotherhood, would be a miracle far more incredible than any recorded in the Gospels." (1) Whether they realize it or not, those who admit that Jesus really lived and that he was a great man are simultaneously admitting that the New Testament is a reliable historical document. Why? Because the extrabiblical historians contemporary with Jesus never recorded the many deeds and events of his life. Therefore, the New Testament is the only place one can go to find out why and what made Jesus great. To admit the existence and greatness of Jesus Christ, while denying the veracity of the New Testament, is a hopeless contradiction. The greatness of Jesus and the reliability of the New Testament stand or fall together. There is no middle ground.

Therefore when we honestly deal with the gospel accounts of Jesus we must ask ourselves: 1) Are those the attitudes and actions of a natural man? 2) Would a Jewish impostor posing as Christ have reacted in a similar manner?; or 3) Would a self-deluded lunatic exhibit the same character and attitudes displayed by Jesus? I respectfully submit that when one examines the evidence he must answer no to all these questions

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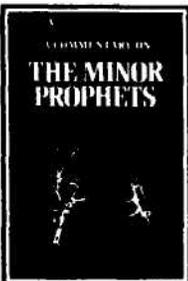
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and conclude as the centurion in Mk. 15:39, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

Let us further investigate some of the unnatural attitudes of Jesus.

1. Jesus lacked any hint of worldly ambition. A certain amount of worldly ambition can be found in almost everyone. Undoubtedly some of us have more than others; however, nearly everyone in some way strives to make his mark in this world. Jesus on the other hand was much different. He lacked completely many of the marks normally associated with ambition. He never went to college, never wrote a book, never held public office, never led an army, never owned a business, never amassed a fortune. In fact, he never even owned his own home (Mt. 8:20). Even when one came to him that could have financially helped his cause greatly, Jesus turned him away by requiring conditions many rich people cannot accept (Mk. 10:17-22). When men sought to make him an earthly king he refused and "... departed again to a mountain by himself alone" (Jn. 6:15). Instead of cultivating the support of those in positions of influence Jesus rebuked the prominent and associated with the poor and sinners (Lk. 15:1-2). Would a Jewish fake or a lunatic shun the rich and elite or refuse the coronation of the masses?

2. Jesus was a fearless teacher who never expressed doubt on any subject. When the chief priests sent officers to seize Jesus they failed their mission due to amazement over his teachings. In answering for their failure they could only offer the excuse, "No man ever spoke like this man!" (Jn. 7:46), Jesus did not apologize for his revolutionary teaching nor did he burden his audience with lengthy explanations or philosophical arguments (Mt. 5:32; 19:9). Instead "... he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes" (Mt. 7:29).

Jesus never failed to speak out even though much of his teaching was guaranteed to bring persecution. For instance, the Jews looked with great pride upon the temple and Jerusalem as the holy city of God and center of their hopes for physical kingdom. Yet Jesus explicitly foretold the destruction of both at the hands of the Gentiles (Mt. 24:2; Lk. 21:20-24). He snuffed out all hopes of a Jewish world empire by proclaiming, "My kingdom is not of this world" (Jn. 18:36). Would not a Jewish impostor have capitalized on the misconceptions of his potential followers? Would a lunatic have the mental acumen to teach such sublime, profound truth? What would a mere man have to gain by condemning the sects, traditions, and hypocrisy of the Jew-ish elite (Mt. 23)?

3. Jesus was entirely free of prejudice or hatred. Through the years the Jewish people became a prejudiced lot. However Jesus completely ignored the prevailing prejudices of the day. His attitude astounded the woman at the well, "How is it that you, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman" (Jn. 4:9)? Why the fuss? Because as John matter-of-factly records, "For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans." Certainly a pretender would have used prevailing prejudices to generate support. Men throughout the ages have fueled the fires of prejudice in their quest for

power. But not so with Jesus, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26-28).

4. Jesus' character was entirely free of malice or egotism. Is his statement as he hung dying on the cross that of an impostor or lunatic whose earthly plans had been thwarted (Lk. 23:34)? Can you name one act of selfishness on Jesus' part ever recorded in the gospels? Jesus spent his entire life in service and sacrifice to others. His very own words betray his humble character, "... the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:28). If Jesus were a mere man, impostor or lunatic would he have given someone else the credit for all the great ideas he taught or deeds he performed (Jn. 5:30; 7:16; 8:28)?

Therefore my fellow brethren rest assured that after all the attacks have been launched, after all the philosophical and theological debates are held, the character and authenticity of Jesus Christ remains untarnished. Jesus still stands as the Messiah, the Son of God, the saviour of the world and the giver of eternal life. Only an illogical mind that no longer wants to "... retain God in their knowledge." (Rom. 1:28) will unswervingly affirm that Jesus never lived or was merely one of history's great men.

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CORRECTION

In the May, 1984 issue on page 99, I said "We believe that, regardless of what some have said, the best and safest translations of the Bible are still the King James Version and the American Standard Version. These are based on the Textus Receptus. . . ."

It is the King James Version which is based on what is known as the Textus Receptus. It was a careless mistake on my part. —Editor

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NEW CONGREGATION

W. W. LAYTON, 546 C Hartnell St., Monterey, CA—This congregation began April 1. This is the first time a sound work has existed on the Monterey peninsula. We meet on Sundays at 9:30 and 10:30 A.M. and at 6 P.M. and on Thursdays for Bible study at 7 P.M. Phone (408) 394-8743.

IN NEW BUILDING

G. MARK NATIONS, P. O. Box 401, Spruce Pine, NC 28777—In November the church here began meeting in a new building on McHone Road in Spruce Pine. The members here did almost all of the construction. Everett Hardin of Johnson City, Tennessee held our first gospel meeting in the facility. Harold Dowdy is to be here in October. The church here began with a few Christians meeting in private homes. Attendance now is about 40,30 of which are members. I have worked here for four years, partly supporting myself in a secular job the first two years but now fully supported for full-time work. We now have a 30 minute radio program on Sunday afternoons. Spruce Pine is the only congregation in a three county area. This is great place to live or vacation. When you are traveling in the Blue Ridge Mountains, visit with us. If you have relatives or friends in Mitchell, Yancey, Avery or McDowell Counties contact me and I will visit them. Phone (704) 765-6215.

BACK TO MAINE

BRUCE HUDSON, P. O. Box 56, Milbridge, Maine 04658—Ralph Smart, Sr. and I have made plans to engage in a special work together. We both are ready to preach the gospel together to the east of Maine. This would include a few towns between Milbridge, Maine and the Canadian border. We would then proceed to work in various places in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island of Canada. These regions have been untouched with the gospel and to have the "seed" planted and watered there. We plan to reside in Milbridge, Maine where we labored before. This is the closest church to the New Brunswick border. The opportunities are great and numerous, as we already have many contacts in various places. Perhaps someone read-

ing this may have friends or relatives living in these areas. Please contact us about them. Write me at the above address or call (207) 546-7450 or 483-2242.

IN NEW BUILDING

KENT ELLIS, 9955 Neuens Rd., Houston, Texas 77080—After meeting for 4 years at the Creative Care Children's School, 9709 Long Point, Houston, TX, the Gessner Area church has purchased land and built a building at 9955 Neuens Road at Witte Road. Both of these locations are in the Spring Branch area of west-central Houston. This is the only congregation we are aware of in this area bounded by I-10 on the south, Highway 290 on the north, Loop 610 on the east, and Highway 6 on the west. There are an estimated 100,000 people in this area.

We will henceforth be known as the Spring Woods church of Christ. The elders are George Willis, Bob Perkins, and Kent Ellis. The deacons are W. J. Stephenson, Nill Roberts and Kyle Willis. The preacher is Kent Ellis. The new meeting place may be reached by driving north on Gessner from I-10 to the 3rd stop light. This is Neuens Road. Turn right to the corner of Neuens Road and Witte Road. Please visit with us when in this area and place us on your mailing list. Phone (713) 932-1219.

CRAIG MEYER, 55 Barrett Rd., Suite 634, Berea, Ohio 44017—After two and a half years with the church in Wooster, Ohio, I began work September 2, 1983 with the church in Berea, Ohio. This city of 20,000 is in the Cleveland, Ohio area, the eleventh largest metropolitan region in the U.S. This work began in 1955 as former members of the Lorain Avenue congregation began the new work with the "blessings" of Lorain; Ave. They met for a time in the Fine Arts Building, then in an old Lutheran building and ultimately in our new building. Since 1955, Ellis Webb, Olin Kern, Bob Nichols, Paul Kelsey, Bill Echols, Ralph Givens, Elvis Bozarth, and the beloved Luther Blackmon have preached here. We are at peace. Two have been baptized since moving here. Our meeting house is located at 24430 Nobottom Road just outside the city limits. We are the closest sound church to

Cleveland-Hopkins International Airport (3 miles south of it). If you need transportation to worship, please call. We have the cheapest taxi service in town! If you have friends, relatives we might contact, please let us know.

RODOLFO BERDINI, Via Giuseppe Perego, 58-H, 00144 Rome, Italy—In March I had the pleasure of preaching in northeastern Italy at Udine, where our son-in-law, Stefano Corazza preaches, and at Trieste where our son Gianni is the preacher. March 29-31, we had a special meeting in Aprilia in which Gianni Berdini preached. We advertised with big posters on public walls in town and distributed 8,000 personal invitation cards from door to door. We had 10 non-members present every night and also the comfort of the presence of many brethren of the Aprilia church, we continue personal work from door to door. It is not easy work. Prejudice and fear are often on the faces and in the words of those who open their doors. On April 15 two were baptized into Christ after our morning worship. It has been a great joy for us all here.

NARCISO S. ROMIO, 1010-C Tayabas, Tondo, Manila, Philippines—Gregorio Valerio is now working with me at Tayabas, Tondo, Manila. He is a Certified Public Accountant with a job in a government office. He is also graduating in law next year. He was previously with the liberals. His wife is a high school teacher. Besides our labor here on Sundays and mid-week, we also meet appointments at the request of brethren in Taytay, Rizal, Novaliches, Quezon City, Mandaluyong and sometimes in San Narciso, Zambales. Our labor is blessed with 8 souls baptized this year (report dated April 30). I express my great gratitude to concerned saints in the U.S. for their part and interest in the Lord's work here.

PREACHERS NEEDED

SCIOTOVILLE, OHIO—The Harding Avenue church in Scioto, Ohio (Portsmouth area) is looking for a preacher to work with us. We have 100 plus members and are self supporting. Write to: Box 223 Route 2, Scioto, OH 45662, or call: Earl Gampp, (614) 776-6155 or Bill Holbrook (614) 776-6059.

PISCATAWAY, NEW JERSEY—We would desire someone mature and well grounded in the truth to come work with us. At present, we are able to provide \$1,000 a month support. For more details, please call Richard Pflaum at (201) 359-1928.

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

Preaching in the Tar-Heel State. Late May found me preaching in Concord, North Carolina where Ralph Walker is doing good work. North Carolina is special to me. This was the home state of both my parents who grew up in the eastern North Carolina rural community known now as Pike Road, located about 14 miles from Plymouth. It was at Pike Road that I preached my first sermon when 15 years of age. Newport, North Carolina was the place where I held my first gospel meeting in 1950. My father moved to Hopewell, Virginia in the early 1920's to find work (but mainly to pursue my mother who had

moved there with her mother to run a boarding house). There they stayed and there I was born and reared.

The church at Concord (about 20 miles north of Charlotte) has about 75 in Sunday morning attendance. We reached 92 the last night of the meeting. During the week I was able to see preachers from Concord, Charlotte, Asheville, Spruce Pine, Cary, Sanford, Newton, Chapel Hill, Lincolnton, Dallas and a couple of other places I can't recall, plus one preacher from Virginia. Unless I have been misinformed I saw all the preachers in the state except four or five. There is much to do in the Carolinas and too few to help do it.

Why I Don't Go To the Kentucky Derby—In traveling around the country, I have met a number of people (including some brethren) who register surprise that I have not attended a single Kentucky Derby since moving to Kentucky in 1970. Well, I don't bet on horses and don't feel all that comfortable where that is being done. More than that, I respect the Lord and the gospel more than to place myself deliberately in that environment. An article in the Louisville Courier-Journal, May 4, 1984 summed it up. "The familiar giant flower planters—where naked drunks, male and female, often have brutalized each other playing 'king of the mountain'—have been removed from the infield this year at the request of police, Jewell (deputy police chief) said. And he said enforcement efforts also will be beefed up near the rest-rooms, another area where crime and violence were common last year. Despite the heavy police presence and the stricter enforcement philosophy, Jewell said, officials expect to encounter the usual problems. But hey, it's May. And what would the infield be without cut feet, indecent exposure to sun, drug deals, overdoses, drunkenness, vomiting, illegal card games and shell games, pickpockets, fist fights, lost people and general human degradation?" Any more questions?

PAUL CASEBOLT back from Philippines—We are thankful that Paul Casebolt, of Moundsville, West Virginia, has safely returned after a six-weeks preaching trip to the Philippines where he worked with brethren on several islands. Be sure to read his article in this issue. This was his second preaching trip to that nation. His knowledge, experience and good judgment were of great benefit to the brethren there and already we have heard from several places he visited expressing great appreciation for his visit. It looks like the brethren in that land are snake-bit. In addition to increasing political tension, violence and frustrating economic conditions, the brethren have to contend with liberalism, Premillennialism (especially rampant in Mindanao), the one-cup doctrine and now Chuck Lucas and Cross-roads doctrine. What else? In spite of all that, it is refreshing to know that there are still many good men and faithful churches which have not lost their bearings amid these swirling conflicts.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	350
RESTORATIONS	152
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	