

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 Thessaonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" — Acts 17:11

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

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THE CHURCH BUILT BY JESUS CHRIST

One of the most tormenting questions of our times is the question of the many, many churches, all claiming to be from God, and promising salvation to the lost souls who seek the way of truth. What are their claims? What credentials do they offer that they are of God and have heaven's right to exist? Is there some way that an honest and good heart can know whether or not there is just one church approved by God? And if so, can one know from the Bible which church is from heaven?

The first time the word "church" appears in the New Testament is in Matthew 16:18. It says: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The context of that statement shows that Peter has confessed that Christ was the Son of God. Upon this fact (rock) Christ said he would build HIS church (Matthew 16:13-20). The apostle Paul said there was just one foundation laid, and that was Christ: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11).

If Christ was the builder, and he built the church upon the truth that he is the Christ the Son of God, it must follow that every church that he did not build is not authorized by God.

A Question Of Prejudice

"Do you believe one must be a member of your church in order to go to heaven?" "Don't you believe all other churches are wrong and will be lost?" These questions

are not usually asked for the purpose of ascertaining the truth. They are asked in ridicule for the purpose of exciting prejudice and promoting rejection of any who would dare to nod an agreement with the thought expressed in the questions. If the truth is really desired the questions would be: "Do you believe one must be a member of the church Christ built in order to go to heaven?" "Don't you believe all churches and religions not built and authorized by Christ will be lost?" Now, how would you answer these questions?

It seems appropriate to me to ask two questions at this point: "Are there any churches today wrong and sinful in the sight of God?" "If so, what is the standard by which we can determine when one is right and when it is wrong?" "If not, can any religion be rejected as unauthorized by God today?" I do not believe it takes a Solomon to decide where the truth is on these questions.

Some Pertinent Facts About The Church

First, the church is not some hasty arrangement of God to provide facilities for man to fulfill his religious desires. The church is the result of the eternal purpose of God. It has to do with man's salvation and his relation to God. The letter to the Ephesians tells us something of this eternal purpose of God. I underscore some words to emphasize the points being made.

"That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might *gather together in one all things in Christ*, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ" (Ephesians 1:10-12).

Then in Ephesians 3:8-12 the apostle Paul speaks of his mission in preaching the gospel (the grace of God— vs 2) that the eternal purpose of God might be known: "Unto me, who as less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly

places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by faith on him."

That eternal purpose of God was predicted by the prophets long before Christ came in the flesh. About 650 years before Christ Isaiah prophesied: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:2, 3).

The term "mountain" indicates rule or government. It is higher or above the common standing of men, thus "hills" or "mountains". It was the "mountain" of the Lord's house. The "Lord's house" is used to refer to God's people. (Hebrews 3:4-6; 10:21; 1 Peter 2:5-9; 4:17). It indicates that relationship to God as His family. The house of God is plainly called the church of the living God in 1 Timothy 3:15.

Daniel prophesied of the eternal purpose of God in explaining the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. He said of the fourth part of the image the king saw: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:44).

"In the days of these kings" refers to the Roman kings who ruled at the time of Christ. We can know this because Daniel said Nebuchadnezzar was the first king in the dream (Daniel 2:37, 38). After him would follow another kingdom, which was the Medo-Persian. And a third would follow, which was the Grecian kingdom, which influence existed at the time of Christ, especially the Greek language. The fourth kingdom was the Roman kings who followed, and it was "in the days of these kings" that God would establish a kingdom which would never be destroyed.

The kingdom of God and the church refer to the same body of people. When Jesus said he would build his church, he said: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Furthermore, when one gets into the church, he gets into the kingdom at the same time. Paul explains this in Colossians 1:12-14: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

In Joel 2:28-32 a prophecy is made which is quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:16-21. Peter says the fulfillment of Joel 2 took place on that day, therefore, we do not look for its fulfillment at any time

(Continued on page 4)

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Editorial

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WE NEED YOUR HELP

During the twenty-six and a half years **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES** has been published, we have made very few appeals to our readers to help us. Over the years many have helped us in various ways to either increase or maintain our circulation. All of this has been appreciated. The time has come to call some things to the attention of our readers and ask for your help.

We still have a number of readers who have subscribed to the paper since it began in 1960. Many of these are now aged and on fixed incomes. A number of our long-time readers have now passed on. Every now and then we hear from some aged subscriber who advises us that it is best to stop his or her subscription because of failing vision. Our basic readership is aging.

Not only does that gradually reduce our subscriptions where these are personally concerned, but that contributes to another problem. Many of these older readers have also paid for lists of friends or relatives, some from the beginning in 1960. Some have regularly paid for bundles which they have personally distributed each month. With increasing age and reduced income, more and more are finding it necessary to discontinue this work. Every time that happens, we stand to lose not only the revenue involved, but from 10 to 25 in total circulation. Add to that the continuing problem all subscription papers face in maintaining a constant level of renewal from readers and you have the stage set for a losing battle in maintaining our circulation. We add a number of new subscribers every month. In the past we have added more than we have had to take off. But we are seeing a change in that, we think largely because of the aging of many readers and supporters.

We have a good base of younger readers now. Some of them were introduced to the paper by their parents or grandparents, and some by a friend who paid for them for a year to get them started reading the paper. But the younger set, as a whole, has not been as interested in introducing the paper to others as the older set was.

There are some who have a strong aversion to religious papers. The reasons given have never sounded convincing to me. Some think it costs too much. Yet, many who would balk at \$9 a year for a paper such as **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES**, think nothing of spending over \$100 a year for a daily newspaper. I am regularly in the homes of brethren whose tables are stacked with secular magazines which cost much more

per year. Televisions, radios, tape recorders, VCR's abound. There are conveniences and gadgets of every description.

Some feel that religious papers contain too much controversy. It is certainly possible for controversy to get out of hand and we have tried very hard not to let that happen. There are issues and questions which gain enough attention to merit study and even to open the columns of a paper to an exchange of views for the study of readers. I do not believe this paper can justly be charged with excess in this regard. We have kept out personality attacks. I have consistently refused articles which attacked men rather than doctrinal positions advocated by men. It is not wrong to identify those who advocate views causing disturbance. There is New Testament precedent for that. But I have regularly asked writers to be fair and to treat the other fellow as he would want to be treated if the situation were reversed. Some may think we have failed in this regard, but God knows that we have honestly tried.

But the same ones who object to religious controversy do not stop reading the editorial pages of daily newspapers or sound off columns in secular magazines. They will argue with you that it is wrong to argue. In balance, **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES** carries a wide range of spiritual subject matter. That is the reason for the column headings under which several men regularly write. Other articles are chosen for timeliness and ability of written expression. The **NEWSLETTER REPORTS** contain information on the work of brethren in various parts of the world. We would carry more such news, if it were sent to us. This is usually the first thing read each month. We have received letters from readers in areas where congregations are few and far between telling us how much it means to them to hear of the struggles and triumphs of brethren in other places. Many readers utilize the church ads to locate a place to worship when they travel. We have had many reports of this both from churches which placed ads and from individuals who used them. We hear often from native preachers in other countries who write to thank us for the paper and to tell us that they receive much help in their personal study and sermon preparations from the many good articles. The evidences of good being done are too many to be ignored and to allow ourselves to be tempted to let the paper go out of business yet.

How Can You Help

1. Renew your own subscription promptly. This will save a second notice having to be sent. That will save us time and money. We send all notices by first class mail.
2. When you move, please allow two months notice so we can make the necessary changes and conform to our mandatory cut-off date with our printer.
3. Show your paper to friends and relatives where you worship. Perhaps some particular article has been helpful to you or there is one which seems ideal to meet some need with that friend or relative. Suggest to them that you get much good from the paper and ask them if they would like to subscribe.
4. Pick out some young families in the congregation where you worship, and tell them you will subscribe for

the paper for them for a year to get them started. You might use our club rates of \$7.50 a year in clubs of four or more sent at the same time.

5. Make up a list of 12 people you think would benefit from the paper and pay for them annually, if you are able to do so. For \$6 a month (\$72 a year) you can send the paper to a list of 12. We have a number of readers who could do this if they so desired. Many have done it for years and some continue it even though they are aging, as we indicated before.

6. Some of our readers are in contact with native preachers (or even American preachers) who are laboring around the world. They have reduced incomes and would be hard pressed financially to subscribe to any paper. Why not send gift subscriptions to help them. I have been in other countries and have seen copies of this paper and others with the covers worn off from being passed through so many hands. We lose money on our papers sent overseas. We have never advertised a foreign subscription rate but send it for the same rate as domestic subscriptions. We are interested in these works and, as long as we can afford to do it, we shall not change our policy on that. But you could help our circulation and a grateful family in some other land by subscribing for them.

7. When your own children marry and establish homes of their own, start them right away with a gift subscription to this paper. You will do them good. Is that worth \$9 a year to you? It will be to them.

8. Order a bundle of 12 a month (or 24, or however many you can use) and hand them out to friends. A bundle of 12 costs \$6. That is 50c apiece. We think that is a bargain.

There are other good papers being published by faithful brethren in the Lord. We wish them all well and rejoice in whatever good they may do. We do not feel that we are in competition with them. It is good to read more than one paper, if you can afford it. That will broaden the number of writers whose works you consider in your own Bible study. Do not accept what any writer says when his material does not square with the word of God.

We are working hard to keep the paper in the mail on time each month and to operate in as business-like manner as possible. We have recently added a computer to our office equipment which will save a great deal of time and reduce the number of errors which normally occur in processing the number of accounts we have. But we still need your help to build our circulation to what it ought to be. We hear many encouraging comments about the paper everywhere we go. But the time has come that we need more than words if we are to do as much good as we hope to do. We need SUBSCRIPTIONS and we need your help to obtain them. How about it? Can YOU help? WILL you help? Please let us hear from you.

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(Continued from page 2)

subsequent to that date. Joel said: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call."

Observe what Isaiah, Daniel and Joel said in their prophecies that help identify the time WHEN, the place WHERE, and the person WHO built the church that was the eternal purpose of God from the foundation of the world.

1. It would come to pass in the last days that the government of God's house would be established.

2. Many people would willingly enter into it.

3. Out of Zion (mount in Jerusalem) would go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

4. It would be in the days of "these kings"—the Roman kings.

5. God would establish a kingdom which would never be destroyed. It would stand forever.

6. God said He would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh—Jew and Gentile. Obviously every individual did not receive such a gift.

7. The signs describe the complete fall of the system that preceded the establishment of the church. Judaism as a religion is no longer authorized by God. Jew and Gentile are saved exactly alike and both are reconciled unto God in one body. (Acts 15:9; Romans 1:16, 17; Ephesians 2:16, 17).

8. Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Calling upon the name of the Lord means to submit to his will to be saved. (Romans 10:12-21; Acts 22:16).

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**AUTHORITY FOR CONGREGATIONAL
SINGING (NO. 2)**

In our former article we clearly established the need for divine authority for all things which Christians do. This authority is either generic or specific. We also pointed out a fundamental difference between the two in nature. Emphasis was placed upon the need for respect for both the voice and the silence of the Scriptures; that the former authorizes and the latter prohibits.

The issue of this article is clearly identified in the statement of Don DeWelt (quoted in Article No. 1): "There is no command, apostolic example or necessary inference in the New Testament for congregational singing with or without an instrument" (*One Body*, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 4). I take sharp issue with his statement concerning congregational singing. This article is designed to establish authority for such.

Historical Information

One other matter needs attention before we come to the real burden of this article. A clear picture of what history reveals concerning the early church and singing is of value. This history shows that different types of singing have been used by saints through the centuries in their worship unto God.

From the viewpoint of melody, monophonic singing was quite common in the Jewish services and in the early church. This involved a one line melody or a chant. Homophonic singing, which involved all of the voice parts, did not come into use until several centuries later. The following historical excerpts are interesting:

"Sacred music must, in the primitive church, have consisted only of a few simple airs which could easily be learned, and which, by frequent repetition, became familiar to all. An ornate and complicated style of music would have been alike incompatible with the circumstances of these Christian worshippers and uncongenial with the simplicity of their primitive forms ... In their songs of Zion, both old and young, men and women, bore a part. Their psalmody was the joint act of the whole assembly in unison. ... The authority of Chrysostom is also to the same effect 'It was the ancient custom, as it is still with us, for all to come together, and unitedly to join in singing. The young and the old, rich and poor, male and female, bond and free, all join in one song... All worldly distinc-

tions here cease, and the whole congregation form one general chorus' " (McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, Vol. VI, pp. 757, 758).

It also appears, based upon 1 Cor. 14:26, that at times there was a form of individual or solo singing. While this psalm was inspired and sung monophonically by an individual, it may have been with a view to teaching others or leading them in the singing of it. Still, history confirms monophonic singing by individuals in the early church:

"Each member was invited, at pleasure and according to his ability, to lead their devotions in a sacred song indicated by himself. Such was the custom in the Corinthian church. Such was still the custom in the age of Tertullian, to which reference has already been made. Augustine also refers to the same usage, and ascribes to divine inspiration the talent which was manifested in this extemporaneous psalmody" (Ibid, p. 758).

History further reveals that responsive and antiphonal psalmody were found in the early church:

"Among the Hebrews, psalms were sung in alternation between a soloist and the congregation; in one form of alternation, which later became important in Christian liturgy under the name of **responsorial psalmody**, the leader sang the first line of each psalm verse and the congregation responded by singing the second line. Such a method is particularly appropriate to the psalms, in which many of the verses have two parallel phrases, the second restating or continuing or amplifying the thought expressed in the first.... A related form of singing was **antiphonal psalmody**, in which the two parts of the verse, or alternate verses, were sung by two choruses" (Donald Jay Grout, *A History of Western Music*, Revised Edition, p. 12).

McClintock and Strong continue in their treatise on **Music** under the heading of **Innovations** to point out that in the third and fourth centuries a special class called **Singers** were appointed to sing in the church; that such gradually supplanted the former practice of all singing together; that "an artificial, theatrical style of music "took the place of the former, and that this "converted the house of God into a pagan theatre.... Thus, it soon came about that the many, instead of uniting their hearts and their voices in the songs of Zion, could only sit coldly by as spectators" (McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, p. 758).

I think it well to observe just here that in view of the more ornate and artistic type of singing with which we are accustomed, solo singing must be ruled out in our worship today. It would be next to impossible to keep such from converting the worship into a theatrical performance. History does repeat itself! This is not to say under no conditions and at no time could one person come before the congregation and present a spiritual message in song, being truly motivated by that which is spiritual, and which song was received by the congrega-

tion in the same spirit. However lawful such may be, remember that history shows that the regular practice of such makes it highly inexpedient.

Congregational singing is authorized by generic authority. Who can deny that Christians are authorized to sing in worship unto God? (Cf. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; Jas. 5:13). The type of singing becomes a matter of choice, which choice must be determined and governed by all else revealed. It may be monophonic or homo-phonic; it may involve a soloist leading a monophonic psalm; it may involve responsive or antiphonal singing, or it may involve the whole congregation singing simultaneously the same melody and words. That singing by saints was done in an assembly is evident from 1 Cor. 14:26. Whether this was an inspired or uninspired song, it was still singing, and it was in an assembly. Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 obviously demand more than one person in order to do the type of singing here commanded. If more than one, then two, and if two, then any number. Thus, we have generic authority for singing in an assembly. The latter involves corporate singing, and this is congregational singing.

DeWalt has a hard time seeing congregational singing in these verses—simply because of his arbitrary definition of such. His idea would involve all singing simultaneously the same words. Such is only one type of congregational singing. Even antiphonal singing may involve participation on the part of all. Some of our songs involve responsive singing—one part of the audience singing a separate voice part at a different time from the others, and then the rest of the audience making response with other voice parts. A good example of this is the familiar song "What Did He Do?" Though all do not sing the same words simultaneously, all participate in singing the song—the whole congregation is involved and this is congregational singing!

Furthermore, Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 may involve the whole congregation singing simultaneously the same words. Yes, we may "teach and admonish one another" in so doing, DeWalt to the contrary, notwithstanding. There is power in music. No wonder God authorized some singing as a means of teaching. When saints join their hearts and voices in praise, in exhortations, in petitions, in resolve, and in thanksgiving, a deeper impression is made upon every soul. Each thereby has an influence one upon the other and the spiritual benefit is intensified. To deny this is to deny the factual and that which is known experimentally. There is more than one way for the congregation to fulfill the command "Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19).

Generic authority is hereby established for congregational singing. Generic authority makes the type of singing a matter of choice so long as the choice is governed by all else revealed. Therefore, it is not necessary to find a specific example of any one type of singing. To insist upon specific authority is to exclude all other types. This would likely put one at variance with his own practice.

This is the error of our no Bible class brethren. They

fail to recognize the generic authority in the command to "teach" and insist on specific authority for the Bible class arrangement. In so doing they contradict their own practice by using other arrangements for teaching that are not specified, e.g., radio, TV, tracts, home studies, etc.

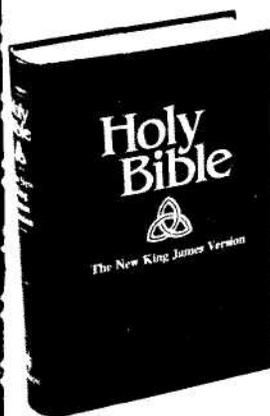
No Authority For the Instrument

While there is generic authority for congregational singing, let it be observed that "there is no command, apostolic example or necessary inference in the New Testament" for instrumental music in worship—either generic or specific. In fact, in relation to the kind of music used in worship, we find only nine verses in the New Testament, and they all involve singing (Matt. 26:30; Mk. 14:26; Acts 16:25; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; 13:15; Jas. 5:13). This is the sum total of divine revelation on the kind of music in worship. This makes the authority for vocal music specific, and, therefore, exclusive.

Truly, the issue of authority is one of great magnitude. Let us continue to study what the Bible teaches on this vital subject, make proper application, and thereby resolve differences, understand each other better, and bring about the unity for which Jesus prayed (John 17:20, 21).

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ROBERT CRAWLEY

Early on Monday morning, March 10th, ranks among the faithful of God were decreased. Bob Crawley lost his battle with lymphatic leukemia and his spirit departed the body in death. To Lexington and the Central Kentucky region generally, a faithful and effective gospel preacher will no long answer the call to "preach the word, reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

Bob was fifty seven years old and had preached the gospel since September 1944. He had continuously engaged in "local work" for the past thirty five years, working with churches in Indianapolis, Indiana, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Mt. Airy, Tennessee and Birmingham, Alabama, before moving to Lexington, Kentucky in 1962. He worked with the University Heights church in Lexington for twenty three years. While not limited to Central Kentucky, it was here that his greatest influence developed. A number of churches benefited from his unselfish efforts as their beginning and struggling years enjoyed his preaching and counseling. The history of many of these will complement the fact that initial efforts in preaching were those of Crawley. His services were used quite extensively in meeting work and even in the earlier years of his illness he was involved with others in gospel work in Columbia. This necessitated cram courses in Spanish as he and his good wife, Leta, along with Royce Chandler and others, went to South America to take advantage of this opportunity.

Bob's work and association with University Heights was terminated October 1, 1985. Curtailment of support, necessity of vacating the residence, along with continuing medical expenses created unprecedented anxiety and emotional trauma. However, when brethren far and wide learned of the situation and need they rallied to the occasion and in a short time there was an outpouring of love and concern relieving the acute pressure of these mundane needs. Several thousand dollars were received from loving and compassionate brethren. Social security was applied for and approved, although he never lived to receive it, and commitments were made to provide support on a continuing basis. Faith in Christ on the part of our brother never wavered even during these trying and difficult hours and confidence in the brethren and their care and concern was vindicated as these needs were provided. Such was a thrill to

this humble hearted man and a joy to those aware of these developments. Indeed, to be a child of God is a wonderful thing as provisions of His grace and providence are experienced and witnessed.

On the Lord's Day before his death Bob attended services at Nicholasville where he was a member, participated in class discussion, and obviously worshipped in "spirit and truth." He was buried on the Wednesday following, March 12th, in Lexington Cemetery. Earlier visits to the grave sites of many of the Restoration leaders had prompted Bob to remark what an honor it would be to be buried among these. How fitting that one of our generation should be laid to rest among some of the giants of yesteryear. Adjacent to the grave of Robert Milligan, author of the commentary on Hebrews, Gospel Advocate series, there is now a marker, Robert Crawley. Thus, those with whom religious history has dealt so kindly have been joined by another who enjoyed the plaudits of his own generation. We are convinced Bob Crawley deserved such a place among the honored dead having proven himself worthy of our respect and honor in the varied relationships of life.

The statement of David as he mourned the death of Abner seems to me especially fitting, "There is a prince and great man fallen this day." Bob Crawley was a great man, not necessarily by the world's standards of greatness, but because he was one of God's chosen and elect. Great because of his commitment to the Lord and His cause. Thus with Paul Bob is able to say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."

Bob leaves a wife, Oleta, whom he affectionately called "Leta" and to hear him roll her name off his tongue was to know of his love for her, to observe her tender loving care of Bob was to see qualities of devotion and true strength. There are three children, objects of great pride and justifiably so, Laura Lee, Bruce and Bryan. Bob's father, A. Bruce Crawley still lives, a resident of Birmingham. We with confidence join our hearts and hands in faith as we are comforted by "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

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(2 Cor. 5:9)

Donnie V. Rader

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IS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST A DENOMINATION?

It is rather obvious that the world has a different concept of the church than we have. It is also obvious that some who are members of the church have some erroneous concepts of the church. One popular concept is that the church of Christ is a denomination.

What Would This Imply?

"Denomination" indicates division or dividing into units. Denominate means "made up of units of a designated kind" (*Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary*, p. 342). Denomination means "sect" (*ibid*, p. 343). Thus to say that the church of Christ is a denomination is to say that it is one of many sects. The idea of division can be seen in that we use this term "denomination" to refer to the divisions or units of money. If the Lord's church is a denomination, then the Lord approves of dividing into sects.

Another thing implied is that one church is as good as another. Back to the illustration of money, two tens are just as good as four fives or one twenty. If the church of my Lord is a denomination, then another denomination is just as good as his.

That being true, you then have a choice of which denomination you want. It becomes a matter of personal preference like choosing between four fives, two tens or one twenty. You could then choose to be a member of the church of Christ or any other church. There would be no wrong decisions.

One Church

The Bible plainly teaches that there is only one church. Paul wrote, "there is one body" (Eph. 4:4, emphasis mine DVR). Now what is the body? The same writer defines the body as the church (Col. 1:18). Thus the passage that says there is one body means that there is one church. The context clearly shows that this means only one church. The same passage says there is "one Lord" and "one God" and "one Spirit". Though there may be many Lords, Gods and Spirits, there is only one Lord, one God and one Spirit that is right. Likewise there is only one body (church) that is right in the sight of God. Jesus taught about one fold (John 10:16).

Unity

God's plan is for his people to be united. Jesus prayed that we all would be "one" as he and the Father are "one" (John 17:20-21). Did the Father and Son believe, teach and practice different things? Absolutely not! How can we be one as they are one and have denominationalism? One church believes one thing; another church teaches something different and another practices something even different.

Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10). That is much contrasted with churches believing, teaching and practicing different things.

The Church Of Christ Is The One Of The New Testament

The church of Christ is scriptural in name, organization, origin, teaching and practice. That being true, it is not a denomination. It is the church of Christ. It is the one that belongs to him. No other church with a human name, creed and practice is just as good. Really, we have no choice. Jesus said, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13).

The Church Is The Saved

The term "church" is translated from the Greek work "ekklesia" which means the "called out". It is those who are saved (Acts 2:47). The church is not merely an organization or institution which has a work to do. It is a relationship to Christ. The very steps to be saved (Mark 16:16) are the very same ones to be a member of the church (1 Cor. 12:13).



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GOD'S HOUSE

Our terminology usually reflects our thinking. A bulletin before me reads: "Why do we worship God? We do not come to God's house merely to entertain ourselves..

Just what is this "God's house" that we come to?

Most of us have traditionally spurned the phraseology of "going to church" or referring to the place of assembly as "the church". How much allowance should be given to the accommodative use of such phrases, I am unsure. I recognize that there are examples of accommodation in the scriptures. But to say the least, we are on safe ground when we strive for scriptural terms.

Just what should we call the place where a local church assembles? We opt for "church building" or "church house" rather than "church", "Christians are the church" it is often observed, and correctly so. But didn't the apostle declare: "Ye are God's building" (1 Cor. 3:9) and "whose house are we" (Heb. 3:6)? So I'm not sure we improve things with our corrections to such verbal abuses.

It appears to me that the most scriptural term to describe a place of assembly for the church may be "synagogue". The word is used in James 2:2 where it is translated "assembly" in the KJV and NASB. The NEB renders it "place of assembly". The ASV uses the Greek word "synagoge" (SUNAGOGE).

W. E. Vine defines the term first as "an assembling" and then "by metonymy, the building in which the gathering is held." The Expositor's Greek New Testament comments: "**This... may well refer to a place of worship in which converted Gentiles and Jewish Christians met together.**" H. A. W. Meyer says: "The whole description . . . shows that **SUNAGOGE** denotes the place where the Christian congregation assembled for worship."

The thing which alarms me is not what the place of assembling is called, but the disproportionate emphasis that is given to material buildings. I've rejected the notion that "We have no scriptural authority for church buildings". This observation is usually made, not to get rid of our meeting places, but to argue from a basis of consistency that if we can have these without New Testament authority, then we can have whatever else may please us without such authority. I believe that it can be reasonably and logically demonstrated that the demand to assemble makes imperative a place of assem-

bling. Thus a meeting place is inherent in what God has authorized.

But that hasn't settled the problem in my mind. It is obvious that the occasions wherein the place of assembly for the church is specified, it was in private houses (Acts 12:12; Romans 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15). Even if special houses were erected for the purpose, there was little cost involved in that day and time. Overhead was negligible. The bulk, if not all, of contributions could be applied to the real work of the Kingdom.

Consider the millions upon millions of dollars that have been spent on temples made with hands. Throughout Europe, costly cathedrals are deteriorating because there is not enough religious interest to appropriate the vast sums required to restore them.

More millions have been expended by the Lord's church in the past thirty years on brick and stone than anything else. We conservatives criticize the liberals for their extravagance, yet we have probably done as badly or worse in proportion to our more limited means and needs.

There are cities where as many as ten, fifteen, twenty, or more fine "synagogues" are located in which "our bunch" assemble for worship. Most of them exist because brethren couldn't get along with each other. Much of the money we've given for the "Lord's work" since most of us have been Christians has gone to pay for these structures.

A church is established in a given location, and for a time assembles in a home or rented facility. Unless that church decides "we can't grow until we get a building" they usually experience their greatest growth during that time. But they cannot wait to construct a house of worship that will seat 150-200 people and tie themselves to a 30 year mortgage. They'll likely stagnate at about 90 people and have a fuss a few years down the line that will necessitate another "church building" for the "faithful" group.

Meanwhile, churches all over the country are called upon to "support our evangelist" while we pay for the new building.

The popular concept of personal work is inviting someone "to church". If he declines, well, we've done our job. Who really believes that such a concept prevailed among first century saints?

Then many have decided that we must have a dress code for "attending church". I'm confident that the first century church had their "Sunday-go to meetin'-clothes", aren't you?

Likely ninety percent of our time in church "business meetings" is spent discussing the physical property of the congregation. Yet we couldn't prove to save our lives that any congregation of which we read in the Bible ever owned an inch of property. Our emphasis is misplaced.

Brethren, let us learn that we are God's building; we are His house. God does not dwell in temples made with hands. Our costly edifices do not impress Him who made the worlds. Our valuable property does not gratify Him who owns the cattle upon the hills and the hills beneath the cattle.

May we get busy with King's business. It has to do with the hearts and souls of men; not the wood, hay, and stubble of our passing vanities.

PRECEPTS AND PERCEPTIONS

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MAY CHURCHES OF CHRIST SUPPORT HUMAN INSTITUTIONS—V

It is wrong for a church to make donations to human institutions because the claim that these institutions are merely "aids" of a congregation in obeying God is false and misleading. The term "aid" is used of any person or thing not essential in obeying a command of God but which may expedite the obedience. A legitimate "aid" can never change any part of any action God requires of any sinner, Christian or congregation of Christians. Legitimate "aids" are allowable i.e., permissible, whether persons or things. "Aids" are never specified in a command yet they never change any aspect of a command. If a person or thing is specified it necessarily becomes a part of the command, not an "aid." This means that no person or group can obey a command unless it be the subject of the command, i.e., **the person or group addressed by the commander.** For example, none except Noah could "make the ark of gopher wood" for the saving of Noah's house. The **goods or services** of others might "aid" Noah but only Noah could obey God for only Noah was commanded. Only believers can be baptized for remission of sins because only believers are told to be baptized. Neither infants nor infidels are told to be baptized to be saved. For an infidel to profess obedience while remaining an infidel is to disobey God. He who baptizes infants disobeys God.

Further, any **primary** "aid" must be controlled by the will of the individual or congregation using it as that individual or congregation's will is controlled by the will of God. The case of Noah again serves as an illustration. Whatever tools or persons Noah used in building the ark were necessarily subject to Noah's will **in the specific service Noah required of them.** Noah's will acting in subjection to God's will was the obedience God required. Therefore, every service rendered to Noah by an animate or inanimate being—tool or person—was necessarily subject to Noah's will. If this were not true God could not have obeyed God. This would not mean that Gopher Wood Company was owned and controlled by

Noah or that Pitchblenders, Inc., was owned or controlled by Noah. It would mean that any services or materials obtained from these companies and used by Noah in the making of the ark would necessarily have been subject to Noah's will. No axe, rope or tar bucket was any part of the ark Noah prepared for the saving of his house. These items may have "aided" Noah in his obedience but they were not obedience.

A Christian is commanded to teach God's word. Writing is a "method" of teaching and a typewriter is the teacher's "aid" in writing. Who believes that any Christian can make a donation to IBM (International Business Machines Corporation) which deals in typewriters and thereby discharge his responsibility to teach God's word? This being true, why should one have difficulty in seeing that no parent discharges his duty to "nurture" his children "in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" by making a donation to Tennessee Christian College which deals in educational services and no congregation discharges its obligation in the realm of teaching by making a donation to any "Christian" school?

It is unscriptural and wrong for a church to make donations to human institutions because making a donation to any body of persons except the body of Christ is definitely and distinctly another action than the action God requires of a congregation. Sprinkling or pouring water on a penitent sinner is not the same action as baptizing (immersing) him. Sprinkling is not pouring, pouring is not sprinkling and neither action is immersing. Each is a distinct action. Baptizing an infant or infidel is not the same as baptizing a penitent believer. The former is an act of disobedience; the latter an act of obedience. Had Noah built a wagon instead of an ark for the saving of his house he would have disobeyed God. Had he made a donation to Ark-builders, Inc., in alleged obedience to God he would have disobeyed God. Likewise making a donation of money to a self-appointed body of non-needy saints, such as Widowcare, Inc., is not the same action as relieving the poor saints. Making a donation to Tennessee Christian College is not the same action as teaching the Bible. These two actions are not synonymous; they are not the same in principle. They are different actions. A congregation does what God commands when it acts in the same fashion as the Jerusalem church acted in Acts 6:1-16, but disobeys God when it shifts its responsibility to another body of Christians or non-Christians.

Noah might have grown his own gopher-wood or purchased it. He may have mined his own pitch or purchased it. In neither event, however, could he have made a donation to Gopher Wood Company or to Pitchblenders, Inc., and by virtue of that contribution made the ark God commanded him to prepare. His contribution would have been disobedience to God had he done this while affirming this action to be the making of the ark God commanded him to make. This would have been a completely different action than the action God commanded. In reality it would have been a substitution for the commanded action as much as pouring and sprinkling are substitutions for baptizing or as eat-

ing potatoes and drinking buttermilk would be substitutes for eating the bread and drinking the fruit of the vine on the Lord's table or as instrumental music as an act of worship would be a substitute for singing.

If Noah, professing to make the ark, had donated money to Pitchblenders, Inc., instead, he would have disobeyed God. If a father, admonished to "nurture" his children "in the chastening and admonition of the Lord," makes a donation to Tennessee Christian College and professes thereby to obey God's command in Eph. 6:4 he actually disobeys God. Both would be substitutions for the action God commanded. A congregation is told to "relieve them that are widows indeed" (1 Tim. 5:16). It makes a donation to Widowcare, Inc., and says, "We have obeyed God's command to relieve widows indeed." This reasoning, of course, is simply erroneous. It may be a cover-up for the obedience that congregation should have rendered. If not, even though done sincerely, it is wrong. A gift to a service organization completely separated from a local church in creation and control is not obedience to God. It is an action other than the action God commands a local church to perform. Each local church should learn the difference between making a donation to a human benevolence society for which there is no authority and relieving poor saints for which there is abundant authority.

Restoration Footnotes

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PROVING DOCTRINE BY THE DEAD

The art of writing can preserve the words of men for hundreds of years after their death. Thus things written long ago may be profitably studied today. This is especially beneficial in the church where history appears to repeat itself. The record of issues discussed in the past often casts light on similar questions in the present. But it is wrong to use uninspired dead men to establish faith and practice because they carry no authority in such matters. Trying to prove doctrine by the dead is also risky because it is not easy to fit a comment lifted from one age to conditions that exist in another. This is evident in an incident that rose in the 1930s in the controversy over "the one-man missionary society."

As the plan worked, a generally self-appointed brother, who placed himself "under" and obtained support from a willing eldership, traveled as an "agent" among the churches to stir up interest and collect money for missionaries. One of the most vocal oppo-

nents of this forerunner of the "sponsoring church" of the 1950s was F. B. Srygley, senior "editor" of the Gospel Advocate. He challenged the promoters to "find an instance from the teachings of the apostles where one church... supported a man to go among the churches to stir up zeal on mission work and to collect money for missionary purposes."

Feeling the sting of Srygley's pen, Batsell Baxter, a supporter of the system, quoted respected preachers then dead to prove they favored "church cooperation." tie believed this put them on his side. One of the quotations came from "The New Testament Church," which F. B. Srygley compiled from the editorials of his brother, F. D. Srygley. Baxter went out of his way, Srygley thought, to quote an unrelated statement from the preface of the book. Srygley asked: "Was there any reason for quoting from the preface except that I wrote the preface? Was there any reason for bringing that fact into it, except that he (Baxter) and I disagreed about the subject, and that it apparently places me in the position of editing a book in which my brother expresses views contradictory to the position which I have recently set forth in the Advocate?"

Srygley explained the quotation from his brother, who was a relentless foe of the missionary society: "The society people had accused him of being against church cooperation in missionary work, and the quotation from him ... was in answer to that charge. I do not know of any brother who would not endorse the answer which F. D. Srygley made to the charge ... I believe in church cooperation, but about a peculiar kind of church cooperation I have my serious doubts—say, for instance, the one-man missionary society."

He then gave Baxter a lesson in quoting the dead. "Dead men cannot explain their position on something about which they did not express themselves . . . The one-man missionary society idea did not exist then, and how does Brother Baxter know that they would not object to such now? This is one trouble in quoting from dead men. Why not try to settle this matter, then, by the teaching of the apostles? In their teaching they are still living. . . . (The men quoted) are all dead now, but they fought for the truth as they saw it, and that is exactly what we ought to do... Conditions change, but let us live in the present and meet the conditions we have now."

Wisdom may be gleaned, parallels drawn, and lessons learned from the words of the righteous dead, but it dishonors the dead and misleads the living to try to prove doctrine by what good men of the past said while they were struggling with the problems of their day. Instead of abusing their words to line them up with a peculiar idea, Srygley pleaded, "Suppose we let their ashes rest in peace."

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ARE THERE MIRACLES TODAY?

Truman Smith
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What is a miracle? There is a need for the average member of the church of our Lord today to consider the question, "Are there miracles today?" It seems that there are many indications of this need as we listen to the kind of language used among the saints.

There are generally three words used in the New Testament that have to do with a "miracle." By use of these words the idea of the miraculous is set forth. 1) SEMEION; 2) TERAS and 3) DUNAMIS. Let us look at each of these words.

Vincent says of the word SEMEION: "Pointing to something beyond itself, a mark of the power or grace of the doer or of his connection with the supernatural world" (VINCENT'S WORD STUDIES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, Vol. 1, p. 66). W. E. Vine says, "Tokens of divine authority and power." In the Authorized Version, this word is translated "signs." One of the places where it is found is Heb. 2:4.

Of the word TERAS, Vincent says, "A portent or prodigy" (op. cit.). Vine says, "Something strange, causing the beholder to marvel, is always used in the plural, always rendered 'wonders,' and generally follows SEMEION, 'signs,' the opposite order occurs in Acts 2:22-23; 6-8; R.V.; 7:36; in Acts 2:19 'wonders' occurs alone" (W. E. Vine, EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS, Vol. 4, p. 228).

The final word, DUNAMIS, "Power, inherent ability, is used of works of a supernatural origin and character, such as could not be produced by natural agents and means" (W. E. Vine, EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS, Vol. 3, p. 75). While discussing the word TERAS ("wonders"), Vine makes a very fine statement: "A sign is intended to appeal to the understanding, a wonder appeals to the imagination, a power (dunamis) indicates its source as supernatural (Vol. 4, p. 228).

I used to marvel back a few years ago at the great military, prop-driven, cargo planes, some of which were half the length of a football field, that could fly 300 MPH with nearly 118,000 pounds of cargo plus a crew of men. Someone says, "Why, it was a miracle that the thing could fly at all!" No, dear friend, that was no miracle! Such a ship was the Douglas Cargo-Master. Now let me tell you why it was no miracle that this plane was able to fly. With a wing span of nearly 200 feet, it was powered by four huge gasoline engines, each equipped with a large 3-blade propeller. That's how it

flew! There is a law of physics known as "Bernoulli's law," called by this name only because a man by that name discovered it. It is the application of this law that gives any airplane lift to enable it to take off, fly, and even land properly. Such a law acted upon the propellers of the plane under discussion, giving it sufficient speed, which also enabled the huge wings to give the ship enough lift to keep it in the air. The same thing also is true when a baseball pitcher is able to put the proper spin on a ball, it is the principle that causes the ball to curve. No, there is no miracle involved in such things. All such things act according to the well defined laws of nature.

We hear a song on the radio that says, "It's gonna take a miracle to make me love someone new ___ for I'm crazy for you!" But some of our own folk have started using the word "miracle" even more flippantly than that. We hear them speak of "miracle drugs," "miracle foods," "the miracle of childbirth," etc.

No, we believe that the age of miracles ended with the first century. But the miracles recorded in the New Testament were truly miracles for they were characterized by actions which were supernatural in that they defied all laws of nature. And, friends, since their purpose was to confirm that the things those "holy men of God" spoke were true, and we now have that Word in its completeness, we are not going to see any miracles today (Please go back and study Mk. 16:17-20; Heb. 2:1-4; 1 Cor. 13:8-13; Jas. 1:25).

Remember, just because something appears to be unusual or out of the ordinary, and we cannot explain or understand it, such does not constitute it miraculous; it is nothing more than phenomenal or astonishing.

Brethren, let's watch our language!

OBSERVATIONS UPON 20 YEARS OF PREACHING (1)

Dick Blackford

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After preaching 10 years I wrote a piece on "Advice To Young Preachers." It is debatable whether I was qualified, but it had a better reception than anything I had written up to that time. I hadn't planned to do this every decade. However, here I am writing about preaching again. This treatise contains no "new revelations" on the subject. It is merely one man's viewpoint on several random topics that pertain to preaching.

"Apollos Age" Vs. "Paul Age"

There is a story about a famous preacher of the fourth century, named John Chrysostom. He was the best

preacher of his day, which earned him the title of "the golden mouth." He was dedicated and took his sermons seriously. But he was disturbed because believers, at the end of a sermon, would often applaud. He found this totally unacceptable in worship services. To correct this abuse he preached a sermon titled "The Pulpit Is Not A Stage." He rebuked the congregation for their flippant way of listening. He drew a distinction between the theatre where actors spoke for entertainment and the pulpit where the speaker was leading people in worship. The audience was impressed with his sermon—and they gave him a standing ovation!

Some have it and others don't. This illustration seemed like a fitting way to introduce the observation that we have surpassed the "Paul Age" in the church and are now in the "Apollos Age." Paul's "bodily presence was weak, and his speech of no account" (2 Cor. 10:10). Apollos was dynamic and eloquent. There is nothing wrong with eloquence. It should not be the primary factor in hiring a preacher. Eloquence is no guarantee of anything, except that one is a gifted speaker. One may be eloquent but deficient in knowledge, as was Apollos. There are a number of "Pauls" among us (both young and old) who have good Bible knowledge and a love for the word, who are being overlooked because they are not eloquent. These men could do a good work but our desire to hear an orator often causes us to make some unwise, unsound, and unfair judgments.

The Preacher Parade

If you haven't heard this expression, it refers to the practice of a church parading a string of preachers across the pulpit to let the congregation see what they have to pick from in hiring a preacher. Several may "try out" in the process.

This practice has several harmful possibilities. It can cause dissension when one segment is pulling for their favorite while another pulls for theirs. It puts preachers in competition with each other and may create strained relationships. It prolongs the process, making preaching brethren wait about making other plans till they find out how the competition went.

The "preacher parade" seems like a "necessary evil." Surely there is a better way. Why not make a definite decision on one man at a time instead of putting brethren "on hold?" By the same token, preachers should practice the golden rule and not lead a string of churches on to see which one makes the best offer.

Should Preachers Specialize?

We live in an age of specialization. Two medical interns were discussing their professions. One said he was an eye specialist. The other inquired, "Which one?" I have benefited from the in-depth study of others and have found it difficult to refrain from devoting full time to a few of my favorite topics. But this raises the question of balance and moderation. In short, I have concluded that a preacher should try to learn everything he can about everything.

The Preacher's Wardrobe

Not much is said about the preacher's attire in Scripture. John the Baptist wore "raiment of camel's hair and a leather girdle" (Mt. 3:4). Vine says *enduma* (raiment) "was used of the clothing of ancient prophets in token of their contempt of earthly splendor, Zech. 13:4," p. 199.

Occasionally we hear "oohs" and "ahhs" over how some preacher dresses. The principles of humility and modesty should apply to his appearance. The message should be remembered more than the man. As one oldtimer expressed it, "God's not interested in 'show horses.' He's interested in pack mules."

A Plea For Balance

Positive Or Negative Preaching? We should not insist that it be "either/or." The Bible contains both constructive, positive teaching as well as negative instruction. We should maintain the balance. In avoiding one extreme we must be careful not to back off the cliff in the other direction. Extremes can be dangerous and consequential. Neither extreme is a true representation of the gospel.

Issues Vs. The Gentler Graces, When I began preaching I remember making light of denominational preachers who only preached on "love and mercy." I don't believe they taught the whole truth on these topics, but I had gone to another extreme. A look at my records shows that I was preaching only on issues and "isms."

A friend who works in a bookstore expressed concern that books on counseling sell well but books on doctrinal topics do not. This is an extreme that is cause for concern, but it is probably a reaction to another extreme. When we preach only on technical issues and neglect the fact that people have personal problems which are very real (depression, grief, loss of confidence, etc.) we are not proclaiming the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). We need lessons on practical daily living of the Christian life and we also need grounding in great Biblical doctrines that men have so often perverted. When we proclaim only half the message, people will either turn elsewhere to have their needs met or they will be unbalanced Christians. Some may be harsh and unfeeling, wanting only to argue technicalities while leaving weightier matters undone. Others may develop a better self-image but are soft on knowledge and conviction of doctrinal truths. Love and mercy are great Bible principles that we should not neglect. So is obedience, whether to the plan of salvation or the work and worship of the church.

Disposition In Preaching. In preaching and debating, uncalled for treatment may throw a stumbling-block in the way of those who might obey the gospel. Deliberately insulting and smart-aleckness are always out of place (Col. 4:6). We can be firm and deliver rebuke when necessary without getting nasty or reflecting on the person(s) whose soul we are trying to save. We should not do anything to give honorable controversy a bad name, especially if we expect men to defend what they

teach. On the other hand, we must not soft soap the gospel. Vague generalities, "good words and fair speeches," and such like will not result in genuine conversion or encourage those already converted to be total Christians. *(The second part of this article will appear next month).*

FOLLOWING THINGS THAT MAKE FOR PEACE

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The disciple of the Lord needs to pursue those things that will contribute to peaceful relations in the Lord's body, according to Romans 14:19. Both 1 Peter 3:11,12 and Ephesians 4:4 also emphasize the obligation to establish and maintain peace, with the latter passage viewing peace as a bond that ties one Christian to another as they endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit. This very passage would indicate the futility of trying to keep any unity based upon the wishes and plans of men; but the effort to keep the unity prescribed and provided here, when carried out in peaceful ways, meets God's approval.

The kingdom which the prophets foresaw was a peaceable one—peace would be enjoyed with God and among fellow-citizens (Isa. 2:2-4; Zech. 9:9,10; Isa. 59:2). It is truly wonderful when the peace which Christ established with God through his death guides and permeates the dealings of Christians with each other. On the other hand, how tragic it is to observe brothers and sisters in Christ mar that peace through the development of sinful attitudes toward each other. Because of their carping criticism, objecting disposition, and "picky" ways, they have fomented friction, factionalism and obvious fracture over insignificant matters that ought never to divide churches. God has sought to guide in these matters by His presentation of attitudes and actions guaranteed to contribute to peace and edification in a local church. Notice the link between peace and edification in Rom. 14:19: whatever produces peace will also make edification possible, for such is the environment necessary for spiritual growth to flourish. The effort being considered here is essential while we seek to uphold truth and contend for the faith. These very attitudes also make it easier to deal with matters of congregational purity and practice.

Lowliness

The place to begin is the attitude of lowliness, according to Eph. 4:2 and Phil. 2:3-6. This attitude is a low estimate of self in comparison with others, a sense of littleness which has arrogance as its opposite. Jesus taught that there would be no "big I's" and little you's" in his kingdom in Matt. 20:26-28. The "rule-or-ruin"

disposition of many is foreign to the spirit of Christ and Christians. There is no room for the self-will that insists upon having one's own way, but rather there should be humble submission to God's will and to one another in seeking ways of reconciling differences and solving problems (1 Pet. 5:5). Stubborn haughtiness will pursue the course of destructiveness, even to the point of crucifying Christ's spiritual body before an unbelieving world; but lowliness will pursue peace and edification.

Meekness

Eph. 4:2 next mentions meekness, the gentleness that makes one teachable and the mildness that quietly goes about removing differences and soothing injured feelings. We do not refer to the weakness leading one to believe or accept whatever he is told or the passiveness that permits evil to flourish. Call to mind Moses in his valiant opposition to error. He was the meekest of all in God's classification. Christians must learn to deal with each other in gentleness, not displaying the harsh attitudes that so often have been defended as "holding to sound doctrine." Instead of the abusive speech used to "get somebody told," we must learn to substitute the power of the gospel: here God exerts His divine power and light. More light and less heat are needed; lower voices and calmer spirits must prevail. Battles for truth are never won by carnal weaponry; they are gained through teaching truth and that alone!

Longsuffering

The same passage in Ephesians includes this quality, which means "long-tempered." In the midst of spiritual conflict, many a battle has been lost by shortness of temper. In its stead there needs to be self-restraint in the face of provocation, making impossible a hasty retaliation or prompt punishment. Remember that God's longsuffering means salvation (2 Pet. 3:9,15). Ought we not to be as longsuffering as He in our dealings with one another. Longsuffering is the key to long-lasting marriages, not an absolute agreement by husband and wife on every little matter; and it will also sustain us in our dealings with Christians. When you are tempted to give up on that weak brother, remember thankfully that someone did not give up on you. Remember his spiritual welfare instead of our own convenience.

Forbearance

Forbearing one another in love also appears in Eph. 4:2. It means bearing with, holding up, enduring each other. In love for that brother or sister forbearance becomes easier. This quality is necessary because no one of us does everything to the liking of all others. Each of us could sooner or later discover some quality or habit or mannerism in another that he does not like. Bearing with one another in love will cause us to leave private opinions where they belong, instead of magnifying them, emphasizing them, taking sides over them, and finally dividing over them.

Self-Control

Self-control is mentioned in 2 Pet. 1:6 and implied in Rom. 12:18. Self-mastery is the guidance system that

integrates and governs all powers given to man, even those capable of abuse, so that one's life manifests the very attitudes and qualities composing this article. Self-control will temper our speech for the work of edification, that we might minister favor to those who hear us, even as it helps us know how to answer each one (Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:6). It also will help us to eliminate all abusive speech (Gal. 5:14,15).

Forgiveness

An enumeration similar to that of Ephesians 4:2 is found in Colossians 3:11-14. An addition in the Colossian passage is forgiveness, the willingness to count one as if he never committed the wrong. A refusal to forgive has often nursed old grudges and resurrected the problems of yesteryear to the division of God's people. We must be reminded that a readiness to forgive is essential if we expect to receive forgiveness from God (Matt. 6:15).

Love

Colossians 3:14 places love at the end of the list but says that it tops the list in importance. "Above all these things, put on love ___" The list headed by love is quite formidable, but the priority of love is seen and explained in the very passage. Love is here viewed as a bond, that which cements or ties together. It is here described as the perfect bond: it serves to bind together all of the other marvelous qualities in the context. Without love they become disjointed and ineffective; with love joining them, however, they become one mighty chain. Friend, check your life. Are these qualities missing? If so, it is because you do not have the kind of love required. Love will cause us to act in all of the ways denoted by the words of the context.

In view of the importance of peace as a bond joining our efforts to keep the unity of the Spirit, let each remove all attitudes that would disturb that peace, that we might not mar that unity which we ought to be keeping.

A WORTHY WOMAN

By Darlene Craig

This is a well-written book with a chapter on each verse of Proverbs 31:10-31. The author is the wife of a faithful gospel preacher, a mother, homemaker, and grandmother. Her writing style is fresh and her research is extensive. Her applications are alive to the needs of godly women today. This 220 page paperback book is attractively bound, the layout is neat and the printing is excellent.

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SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

P. J. Casbolt

P.O. Box 1487
Chiefland, FL 32626



"THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT"

Nowhere is the inconsistency and disobedience of man more apparent than in the areas of unity and division. Both Old and New Testaments are plain in their condemnation of division, and exhortation to unity among God's people (Ps. 133:1; 1 Cor. 1:10). Israel experienced a major division between the Northern and Southern tribes in Old Testament times, and the church has seen its share of division in the New Testament dispensation. Yet, the Bible is plain in identifying those things which make for unity, and contribute to division.

We should not expect man to attain to any degree of unity when "every way of man is right in his own eyes" (Pr. 21:2). There was division and confusion among God's people when this course was followed (Judges 17:6; 21:25), and we should expect nothing better when the religious world practices and upholds division, refusing to acknowledge the purity of the wisdom from above as a prerequisite to unity and peace (Jas. 3:17). But, as I said in the beginning, man is inconsistent because he admits on the one hand that unity is pleasing to God, while on the other hand he will not leave off those things which cause division.

The kind of unity which is taught by the Spirit is set forth in Eph. 4:1-6, and it is to this passage that we turn.

The Right Attitude

In verses one and two, the apostle emphasizes the need to exercise "lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love." Man doesn't exhibit much meekness, when he elevates his own wisdom, ways and creeds above those of God. And, when we have more affection for our traditions and institutions than we have for Christ, the truth, or the church, we display a haughty attitude toward things divine, and toward those who plead for "the unity of the Spirit."

David and Abner had been reconciled to each other, and David had made peace with the house of Saul, yet others kept the fires of division alive (2 Sam. 3-4). All too often the old Hatfield-McCoy type of feuding is handed down from generation to generation, which precludes any progress toward unity.

The Right Effort

Some people manifest a commendable attitude toward unity, but are weak on effort. Endeavour means to

try, and man could meet this requirement if he would display as much zeal in the direction of unity as he does in the area of division. More diligence would complement the right effort, not neutralize it.

The Right Plan

Neither will the right attitude, nor the right effort avail anything without the right plan. This plan is comprised of forty-one words, counting those in italics. There are thirty-three one syllable words, and eight two syllable words in verses 4-6. How can man expect to improve on that?

Think of all the ecumenical counsels that have convened, all the plans that have been presented and consi-

dered, then take another look at this plan presented by the Holy Spirit: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Man rejects the very first point in this divine plan, and then tries to arrange the rest to fit his own likes or dislikes. He may cover his failures in a multitude of words and theological maneuverings now, but he will be hard pressed to explain to the Lord why he couldn't understand such plain, simple language, and why he didn't manifest a better attitude and make a better effort toward "the unity of the Spirit."

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

Send all News Items to: Connie W. Adams, P.O. Box 69, Brooks, KY 40109

PREACHER TAKES STAND

MICHAEL S. SCOTT, P.O. Box 53, Middletown, IN 47356—Wayne Goforth of Jadwin, Missouri, who formerly preached among churches which support human institutions and engage in centralized control and oversight operations, has taken a stand for the whole truth. We carried on a lengthy correspondence for the past two years on the issues. His attitude throughout has been excellent. He is a man who loves the truth and is not ashamed of it. His wife stands with him in the truth. He is ready to preach the whole counsel of God. For refer-ence, you might contact L. A. Stauffer of St. Louis, MO and Luther W. Martin of Rolla, MO. Should any brethren wish to contact brother Wayne Goforth, his address is Cedar Grove, Rt., Box 75, Salem, MO 65560.

NEW PUBLICATION

JUSTICE is the name of a new bi-monthly magazine edited by Allan Turner of Louisville, Kentucky. It is published by the Committee For Justice in Government. It is designed to combat secular humanism in law, philosophy, medicine, the media and education. This publication affords a forum through which to oppose such evil without being identified with the Moral Majority and other such groups which foster much false doctrine while opposing other errors. Allan Turner, Gene Frost, John Humphries and others involved in this venture are well informed on these issues. Subscription price is \$12.00 a year. Write: Justice, P.O. Box 33201, Louisville, KY 40232.

NEW CONGREGATION

JOHN H. COPELAND, 580 Maddox Lane, Powell, Wyoming—A new congregation has been established in Powell, Wyoming. We have been meeting since the first Sunday of January, 1986. Two families are meeting together to worship the Lord and work jointly to carry out New Testament teaching. If you are planning a visit to Yellowstone Park this year, we extend to you a hearty welcome. We meet in my residence at the above address. After you arrive in Powell, you may call us at 754-5973 or 754)7141. I get much enjoyment out of reading **SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES**.

CHURCH NEEDS PEWS

The Crandall, Indiana congregation is moving its location to New Salsbury and needs pews. Please contact **BRUCE SHEARER**, Rt. 2, Box 92A, Depauw, IN 47115. Call (812) 347-2557. Reggie Robarts is now preaching for this congregation.

A TWO-WEEKS MEETING

The Expressway congregation in Louisville, Kentucky has just concluded a two-weeks gospel meeting in which Dee Bowman did the preaching. Singing was led the first week by Rollin Morris and the second week by R. J. Stevens who also offered singing instruction to song leaders before the evening services and then led about 30 minutes of congregational singing. Since few churches have meetings this long any more, a number of brethren have been anxious to know about the meeting. Attendance was good throughout with better support from local members than in most one week meetings. Although there were several other meetings in progress in the area both weeks, there was still good support from other places. The members worked hard and from the first brought many visitors to the services. Six were baptized and one restored. The interest and attendance grew during the second week with 320 on Sunday night and closing with 380 the last night which well fills the building. Good preaching and good singing are a powerful combination and still do good in these modern times. We thought our readers would like to know that people will still attend a two weeks gospel meeting.

PREACHERS NEEDED

MIDDLEBOURNE, WEST VIRGINIA—A full-time gospel preacher is needed for a well established congregation of 155 members. Outstanding opportunity for a working preacher to labor with us. Modern brick, three bedroom house, provided adjacent to the church building. Middlebourne has a population of 1,000 but is the county seat. We are located only a few miles from Paden City and New Martinsville. Write, giving full information to: Elders, Church of Christ, Middlebourne, WV 26149.

CONYERS, GEORGIA—The church meeting at 1695 Flat Shoals Road needs a full-time preacher. Attendance runs 40-50. This is the former Snapfinger Road church. Some outside support will be needed. Located between Atlanta and Covington, Georgia in a rapidly expanding area. Call **HOLLIS COLLIER** (404) 483-0390; or **PAUL LOOPER** (404) 241-5112.

SALEM, OHIO—The Salem church needs a full-time preacher. Those interested may write the church at: P.O. Box 446, Salem, Ohio 44460; or call **WAYNE HAMILTON** (216) 821-1152; or **REX TEAGARDEN** (216) 424-7010.

CLEVELAND, MISSISSIPPI—The North Cleveland church is looking for a full time preacher. About 40 in attendance. Partial support is available. Contact Randy Andrews, Rt. 1, Box 112, Merigold, MS 38759, Phone (601) 745-6180; or call William Sheady (601) 756-2502; or call Harold Hurst (601) 686-4589.

HUMBOLDT, TENNESSEE—The Elliott Street church in Humboldt needs a full time preacher. Jim Allen, who has been here for three years is moving. Those interested may write Clarence Spain, 1606 Poplar, Humboldt, TN 38343, or call (901) 784-6595.

PEKIN, INDIANA—The church in Pekin is looking for a young man for preacher training to work about 10 weeks this summer with the local preacher, Darrell Haub. He will help with sermons, classes, visitation, call-in-radio programs. We will provide room and board and some support. He will need an automobile.

PREACHER WANTS TO RE-LOCATE

MIKE HUGHES, P.O. Box 75, Joaquin, Texas 75954—As of June 1, I will be looking for a place to preach. I prefer a self-supporting work. Write me at the above address or call after 5 P.M. central time (409) 598-9789.

NEW CONGREGATION

McCOMB, MISSISSIPPI—In October three families (six adults and three children) started meeting. On April 13 we began renting a building at 430 Georgia Avenue. Exit I-55 at Smithdale exit, go to U.S. 51, turn right and go one mile to the building on the left. Allan Smith is the preacher. For information call (601) 276-3046 or 276-7580.

GLENN SEATON, 1814 Buchanan, Wichita Falls, Texas 76309—A few weeks ago the leaders of the Floral Heights church in Wichita Falls learned that two members of this congregation were supporting the work of Charles A. Holt by (1) being on the board of trustees of the TRUTH AND FREEDOM MINISTRY, INC. (formerly HOLT MINISTRIES, INC.) and (2) spreading the false doctrine of Charles Holt through the EXAMINER (published by TRUTH AND FREEDOM MINISTRIES, INC. and edited by Charles Holt. After meeting with these two men, the leaders made known to the congregation what was going on, in keeping with Rom. 16:17; 2 Jno. 11 and 1 Cor. 5:6. Before this information was made known to the congregation the men involved withdrew their membership from Floral Heights. It is our

prayer that others will take appropriate action to stop the spread of this doctrine which undermines the local church and the Biblical role of elders. It is encouraging to know that there are still godly elders who will defend the truth.

* * * * *

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

PREACHING IN CANADA—For the past two weeks my wife and I have been in meetings in Ontario, Canada. The first meeting was at Jordan in the Niagara peninsula, not far from Niagara Falls. The church at Jordan has a long history of good works. It was established in the days of Alexander Campbell and he preached there on occasion. Over the years many good men have worked locally and in meetings there. Bill Hall is presently preaching at Jordan and doing excellent work. In spite of giving up several families to start congregations at Wellandport and St. Catherines, the church is now about the size it was before those works began. There is an impressive group of young people who take an active role in the work. Two were baptized and one restored. This good congregation has supported faithful men throughout the province to preach the gospel.

The second meeting (still in progress at this writing) is in South River, Ontario, 230 miles north of Jordan. This is in the heart of a beautiful hilly area where lakes abound. It is excellent for fishing and hunting and many tourists come here. South River is about 50 miles south of North Bay. The church here has a very attractive meeting house. Attendance on Sundays runs about 40. Jim Nicholson has been the preacher here since the work began. Three families from here moved up to Timmins (240 miles north) to establish a congregation where John Hains is the preacher. John was converted at South River and is married to the daughter of Jim and Joan Nicholson. Some have been baptized there since the work began, mostly from French background.

There is much work yet to be done in this great country. There are many cities and towns where works could be started. The laborers are few.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	170
RESTORATIONS	48
(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)	