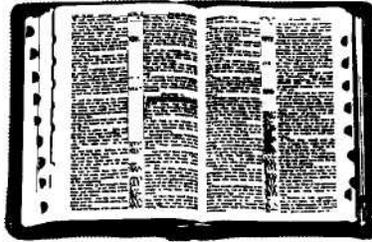


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

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



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

"DEVOTED TO THE SEARCH FOR DIVINE TRUTH"

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DIVINE COMMUNIQUES

C. G. "Colly" Caldwell

Florida College
Temple Terrace, FL 33617



SPEAK TRUTH

THE KING'S MESSAGE: WHEREFORE, PUTTING AWAY FALSEHOOD, SPEAK YE TRUTH EACH ONE WITH HIS NEIGHBOR" (Ephesians 4:25).

At a convention in Atlanta last December, an Assistant Secretary from the United States Department of Education told of a lawyer who died and went to his eternal abode. Large, red and yellow banners were strung across the gates to welcome him. Most of his friends and all the hosts of wickedness were there. Loud music was filling the air (no doubt provided by a hard rock band playing heavy metal "music" (?) and transferred to the outer limits of the realm through a cable network similar to MTV, cgc). Satan, himself, was ready with a very special greeting. Such a massive gathering had turned out because this was a unique day! The devil stepped up to the disillusioned attorney and exclaimed, "Congratulations, you are the OLDEST man ever to be admitted to this domain." "Oh," the barrister replied with relief, "a mistake has been made, I am only fifty years old." "No," the devil replied, "we checked all your records carefully and you charged your clients for 977 years of professional services."

I am not certain how the Secretary would document this bit of data. It is obvious, however, that this professional man owed his presence as a special guest in the most populated place of souls to his response to the central moral issue of PERSONAL INTEGRITY.

Explicit and Implicit Deceit

Almost everyone who claims to have ethical stand-

ards understands that explicit falsehood is immoral. The devil is a liar and we take him as our father when we sacrifice our integrity (John 8:44). Satan induced the first human sin with lies (Gen. 3). In so doing, he deceived Eve: a) concerning the probability of escaping the consequences of sin (vs. 4); b) concerning the viability of excuses for sin (vs. 5); and c) concerning the satisfaction received from sin (vs. 6). The Bible is filled with examples of bald-faced liars who brought terrible consequences upon themselves and others.

Not all of us are so clear, however, in our thinking about **implicit falsehood**. "Implicit" falsehood is deception without actually, specifically, overtly, lying in expressed words. The word "falsehood" is translated from the Greek word pseudos. We anglicize that word as a prefix to many English words suggesting "pretended reality." Falsehood is fiction. It claims something which is not so. The key to the sinfulness of one involved in falsehood is misrepresentation and deception. This may be done implicitly without express statement:

a) We might use deceptive business tactics and maneuvers or stretch facts to gain business advantage or monetary gain;

b) We might hide the defects in what we are selling and leave a false impression for personal gain;

c) We might become careless with the facts: d.

We might spice up stories with untruth:

e) We might disregard promises and fail to fulfill our word or vows:

f) We might by some body movement (a shrug of the shoulders, a wink of the eye, or some other action) affirm that which is not true:

g) We might lie by silence hiding truth and creating deception:

h) We might make insinuations which twist truth and allow harmful rumors to be initiated or continued:

i) We might become hypocritical, allowing ourselves to deceive others and to lie to ourselves!

j) We might make untrue excuses about our conduct or lack of it, or the conduct of others.

Every Christian is responsible in all aspects of life to maintain honesty in character. He will not, for example, choose a profession which requires deception or dishonesty with any man. He will determine that he will be an

honest lawyer, or insurance man, or car salesman, or preacher. He will avoid any temptation to rationalize deceit for whatever reason. Truth is not situational. Our responsibility to maintain impeccable integrity does not depend upon the circumstances of the moment. Situation ethics must be rejected as a system of thinking which promotes the philosophy that "the end justifies the means." Peter lied to save his life (the ultimate "reason") and yet his reaction depicts the lowest type of cowardice. It will not do for a man to argue. "THIS IS JUST BUSINESS."

Secular and Religious Deceit

"Secular" here refers to all "non-religious" falsehood. Obviously, however, all lies have religious significance with regard to one's relation to God. The old prophet lied to the "man of God" about his right to spend the night at his house (1 Kings 13). Ananias and Sapphira lied to God about their money (Acts 5). Rahab lied about the spies (Joshua 2). Delilah and Samson played terrible games with the truth (Judges 16). God rendered judgment in all these cases which involved physical, material things.

Our generation is not fond of identifying religious lies. We want to give all people credit for being honest and sincere. Many are indeed sincere who nonetheless believe a LIE (cf. 2 Cor. 4:3-4). God is not as patient with error, deceitful doctrine, and ignorant followers of untruth as weak Christians and soft preachers would like to think (cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Matt. 7:15-23; 2 Thes. 2:10-12). All would be pleased if God did not care and if all that he required was naive good attitudes, but the Devil laughs and counts up the souls he will receive when he sees us accept such a deceitful concept of religion. We must get back to the study of doctrinal truth so the foundation of our faith will not rest on LIES!

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Editorial

Connie W. Adams

P.O. Box 69
Brooks, Kentucky 40109



(Editor's note: The following article was written by my son, Wilson Adams, as a tribute to his grandfather and my father. I had intended to write something myself, but after seeing this article which appeared in GUIDE-POSTS, bulletin of the Wildercroft church in Riverdale, Maryland where Wilson preaches, I asked his permission to print it as my editorial for this month. We also carry in this issue an article by John L. Nosker of Richmond, Virginia which is a summary of his remarks at the funeral service. It was my father's request that brother Nosker speak at his funeral assisted by the local preacher of the Rivermont church near Hopewell, Virginia where he served as an elder for 15 years until failing health forced his resignation. Ronny Milliner assisted in the service and the grave service was conducted by Roy Diestelkamp who formerly preached at Rivermont while Daddy served as an elder. CWA)

JOYNER WILSON ADAMS 1902-1986

We called him "Grand-daddy" and we loved him very much. He had a special kind of wit and wisdom that few possess. He never had much money nor did he enjoy the advantages of education that others had, but he knew the merits of honesty, hard work and family devotion. Last Tuesday night (December 9) he was given the blessed privilege of going home to be with the Lord he loved.

While some men leave behind a monument of marble or a slab of stone, "Grand-daddy" left behind a living memorial of Jesus Christ enshrined in human hearts. All three of his children are Christians. All three married Christians. His two sons are gospel preachers and his daughter married a preacher. All nine grandchildren are Christians and three of them are preachers and one married a preacher. It is a legacy that few can match. Here was a man who understood that putting the word of God into the heart of the little child was the most important priority of life for it would be the only monument that would ever last. He succeeded where so many of us fail.

This December 23rd was to be their 63rd wedding anniversary. It was a beautiful love affair that defines description. The last several years saw our grandmother waiting on him night and day when he could no longer care for himself. Hour after hour she sat at his bedside, caressing, caring and feeding. Perhaps it was her way of thanking him for the many years he worked so hard to provide for her. Why the Lord allowed

"Grand-daddy" to linger on so long no one knows. But maybe, just maybe, it was to teach the rest of us an unforgettable lesson: that marriage is sacred and the marriage vow of "in sickness and in health" is still to be remembered even after 62 years!

Here was a man who was great because he never knew he was. He liked the simpler things in life and never was at all impressed with worldly achievement and earthly accolades. For fifteen years he served as an elder in the Lord's church — the highest honor on the face of the earth — and understood as well as any man ever has, the tender, compassionate care required of God's shepherd. He wasn't afraid to shed tears over those who had wandered away nor was he the least bit hesitant to stand firm when the enemy approached the flock. When some of his own kin were swept away by the flood of compromise that brought division to churches of Christ during the last several years, "Grand-daddy" remained entrenched in his respect for scriptural authority and dedication to the ancient order of God's religion. To him, Bible was thicker than blood and truth was more to be desired than compromise with kinfolks.

As I stood arm in arm with my father and peered one last time into the open casket, Dad said: "You know, I never felt worthy to even walk in his shadow . . ." Everyone who knew him could say the same. I just pray that I will never place a blemish on the names that he so well preserved — his own and his Lord's. And, if I had to pick one verse of Scripture to serve as a summary to his life, I would choose Micah 6:8:

"And what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

Yes, I long for the day when I can see him again. His presence in the eternal emerald city makes the prospects of heaven even sweeter.

—Wilson Adams

THE PATTON — PHILLIPS EXCHANGE

With this issue we begin the much awaited exchange of articles between Marshall E. Patton and H. E. Phillips on the right of "certain put away" persons to remarry. There will be three articles by each man, followed by a brief rebuttal by each. The discussion will extend through the April issue. These men are both careful students of the word of God. They are good friends and fellow-workers of many years. They have worked together as writers for this paper since it began in 1960. H. E. Phillips was editor from January, 1960 until June, 1973. For twenty-five years, Marshall E. Patton wrote the question and answer column. The first twenty years of his work is now in a hardback book, ANSWERS FOR OUR HOPE, which was the title of his column in this paper.

This exchange reflects a difference between them as to the right of some "put away" people in a divorce situation to remarry. Brother Phillips does not believe that any "put away" party has a right to remarry. Brother Patton believes that only certain people in that category may remarry without sin, when adultery has

been committed against them. Both men repudiate what has been called for years "the Moyer position." Neither believes that one put away for fornication may remarry.

Circumstances in the lives of all of us sometimes make it hard for us to be completely objective touching certain issues, including this one. But we ask our readers to study this material carefully and with deep respect for the word of God. Do not settle the question by emotion, nor by reading between the lines of scripture. Let us all resolve to accept exactly what the Lord said, be as tolerant of each other as his word would allow, and accept truth wherever it may lead us.

We thank both men for their work and for their gracious attitude toward each other. Each reader will have to settle the matter in his own heart as to where the truth is found.

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TRIBUTE TO A PRINCE AND A GREAT MAN IN ISRAEL

**John L. Nosker
1207 Peachtree Blvd.
Richmond, VA 23226**

The passing of Joyner W. Adams at his home near Hopewell, Va. on December 9, 1986, brought sadness to his loved ones, brethren and friends. However, we "sorrow not as others who have no hope." Praise be to God for hope which serves as an anchor of the soul. How thankful we are that we do have hope, not despair. The quality of the life of this patriarch in Israel provides a solid basis for our hope.

One indication of his character is the nature of his home and family. He and sister Adams had been married just a few days short of sixty-three years. Three children were born to their union: Wiley, Connie and Glenda (Mrs. Thomas Icard), all of whom survive. The children expanded the family to include nine grandchildren and eleven great-grandchildren.

Strong indeed are the bonds of love woven into the fabric of the Adams home and family. In these days when marriages are breaking up on every hand, the love affair of Joyner and Nollie provides a beautiful object lesson on the home and family as God would have them. These two cared for each other in good times and bad, in sickness and health.

During the past several years of his declining health — chronic illness frequently interrupted by crises requiring hospitalization — the depth of Nollie's love was so beautifully demonstrated. When questioned as to how she could hold up, she replied: "He's a good man and he deserves it; I want to do everything I can for him." How lovingly she nursed him and cared for him. And tribute is also due his loving sister, Miss Beulah, who throughout his long illness provided such strong support and help to Nollie. Together they gave a full measure of devotion (and more).

The wholesome religious environment in which Joyner and Nollie reared their children continues to bear fruit in succeeding generations. Every child and grandchild who has married has a Christian spouse, and all are faithful members of the Lord's church. Both of their sons are gospel preachers as is their son-in-law, three grandsons and a grandson-in-law. That is seven preachers in the family. Son Connie is the editor of this fine religious journal which touches the lives of thousands on a regular basis.

After their own children were reared and out on their own, the Adams home became the haven for a considerable number of foster children. There these troubled waifs found love and sustenance which they had not previously known. Several of them, now adults, return from time to time to express their gratitude for the wonderful experience they had in this Christian home.

Some were at the funeral home to mingle their tears with those of the family.

A review of brother Adams' life brings into focus the depth of his spirituality. He grew up against a conservative background, and throughout his life he has respected the authority of the word of God. He has always opposed deviation from the revealed will of God in the practice of Christians, either individually or collectively as the church.

When the truth came into conflict with error, Joyner Adams could be counted upon to take a stand for the truth, even if some of his associates were compromising with error. There were important crossroads in his life when he did just that. Doing so meant taking a different position from some who had been near and dear to him; but, the Lord and his will was dearer to him than what any man might think of him. When a decision was to be made, he wanted to be on the Lord's side. He stood with those who defended the word of God without addition or subtraction.

The friendship of this writer with the Adamses dates back forty-three years. As a lonely, homesick serviceman during World War II, they were among those who extended a warm welcome to him. He was only one of many servicemen who passed through Fort Lee and were the recipients of the warmth of their love and hospitality.

Brother Adams' passing brings to mind the language of David upon the death of Abner (2 Samuel 3:38): "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" Yes, a prince and a great man has gone from us. A prince and a great man! He was not a great political figure. While a success in life, he did not amass a vast financial empire. He was not a great orator or a renowned entertainer. Why then princely and great? Because he was a Christian — a faithful, consecrated, humble and courageous Christian. A virtuous Christian.

Joyner's personality was adorned with humility which can best be described by the words of 1 Peter 3:4: "a meek and quiet spirit." He never sought preeminence over others; he was self-effacing almost to a fault. He became a Christian many years ago. He was a faithful member of the Rivermont church (near Hopewell). Brother Adams served as an elder of that flock until failing health forced him to give up the responsibilities of that office.

Attending worship took first place with him. He attended as long as he as able, and undoubtedly was present many times when one of lesser faith would have given in to health problems and remained comfortably at home.

Like Paul of old, he kept the faith, ran the race and finished the course. We usurp not the role of judge, but we have every reason to believe that our beloved brother has now gone on into the expanded horizon of eternal life.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

PATTON—PHILLIPS DEBATE

Marshall E. Patton

1024 Coronado Dr., S. E.
Huntsville, Alabama 35892



FIRST AFFIRMATIVE

By Marshall E. Patton

RESOLVED: The Scriptures teach that the innocent person (free of fornication) who has been put away without God's or his/her approval and against whom adultery has been committed may remarry.

For the sake of brevity, which the space allotted for this exchange demands, I will leave it to our editor to properly introduce and solicit the proper attitude toward this study.

I would like for our readers to know that Brother Phillips and I are personal friends of long standing; we each hold the other in high esteem and feel deep brotherly affection for one another. We engage in this debate for the sake of determining truth, exposing error, and ultimately the saving of souls. Neither of us questions the sincerity, integrity, or objectivity of the other.

The Issue

Both Brother Phillips and I believe that there are some put away persons who may not remarry. I affirm that there is a certain put away person who may remarry and the proposition is worded so as to help identify this certain person. Brother Phillips believes that no put away person may remarry, hence, the issue between us.

Definition of Terms

As the affirmative, it falls my lot to define the terms in the proposition.

By "the Scriptures" I mean the sixty six books of the Bible. By "teach" I mean by direct statement, approved example, or necessary inference. By "the innocent person" I mean one free of fornication as stated in parenthesis in the proposition. By "put away" I mean the breaking of the personal commitment made to one's spouse when God joined them in marriage. I do believe that while not an essential part of either the marriage or the putting away, when and wherever civil authority prevails and civil action is required, one must be subject to "the powers that be" (Rom. 13:1). In such cases the civil action becomes a divinely authorized means to the end. By "without God's approval" I mean without divine authorization. God approves only one putting away, namely, the put away fornicator (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). While God hates putting away (Mai. 2:16), in the interest of justice and for the protection of the innocent, He has authorized the putting away of the guilty party.

Since God approves the putting away of the guilty

party, and since the putting away of the person in our proposition is "without God's approval," it follows that the guilty party is excluded from this proposition. Neither I nor Brother Phillips believe that the put away fornicator may marry another.

Also, by "without God's approval" I mean a putting away that takes place by human authority and in violation of the law of God. A clearer distinction between these two putting aways will be made later in this article.

By "without... his/her approval" I mean without any desire, intent, or action on his/her part in relation to the putting away. If the put away person desired the divorce, had any intention of bringing it about, or indulged any action, orally or otherwise, that would mark him/her as a participant in the putting away, such a person is excluded from this proposition. I make no defense of such a person in remarriage. My reasons are based upon Matt. 5:32: "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

This verse teaches that there is only one cause for putting away one's spouse, namely, "fornication." When a husband puts away his wife for some cause other than fornication, he does so without divine authority, violates the law of God, and causes her to commit adultery when she remarries. Any participant in the putting away, to any degree, shares in the guilt that follows.

Furthermore, this expression "without . . . his/her approval" excludes from this proposition those who would play "the waiting game." By "the waiting game" I mean what is generally understood by that expression, namely, where husband and wife mutually agree to divorce with a view to waiting until the other commits fornication thinking that he/she is then free to remarry. **The mutual agreement makes each an active participant in the putting away.** Such action is without divine authority, is in violation of the law of God, and is the cause of the adultery that follows regardless of which one commits it. I want it clearly understood that such persons are excluded from the proposition which I affirm. I make no effort to justify such persons in remarriage.

The last statement in the proposition, "and against whom adultery has been committed may remarry" is, I think, self-explanatory. If Brother Phillips thinks further clarification is pertinent to this study, I shall be happy to honor his request.

Matthew 5:32

"But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matt. 5:32). Understanding this verse, what is in it and what is not in it, is essential to understanding the truth on the issue under study. This verse shows that there are two putting aways: 1) The putting away of the one

guilty of fornication (authorized in the exception clause). This putting away may be done by divine authority and, hence, with God's approval. 2) The putting away for some cause other than fornication. This putting away is done by human authority and, hence, without God's approval.

Furthermore, this latter putting away is futile so far as breaking the bond formed by God when He joined them in marriage. That such action is vain (so far as breaking God's bond is concerned) is evident from the fact that when the thus put away person marries again he/she commits adultery (v. 32b). There is another verse that makes this even more clear and conclusive: "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her" (Mk. 10:11). Notice especially the expression "committeth adultery against her," i.e., against her that is put away. Obviously, God's bond is still intact, otherwise the adultery would not be against "her."

All men need to learn that marriage approved of God involves a joining that takes place in heaven—not just on earth. Any loosening from this divine covenant must take place in heaven. Until this is done the heavenly bond continues intact, regardless of what is done on earth. Man may break his commitment in marriage, go back on his word, fail to honor the covenant he made, dismiss his wife, and in this sense put away his spouse, but all such action (save for the cause of fornication) is futile so far as having any effect on the heavenly bond is concerned. There the bond remains intact, untouched—unaffected!

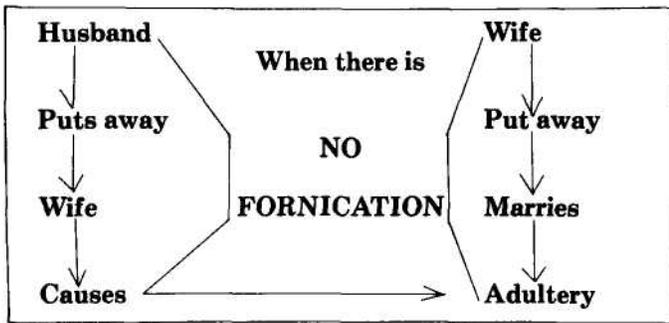
Who Is In Matthew 5:32

It must also be observed that the husband in this verse who puts away his wife is innocent of fornication, otherwise an adulterer may put away his wife when she commits fornication against him. Surely, we are agreed that only the innocent may do that. The wife in this verse who has been put away (not the one in the exception clause) is innocent of fornication, otherwise the putting away could not be the cause of her becoming an adulteress—she would already be one. **THEREFORE**, Matt. 5:32b which says, "Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" **CANNOT** refer to just ANY divorced person, but rather only to "her" who was divorced when there was no fornication involved. One simply cannot get out of a verse more than there is in it.

The put away "her" of verse 32b has for its antecedent the put away wife of 32a. This "her" was put away **when no fornication was involved**. In fact, there is no fornication in this picture—not until the "whosoever" comes into view. This means that the innocent put away person of our proposition who has fornication committed against her simply is not in verse 32b. To so apply the verse is to misapply God's word. The following chart (No. 1) illustrates the truth of this verse:

READ YOUR BIBLE TODAY

Matthew 5:32—Chart No. 1



The husband who puts away his wife when no fornication is involved causes her to commit adultery when she remarries. The put away wife who remarries when no fornication is involved commits adultery.

Therefore it follows that the b part of verse 32 cannot negate the divinely authorized putting away in the exception clause. Fornication is the cause of that putting away. Verse 32b relates only to one put away for some cause other than fornication. Verse 32b, therefore, cannot negate the divine prerogative in the exception clause, i.e., the right to put away one's guilty mate—not even if the one who puts away has already been put away by human authority against his/her will. The divine prerogative still stands untouched and unaffected. The exception clause and verse 32b are unrelated! To say otherwise is to say that human authority takes precedence over divine authority.

It is this divinely authorized putting away that supports my proposition. This putting away is implied in my proposition and is necessary to the remarrying affirmed therein. Matt. 19:9 expands the exception clause to not only authorize the putting away of the guilty but also to authorize remarriage. When these two verses are considered together, we have full proof of the proposition affirmed.

It would be folly to say that the putting away action already taken by human authority negates this divine prerogative. Such would demand the following conclusions:

1. Human action by human authority and in violation of the law of God can negate that which is divinely authorized.
2. Human authority supersedes divine authority.
3. It would set aside Acts 5:29 which says "We ought to obey God rather than men."

I say, respectfully, that I see no way to escape these conclusions unless one accepts the proposition affirmed in this debate.

Matthew 19:9

"And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."

Limited space precludes a careful analysis and study of this passage in this article. However, I promise such, along with other related verses, in my second affirma-

tive. The following brief yet pertinent and vital points must suffice for this article.

Matt 19:9, like Matt. 5:32, shows that there are two putting aways—one is done by divine authority, and the other is done by human authority. Concerning the former, this verse teaches that Whosoever shall put away his wife for the cause of fornication and shall marry another commits no adultery. Notice the word "Whosoever." This is an all inclusive term and includes everybody, unless an exception can be shown. We have already noted the following exceptions to the "Whosoever" in this verse when applied to the divinely authorized putting away:

1. The put away fornicator. He/she has already been put away by divine authority which putting away had effect in heaven. Furthermore, he/she is not innocent, which the "whosoever" in this instance demands.

2. The verse itself shows that the one who puts away for some cause other than fornication is excluded from the "whosoever" when applied to the divinely authorized putting away. All such commit adultery when they remarry.

3. We have also shown that those who play the "waiting game," as defined in this article, are excluded. Such become an active participant in a putting away for some cause other than fornication. Again, adultery results when they remarry.

Now unless Brother Phillips can find another exception in the Scriptures—one that excludes the person of our proposition from the "Whosoever" when applied to the divinely authorized putting away, my proposition stands! I insist that the "Whosoever" in this verse in relation to the divinely authorized putting away includes the person in the proposition I have affirmed. I not, Why not? Brother Phillips is obligated to answer this question. If he finds a verse which he thinks excludes the person of our proposition from this "Whosoever," then I shall show that such fails the objective or I will surrender the debate.

Let all remember that as the negative in this discussion, it is the responsibility of Brother Phillips to follow the affirmative material which I have submitted and negate it.

I am not pleading for sympathy, but for objectivity when I say, remember that while you will have an immediate reply to what I have written, you will have to wait one whole month before reading my reply to what Brother Phillips may write. I urge all to remain calm, to honestly and objectively study the material written, and to patiently wait until all evidence is in.

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DON'T FORGET TO PRAY!

PATTON—PHILLIPS DEBATE

H. E. Phillips
P.O. Box 1631
Lutz, FL 33549

**FIRST NEGATIVE**

By H. E. Phillips

Divorce and remarriage is a growing menace upon society, and particularly in the church. It is making havoc of many congregations where it has not been opposed from the pulpit and in classes. The problem has been compounded by infiltrating the eldership, deacons, teachers and preachers. Because of its influence upon the family and the church, I must oppose what I believe is error on the subject.

I do not believe a put away (divorced) person may remarry without sin. Brother Patton believes certain put away persons may remarry, thus this discussion.

Let me fully concur with Brother Patton in his introductory remarks of his first affirmative. I have expressed publicly and privately my personal affection and high esteem for Brother Patton. I regard him as a Christian and a gentlemen of the highest level. There is no doubt in my heart that he loves the Lord and his word.

The Issue

I agree with Brother Patton's statement of our difference and the point of issue between us on the divorced person who may or may not remarry.

Definition of Terms

I accept most of the definition of terms in the proposition. I have some question about the qualifying expression, "without God's or his/her approval." By the expression "without God's approval" Brother Patton says he means without divine authority: a divorce for other than fornication. By "without.. his/her approval" Brother Patton says he means, "without any desire, intent, or action on his/her part in relation to the putting away." He uses this to mean that the put away person resisted the divorce, did not mutually agree to the divorce. Where is an exceptional clause that releases a put away person from the statements in Matthew 5:32, 19:9; Mark 10:11 and Luke 16:18, and permits him/her to marry another?

He did not even prove this in his first affirmation. For even though it was without God's approval, she was nevertheless PUT AWAY, and whosoever marries one who has been put away commits adultery, according to every passage that discusses the subject.

Under the heading, **MATTHEW 5:32**, He says there are TWO putting aways: 1) Putting away of the guilty

party for fornication, and 2) Putting away for some cause other than fornication. The first is by divine authority, and the second is by human authority.

The Bible speaks about one who is put away "for fornication" and one who is put away with no fornication involved (Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18). But actually, Brother Patton gives a **THIRD** putting away: one where both parties mutually agree to the divorce. There is no explanation from God as to what the circumstances were regarding those who are put away when there is no fornication involved. Brother Patton explains that there may be a putting away where both participants are in agreement with the putting away. He affirms that such a situation does not fit his proposition and he "makes no defense of such a person in remarriage." But where does Brother Patton find such an explanation in God's word?

The last statement in the proposition says, "... and against whom adultery has been committed may remarry." This particular statement is so expressed as to try to use Mark 10:11 to justify Brother Patton's second putting away. More about this later.

Matthew 5:32

Brother Patton makes Matthew 5:32 vital to this issue. He points out that there are two putting aways found in the passage. One, for fornication, and one, not for fornication.

The second putting away involves Brother Patton's person who has been put away against her will. The reason I know this is because the husband's putting her away caused her, when she remarried as per Brother Patton's chart, to commit adultery. If it had been the person who had been put away by Brother Patton's "mutual agreement," he would not have caused her to commit adultery, she would have been the cause of it herself. His explanation of this passage also shows that if the wife "cannot contain" and remarries **BEFORE** the husband marries, that both she and the "whosoever" who marries her commit adultery. Hence, even though Brother Patton denies the "waiting game," it is clearly set forth here in his explanation of this passage. She cannot marry **UNTIL** he marries. She must wait until he commits adultery against her so that (according to his argument) she may **THEN** put him away and remarry. If this is not the "waiting game," I do not know what it is.

Brother Patton makes a point from Mark 10:11 with the statement: "Notice especially the expression 'commiteth adultery against her,' i.e., against her that is put away. Obviously, God's bond is still intact, otherwise the adultery would not be against her." His argument is: Because Mark says that the one who puts away his wife and marries another commits adultery **AGAINST HER**, that this is the put away person of his proposition, who was put away against her will, who may **NOW** put away her former husband and remarry because she has had adultery committed against her.

Brother Patton assumes that the one who has adultery committed "against her" is the first wife. This is by no means certain. All evidence does not agree that the "her" is the wife. Some commentaries say the "her" is

the woman who is number two wife,

According to the rules of English grammar, the antecedent of a pronoun is the closest noun to it which would be "woman" (understood.) You will note that the text says, "... and marry another..." (woman understood). Thus the antecedent of "her" would be "woman" (wife number two).

There is not a single syllable uttered in Mark 10:11 about the put away person remarrying.

All fornication is "against" all those those involved, whether married or not. Of course, the wife is sinned against, but so is the other woman. Fornication (adultery) is a sin **AGAINST** one's own body (1 Corinthians 6:18). It likewise is a sin **against** the person with whom that one commits adultery. Mark 10:11 has two wives: the one who is bound in heaven by God, and the second wife to whom he has no right (Matthew 14:3,4). His adultery is equally **against** both of them, because his body belongs exclusively to his first wife and he sins **against** her if he gives himself to another; and he sins against the second by committing adultery with her because he has no right to her body (1 Corinthians 7:2-4). "Against" has no particular significance to just one person in this context.

Brother Patton must produce proof that the "her" in Mark 10:11 refers only to the wife who was put away, and not to the woman also whom he marries after putting her away.

Who Is In Matthew 5:32

In his explanation of "Who Is In Matthew 5:32," Brother Patton denies that the one put away for fornication is included in the "b" part of the passage. Brother Patton has already stated that there are TWO putting aways in 5:32a. Thus the one in the "b" part of the passage would have to include one of the "put away" ones in the "a" part. In addition, Brother Patton needs to consider that the Holy Spirit in the "b" part of the passage is emphasizing the one who is marrying put away person, rather than the one who has been put away.

However, if we grant everything that Brother Patton says about Matthew 5:32, this really has nothing to do with the person of his proposition, for he has already admitted that the one who is put away "for fornication" cannot remarry. He is looking for a person who has been put away who **CAN** remarry. Up to this point in time, he has not found her.

Now Brother Patton rightly states that Matthew 5:32b does not negate the right of the exception clause of 5:32a. He says they are unrelated. Matthew 5:32b is not even talking about the one who does the putting away, which the exception clause sets forth. It is talking about the one who has been put away. What Brother Patton needs to find is where one who has been put away with no fornication involved and who has remarried without committing sin. This he has not done! He says, "When these two verses (Matthew 5:32 and 19:9) are considered together, we have full proof of the proposition affirmed." Read both passages carefully and see if this is the case. Where in either of these passages is

there a mention of anyone who has been put away remarrying without committing sin? It simply is not found. **Yet that is the very thing Brother Patton is trying to prove.**

He makes a big play about the fact that civil law cannot supersede God's Law. I know of no one who thinks it can. If they do, they are wrong.

Look at 5:32b for a moment. Brother Patton said there were two putting aways: 1) the putting away for fornication, 2) the one for any cause other than fornication. Now the "whosoever" who comes along and marries either one is guilty of adultery. The first, because she is an adulteress and when he marries her he commits adultery. The second, because she still is bound by God to her husband and when the "whosoever" marries her he commits adultery. I see absolutely no freedom for either of them to marry by God's approval. The verse says: "AND WHOEVER SHALL MARRY HER THAT IS DIVORCED COMMITTETH ADULTERY." There are no exceptions in Matthew 5:32b.

Brother Patton says that there is no fornication in this picture—not until the "whosoever" comes into view. But that "whosoever" is a part of the picture. When he comes into view that is when the adultery begins, and that is exactly what the verse teaches, no more and no less. When that "whosoever" marries that put away one in Matthew 5:32b, he "committeth adultery." Period!

Now Brother Patton links together Matthew 5:32b and Mark 10:11 for his conclusion that "Verse 32b, therefore, cannot negate the divine prerogative in the exceptional clause, i.e., the right to put away one's guilty mate—not even if the one who puts away has already been put away by human authority against his/her will. The divine prerogative still stands untouched and unaffected."

He concludes: "It is this divinely authorized putting away that supports my proposition . . . This putting away is implied in my proposition and is necessary to the remarrying affirmed therein."

Now we know that Brother Patton believes in the "waiting game." Deny it if he wishes, and he does, his proposition demands the "waiting" until the one who put her away remarries. There is no escape from this conclusion according to his arguments from Matthew 5:32, Mark 10:11 and Matthew 19:9.

Patton's Chart No. 1

Matthew 5:32

The problem with Brother Patton's Chart No. 1 on Matthew 5:32 is that no one is free to marry another because no adultery is involved, and he said unless one commits fornication, no one is free to marry again. His chart does not prove any one free to marry without sin, and that is what he is trying to prove. Where is the proof that a put away person may remarry? Divine authority says in every verse touching the subject, "Whosoever marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery." With me that is final! That put away person in Matthew 5:32b commits adultery when she marries again. The Lord said so!

Matthew 19:9

Two putting aways, one by divine authority and one by human authority. He argues that the "whosoever" in this verse is all inclusive and includes everybody. He also noted the following exceptions to the "whosoever" when applied to the divinely authorized putting away:

1. The put away fornicator. He/she is not innocent.
2. The verse shows that the one put away for some other cause is excluded from the "whosoever." These commit adultery when they remarry.
3. Those who play the waiting game cannot remarry without sin.

CONCLUSION: "Now, unless Brother Phillips can find another exception in the Scriptures one that excludes the person of our proposition from the "Whosoever" when applied to the divinely authorized putting away, my proposition stands! I insist that the "Whosoever" in this verse in relation to the divinely authorized putting away includes the person in the proposition I have affirmed. If not, Why not? Brother Phillips is obligated to answer this question."

Brother Patton is so carried away with his "Whosoever" that he finds him/her everywhere. "Whosoever" refers to the person doing the putting away. If he puts away for the cause of fornication, he may remarry, otherwise, he sins if he marries again. The only other "Whosoever" is the one who marries **the put away person**. In every case that "whosoever" **commits adultery when he marries the put away person**. There is no exception!

Until Brother Patton finds a "Whosoever" who can marry again (except the "whosoever" who puts away his spouse for the CAUSE of fornication), he has not proved his proposition.

I, as Brother Patton, urge calm and honest, objective study of this material in the light of God's eternal word. The discussion is not over until all the material is in.

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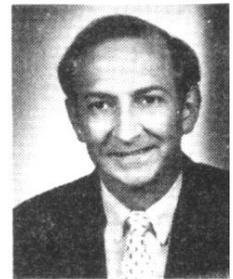
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The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth (Ecc. 12:10)."



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BROTHERHOOD PAPERS

I was five years old when my parents obeyed the gospel. Since then I do not recall a time when we did not have gospel papers around the house. Before I could read I remember seeing my mother look at those papers before going to bed. For the most part my memory of the papers is a good one. There are several topics on which I would not have learned the truth had it not been for them.

I have also seen the papers abused. From the days of the "yellow tag of quarantine" imposed on non-institutional brethren by the editor of the GOSPEL ADVOCATE in 1953 to this present time, I have witnessed harm done by various publications. But the papers are inanimate objects. They are lifeless tools that become extensions of those who publish them. I would be no more in favor of dispensing with the printed page because it is abused than I would favor abolishing soap and eggs just because they are abused on Halloween.

Nevertheless, we must recognize the power of papers for good or bad. The pen is mightier than the sword. Caution must be exercised toward their misuse and encouragement should be given when they are used to build up the cause of Christ.

Disadvantages of Brotherhood Papers

By "brotherhood papers" I mean publications that are sent across the brotherhood, not published by any congregation and usually have a subscription price (though not always). They may be published by an individual, a bookstore, a college, or a foundation.

1. PAPERS MAY BECOME A "VOICE" FOR THE BROTHERHOOD. The Catholics have their popes, the Protestants have their presidents, but what does the church of Christ have? In the absence of any organizational structure for the universal church, papers have often fulfilled a role which they ought not. We mentioned the quarantine of 1953. Those were some of the darkest days for brotherhood publications. No paper should be so powerful. But the Advocate spoke... and it was so. A brotherhood divided that might have been able to find its bearings if the lines of communication had been kept open. That publication was given a nickname deserved only by the Bible. It was called "the Old Reliable."

Papers sometimes develop the power to determine what the brotherhood issues should be. Like the prophets of old, a local preacher must be a watchman. But he must not become a puppet for a paper. Reams

may be published on some topic that has no bearing on a local congregation. There may not be anyone for miles who holds the views discussed. Rather than stirring the congregation over a matter unheard of or would not be inclined toward, a preacher would be better off to deal with the more pressing and important matters that face a local church. There is no "official voice" for the brotherhood today. No editor or group of writers should have such grandiose ambitions.

2. **PAPERS CAN DISCOURAGE NEW CONVERTS AND THOSE WHO MIGHT OBEY THE GOSPEL.** New converts have had their fires put out and potential Christians have been turned off by endless and numberless controversies that were handled carelessly. I know, because they have told me. They need to know that being a Christian is joyous but will also involve some conflict. If the papers are to be around in the future, they will be read and supported by the new converts of today. Consideration for balance and the needs of *all* Christians should be given by editors, unless it has been made clear that a paper is designed to deal only with certain subjects. Even then, thought should be given to the manner in which it is done.

"Now all the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing" (Acts 17:21). Newspapers often try to out-scoop each other to see which can be the first to break a story. Papers among brethren have been abused in this way by constant reporting of the worst news that can be dug up in the brotherhood. This is not said to stifle needed warnings, but a steady diet of it can kill one's joy in the kingdom. No editor should be pressured into feeling that he must be an authority on every issue. I have heard Connie Adams say "What I know about that subject I could write on a postage stamp." A pitfall for all of us is to spend all of our time in trying to settle brotherhood issues to the neglect of one's local work.

3. **A PARADOX WHICH PAPERS FACE.** Due to power of papers that may be widely read, there is the ability to ruin a man's influence with whom there is disagreement. Papers may be justified in exposing certain men and they may not be justified. Generally, one man is no match to a brotherhood publication. However, this cuts in both directions. The paradox is in the fact that many people are always for the underdog. A paper may end up the villain if it appears that a powerful paper has attacked a lone individual.

Advantages of Brotherhood Papers

1. **THEY CAN HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SCRIPTURES.** I was 800 miles from home attending a college operated by institutional brethren when the institutional controversy was reaching its peak. Had it not been for the papers I was receiving I could easily have lost my bearings. The papers kept me searching, studying and discussing those subjects until truth emerged bright and clear. Aside from helping me solve issues, articles have caused me to make soul-searching examinations of my personal life to see if I was really what I ought to be. I didn't always like what I saw, but

it has helped me. All of this, not to mention some of the good sermon material I have gotten from the papers. I have never had those benefits from my daily newspaper, TV Guide, TIME Magazine, etc. Brethren should weigh these benefits when they spend money on reading material.

2. **THEY CAN OFFER ENCOURAGEMENT.** Not only can the articles give you a needed push but news items about the progress of the gospel in other places can give you added incentive to greater dedication. Concerning the Thessalonians Paul said, "For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not speak anything" (1 Thes. 1:8). Similar statements are made about the church at Philippi. Such news was an encouragement to Paul. Efforts to preach the gospel on foreign soil or in remote areas in our country are always encouraging. It shows the spread of the gospel.

3. **THEY SUPPLY HELPFUL INFORMATION.** Meetings, lectureships, and debate announcements are often carried in the periodicals, enabling one to learn of events and make plans to attend which he otherwise might not have known about.

4. **THEY HELP CHRISTIANS WHEN TRAVELING.** A list of services, phone numbers, and preachers are often carried in the papers. This helps us arrange to assemble with God's family when traveling to other sections of the country.

5. **THEY WARN OF ERROR.** This should not be thought contradictory to things said under "disadvantages." We need warning against error. Elders and preachers will need to decide how much time should be spent and whether certain errors pose a threat to a particular congregation. If good judgment is not used, a preacher may soon be looked on as the little boy who cried "wolf."

CONCLUSION: Obviously, I believe the advantages outweigh the disadvantages by far. We would be better Christians if we would spend more time reading good literature. But there are Bible principles that should govern all of us who write—"Let all things be done unto edifying" and "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:26, 40).

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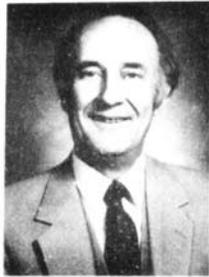
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STATE OF RIGHTEOUS DEAD

QUESTION: *Do the spirits of the righteous go directly to heaven at death or are they confined to Hades until the resurrection?*

ANSWER: It is my persuasion that righteous spirits go directly to heaven immediately after death. There are several passages that seem to suggest this.

Paul wrote, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23). There is no intermediate place between earth and heaven, namely, Hades, indicated in this text. After Paul's departure (death) he would be with Christ in heaven. In 2 Cor. 5:6 we read, "... knowing that whilst we are home in the body, we are absent from the Lord." The implication is that if we are absent from the Lord while alive on earth in the flesh, then we will be present with the Lord when we are not in the fleshly body or alive on earth. Verse 8 states, "... willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." Again, no indication of the Hadean realm.

Prior to being stoned to death, Stephen saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God. In the last moments of his earthly life this faithful martyr prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:54-60). When Jesus received his spirit, He would have had to receive it into heaven because that is where Jesus was.

The apostle John, in his heavenly vision, caught a glimpse of the throne of God, and he beheld a great multitude BEFORE THE THRONE who had come out of great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:9-17). This multitude is the triumphant church in heaven while the 144,000 (Rev. 7:1-8) is the militant church on earth, spiritual Israel, still suffering from trials and tribulation.

Before the ascension of Christ back to heaven whereby the atonement was made for sins, all of God's faithful people were held in hades, that is, in Paradise in the Hadean realm. When the beggar, Lazarus, died, he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom (Lk. 16:22), a figurative expression denoting "blessedness." To be in Abraham's bosom was to be where Abraham was, namely, safe, secure and happy in the unseen world (Sheol in the Hebrew; Hades in the Greek).

Jesus told the penitent thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk. 23:43). This is where Jesus went in the interim between His death and resurrection,

and this is where the thief went after he died. Peter on Pentecost, quoting David (Psa. 16:10), said that Jesus' soul would not be left in hell (Hades, ASV and not Gehenna or the eternal abode of the wicked). Hence, Jesus and the thief went to Paradise in the Hadean world.

But after Jesus made atonement for sins, the way was cleared for man to come into the very, immediate presence of God. Before the glorification of Jesus, there was no absolute remission of sins. We read, "And ever priest standeth daily ministering and offering often-times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins" (Heb. 10:11). The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. Man retained his conscience of sins (Heb. 10:1-4). Hence, until man's sins were covered by the blood of Christ (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:15), and his debt cancelled, he could not enter heaven or the holy of holies. Jesus preceded us into heaven, a forerunner, going before us to prepare the way for God's people to enter, both Old and New Testament' saints (cf Heb. 6:19-20).

Jesus opened the new and living way to heaven. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. 10:19-20).

Of course, the wicked would still be confined to the Hadean abode, to a place of torment (Lk. 16:23), until the general resurrection. Subsequently, they will be cast into hell, *gehenna*, the place of eternal fire (Matt. 25:41; Mk. 9:43-48). The righteous will dwell with God, clothed with their glorified, immortal bodies, through eternity.

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THE WAY TO PRAY (PART 2)

We must be reminded that when the disciples pleaded, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1), they were wanting to be shown the way to do it. Thus Jesus showed them when he said, "After this manner therefore pray ye" (Matt. 6:9).

In our last article in this column we began noticing the way God wants us to approach him in prayer. We considered the characteristics of prayer or how we are to pray. We also examined the elements of prayer which are mentioned in 1 Tim. 2:1. There are four found in this text, two of which were considered in our last article. Let us briefly review those and look at the other components in the text.

Elements (What)

1. **Supplication.** This refers to asking a need, an entreaty. Clarke says this refers to a request for the averting of evil.

2. **Prayers.** This refers to any discourse with God (petitions, praise, thanksgiving, et. al.). Clarke says this refers to a request for the obtaining of good.

3. **Intercessions.** This is a plea to God on behalf of others. There can be no doubt that we have a responsibility to pray for other people. And if we are going to do that, we need to do more than just say "we pray for all whom it is our duty to pray for." We quickly utter that expression and think that fulfills our responsibility. We need to be a little more specific. It seems that the Lord prayed for certain individuals, calling them by name (e.g., Peter-Luke 22:32). The apostle Paul did the same thing. Carefully consider some passages that illustrate that he didn't just pray for his "brethren everywhere," but he remembered particular ones (1 Cor. 1:4; Eph. 1:15,16; Phil. 1:3-5; Col. 1:3-9; 1 Thess. 1:2-3, 3:10-13; 2 Thess. 1:3,11-12; 2:13-15).

We should pray for our brethren that they may grow and develop (Phil. 1:9; Col. 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 1:11; Col. 4:12; Eph. 6:18). When they have sinned or are in need they need our prayers (Jas. 5:16; 2 Thess. 3:1; 1 Jno. 5:16; Acts 8:18-24).

Even our enemies should be included in our prayers (Matt. 5:44-46; Acts 7:60; Luke 23:34). It just may be that with a little praying for them that they may soon become our friends and even children of God.

The rulers of the nation and other parts of the world need our prayers (1 Tim. 2:2). They have a tremendous responsibility which tells us they could use some help.

Anyone who has just the slightest knowledge of the book of Daniel will remember that God rules in the kingdoms of men. Thus our prayers can make a difference in how God uses certain men and certain kingdoms. We ought to pray for peace and that the leaders will make the decisions that are best for the people and the spreading of the gospel of Christ. This doesn't mean that we have to endorse their political policies if we pray for them. It does simply mean that a whole lot more good would be accomplished if we would do less complaining and a lot more praying!

Let's also pray for **alien sinners**. Paul's "heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel" was "that they might be saved" (Rom. 10:1). This does not mean that we should pray that God would save them in their sins, but that they will hear and have a heart to obey. It just may be that we would baptize a few more if we started praying for them.

The **sick and afflicted** desire our prayer on their behalf knowing that "the prayer of faith shall save the sick" and that the "effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:15-16).

As **elders** try to lead the flock of God and **preachers** attempt to instruct and exhort the same they all need the prayers of the saints (2 Thess. 3:1-2; Heb. 13:18).

Let's not only think about our own wants and needs in prayer but do more thinking about others and their needs (Phil. 2:4).

4. **Thanksgiving.** This is expressing thanks to God for the blessings of life, including both physical and spiritual (Col. 3:17; Phil. 4:6).

We have so much for which to be thankful. Have you ever just sat down and made a list of as many blessings as you could contemplate? If you haven't, I suggest you do it and "it will surprise you what the Lord hath done." If we ever get to the point that we realize how blessed we are, from that point on our prayers will be filled with thanksgiving.

We ought to thank God for the protection and care through the day and night, our food (Matt. 15:36; Luke 24:30; Acts 27:35), clothing, shelter, reasonable health and strength, our automobiles, furniture, money, modern conveniences which are so often taken for granted (e.g. hot water, heating and air conditioning, electric lights, appliances such as washers, dryers and stoves, televisions, radios and easy methods of travel), friends, parents, mates, children and other family members, the sacrifice of the Son of God, the remission of sins, the hope of heaven, the privilege of prayer, the Bible, elders, deacons, fellow Christians (1 Cor. 1:4; Phil. 1:3-5; 1 Thess. 1:2) and the opportunity and freedom to worship. Even our troubles could be included in thanksgiving knowing that they help develop patience and mature us. The little boy was thankful for his glasses for then the boys wouldn't fight him and the girls wouldn't kiss him. Matthew Henry thanked God when he was robbed—that they didn't take his life and that they stole from him and not he from them. Yes, there are some things that we need, but are not so pleasant (e.g. glasses, false teeth and medication). We should thank God for these as well.

In fact, we can and should thank God for everything that is good (Jas. 1:17; Phil. 4:6).

Time (When)

1. **Make Time.** Prayer is not a thing that we will do only if we have a little extra time. We must make the time! We have time to do just about anything we want to do. You see, our real problem is wanting to pray. Jesus planned time to be alone with God (Mark 1:35). We have made our lives so busy that we do not always make time. In the mornings we are too busy getting ready for school or work. The day is packed full of appointments and things to do. Then in the evening we are too tired from the day's activities and another day passes without properly approaching God in prayer.

Someone made a survey some time ago that revealed that the average Christian spends five minutes a day in prayer. Actually, our busy schedules ought to cause us to spend more time in prayer rather than less. Martin Luther once said, "I have so much to do today that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer."

2. **Daily.** We need to establish some regular times for prayer (Psa. 55:16-17). It seems that Daniel had done that (Dan. 6:10). I'm told that millions of Moslems pray five times a day. Could we not plan some time every day to speak to the true God"

3. **When alert.** Whatever time we choose to pray we should pick a time when we are most alert. Trying to pray when we are our tiredness doesn't always work. Have you ever fallen asleep praying"

4. **Always.** This doesn't mean that we must spend every minute of every day in prayer, but it does mean that we must continually be prayerful. Jesus taught that men "ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1; cf. 1 Thess. 5:17).

May we all try to find a quiet solitary place (Mark 1:35) that is free from distractions and there pour out our hearts to God in prayer.

Abstain From Every Form Of Evil

Edited By Mike Willis

The material in this book first appeared as a special study in **Truth Magazine**. The material was so well received and requests for it were sufficient that we decided to put it in workbook form. Each lesson contains questions for classroom discussion. Suitable for any class from teenage on up.

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Governor George Wallace gave a noteworthy response to the hue and cry over the overcrowded population of our prisons. He said, "Their victims don't have much room in their graves either."

That side of affairs seems to be virtually ignored.

Our crowded prisons, however, are presenting many problems of monumental proportions.

Daniel W. Van Ness, in an article in *Eternity*, April 1985, reported that four hundred and fifty-four thousand men and women are in American prisons today. He observes: "If such a group were the population of a city we might be talking about Atlanta or Pittsburgh.. if it were a nation it would be more populous than 23 of the countries that belong to the United Nations."

This number has more than doubled in the last decade and is increasing 15 times faster than the general population.

In most every state, efforts are being made to find or raise the money to build more prisons. In the meanwhile extreme measures are being utilized to remedy the situation. In some places, early release programs have turned extremely dangerous offenders loose on the public.

What Our Incarceration System Costs

The average American prison costs over \$15,400 per year to support. It's been observed that this is more than it costs for room, board, and tuition, to send someone to Harvard.

This ongoing expense does not include the price society must pay to relieve families of offenders while providing for the daily needs of the prisoners, however substandard such provisions may be.

Neither does it include the initial expense of constructing these so-called correctional facilities. It costs between \$60,000 and \$80,000 per bed to build the average prison today.

Do Prisons Work?

Only in recent times have prisons been used as a form of punishment. Prisons throughout most of history were used only to hold someone prior to trial.

If the accused was found not guilty, he was released. If he was found guilty, he was then punished, either by death, or beating, branding, banishment, or other methods.

Under the Old Testament law, an offender was stoned to death if he was guilty of certain transgressions (Exo-

dus 21:12-17). The penalty for other offenses was restitution (Exodus 21: 19f; 22:1f). The only thing that resembled a prison system was the cities of refuge to which a person could flee to await a fair trial. Observe that he was responsible for his own living expenses.

Van Ness writes: "The concept of penitentiaries as a form of punishment began in 1790 in the U.S. . . . A small group of Quakers persuaded the city of Philadelphia to convert part of the Walnut Street Jail from a place of detention before trial to a place where convicted offenders could be separated from their criminal environments, given a Bible and counsel from a minister and the warden, and brought to repentance—hence the term penitentiary.

"Though the 'Pennsylvania System,' as it came to be called, failed in its aims, the use of prisons as punishment and rehabilitation spread through the young country.

"What had this done to the Mosaic Law principles of responsibility and restoration? It changed the meaning of both. Responsibility came to mean the offender's accountability for violating the laws of the state (rather than his responsibility for violating the rights of his victim, K.G.). Restoration came to mean not restoring the victim's loss, but rehabilitating the offender."

Since 1790, those in authority have evolved through many phases of attempts to rehabilitate criminals. None of them has worked. The FBI reports that 74 percent of those released from prison are re-arrested within four years. Chief Justice Warren Burger observed that no business could survive with this kind of failure rate.

The Logical Alternative

Is it not obvious that in this matter also, the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of men?

The course we have pursued has proved itself to be absurd and unworkable in very way.

Most folks who respect God's word have cried out long and loud for capital punishment against dangerous offenders. Such people are "worthy of death." God so directs.

Those guilty of non-violent offenses, and this includes 50 percent of the prisoners in America, should not be kept up at tax-payer expense. They should be made to work and make restitution to their victims. They should be sentenced to some community service for governmental or charitable agencies.

Perhaps public flogging would serve a useful purpose in some cases. One thing for sure. Something must be done. Offenders must be required to accept responsibility for the consequences of their acts. As Van Ness suggested, "Perhaps then we will be closer to fulfilling the meaning of criminal justice."

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SIMPLICITY IN CHRIST

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SPENDING THE LORD'S MONEY

When we talk about "spending the Lord's money" it is generally understood that we have reference to that money which is laid by in store upon the first day of the week, and contained in a common treasury (1 Cor. 16:1, 2). But, while we may be agreed on this point, that unanimity seems to disappear when it comes to spending that money, and at what time it ceases to be the "Lord's money."

The priorities of some brethren seem to be inconsistent with the very term which they seem to emphasize so much. If it is indeed "the Lord's money," does not the Lord have any instructions as to its use? I'm persuaded that some brethren cannot forget the fact that this money once belonged to them (was in their power), and want to keep it in sight as long as possible.

Being a good steward of any money, and certainly the Lord's, is a trait to be desired and admired. It is commonly agreed by those who establish scriptural authority by direct command, approved example, or by necessary inference, that the church treasury may be used for preaching the gospel, edifying the church, and relieving needy saints. And, if we are required to assemble, that we have authority for a place to assemble, including not only the place itself, but any necessary maintenance within or without. In fact, good stewardship would require that we take care of that which has been purchased by "the Lord's money."

Nowhere is this inconsistent use of the church treasury more apparent than in the area of supporting the gospel. In the Lord's sight, no greater use can be made of the church treasury than that of preaching the gospel, yet some brethren inadvertently hinder the very thing they attempt to do.

It seems that the main criterion for some in the spending of the Lord's money is to make certain that the preacher doesn't get too much of it. No expense is spared in buying choice lots, erecting a fine building, and paving the parking lot. Attention is often given to classrooms, or the "educational wing" of the building, which would come under the heading of edification. So far, so good.

In fact, nothing much is said about giving a goodly portion of the Lord's money to some sectarian or worldly contractor, and no effort is made to follow up that money once it is spent to make sure such persons spend the "Lord's money according to our guidelines. It may in fact be the Lord's money one hour, and the

Devil's the next. Neither does that recipient of "church money" contribute a portion of his wages back into the treasury of the church, the way a preacher does.

But, it seems that when it comes to supporting a gospel preacher, at least some brethren (but not all), are obsessed with what they consider to be a divine mandate to keep the preacher from getting his share, or more than his share of the Lord's money. They go into great detail itemizing and publishing every dollar spent on the preacher, but just lump everything else under the general heading of benevolence, maintenance, supplies, or miscellaneous. If any error is to be made in overspending the Lord's money, it seems that the place to make it is in the support of the gospel.

Why will congregations deny their present preacher (granting that he is faithful and able), a decent salary, benefits, or a modest increase in either, but spend thousands of dollars in moving expenses to replace him with two or three successive preachers? (Not to mention the fact that some other congregation will have to pay mov-

ing expenses for the preacher they let go). Or, the present preacher can't get reasonable or needed repairs made to the property where he lives, but the congregation will meet any request the new preacher makes, including a new house and increased salary. I cannot understand such reasoning, or "spending of the Lord's money," and I doubt if the Lord can understand it either.

Another thing which has always perplexed me is that some smaller congregations, with limited financial resources, put many larger congregations to shame when it comes to supporting the preaching of the gospel. I have known some congregations which spent ninety-five percent of the Lord's money on preaching the gospel, either at home or elsewhere. May their tribe increase.

Yes, brethren, it is a sobering responsibility to be involved in spending the Lord's money, but spend it we must. The Lord surely doesn't want to find it here when he returns.

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

LALO ENRIQUEZ, 3011 Allen Rd., Bakersfield, CA 93312—After two and a half years of construction, doing most of the work ourselves, we are now finally worshipping in our new facility. We celebrated with a gospel meeting with Peter J. Wilson. In the past two and a half years we have had about 60 baptisms and several have been restored to faithfulness with some families moving into the area. We have tried during this period of construction to maintain strict discipline, an active home Bible study program and have encouraged members to care for each other. Our membership is now about 160. Dee Bowman is to be here in May for a meeting. Brent Willey, formerly of Susanville, C A, is now working with us.

JAMES H. SHEWMAKER, P. O. Box 283, Grinnell, IA— I have recently begun work with the brethren in Grinnell. There are about 23 in Sunday morning attendance. Iowa has seven congregations supporting sound doctrine. I need to raise some outside support. If you are able to help, please write me. I am also available for gospel meetings. If you know anyone in south central Iowa who may be receptive to the truth, let me know and they will be contacted.

FROM FOREIGN FIELDS

EFRAIN F. PEREZ, Casilla 1317, Valparaiso, Chile, South America— In November three were baptized into Christ after home Bible studies. Brethren at Quilpue congregation are zealous, united and committed to the truth. They are trying to reach non-Christians in the community. Attendance runs from 32 to 38.

PAUL WILLIAMS, 18 Fairlie Rd., Eshowe, 3815 South Africa— Five fine young people were baptized in Eshowe since my September report. One man is a school teacher. One 19 year old boy lost his job when his employer heard that he was going to the church of Christ. A 17 year old girl is having trouble with her father and with some school teachers because she has become a Christian. It seems that every person baptized can tell a story of persecution. The church sent David Ngonyama to Jozini and Inqwavuma, and he baptized five in Jozini. David Hurst is having a hard time raising support, in part because brethren have been turned off about South Africa because of the

sensational TV saturation coverage of the past few months. If you can help him please contact him. The brethren in Johannesburg want him, are going to help on his support and can really profit from his coming. The opportunities are great in Johannesburg and in African rural areas. Please help!

INDIA REPORT

JERRY PARKS, 4437 S. 6th St., Louisville, KY 40214—On October 13 John Humphries and I met Bill Beasley and Gary Johnsen (both from Arizona) in New York and the four of us traveled to India where we spent the next six weeks working together in the gospel.

Arriving in India is like going back 300 years in time. It is a paradox of modern civilization trying to find a foothold in an ancient civilization that refuses to give way. On the crowded streets of Hyderabad you might find a Mercedes Benz trying to pass a cart pulled by two oxen. Because of backward conditions, there is much that would be distasteful to westerners. In addition to the extreme poverty, there is the heat and humidity, the noise and filthy stench of raw sewage along side of the streets. But you soon forget this when you see the opportunities to work with and teach some of the most receptive and gracious people in all the world. They may not have much but they will share it with you. They are hard working and for the most part, happy and contented. City people are being influenced more and more by movies and television whereas village people are pretty much isolated from all this.

At Hyderabad, we split up to cover more territory and double our teaching opportunities. Preachers from hundreds of miles around came to study with us at the house of T. George Fred. Bill and I stayed in Hyderabad for a week while John and Gary left for a week of preaching 200 miles northeast of Hyderabad. We conducted classes from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. each day. In the evening we went into the homes of various members to teach all who came. We baptized 8 from the classes there.

John and Gary met great success in Yelandu and Kottuguttum. Local preachers had done much preparatory work and these combined efforts resulted in 136 being baptized on this trip. Because of methods used by liberals in this area, brethren had grown to expect Americans

to build not only meeting places but also schools and orphan homes. Much time was spent dealing with these issues.

Following that week, John and I, along with T. George Fred, his wife and youngest son and a driver left on a 400 mile trip southeast of Hyderabad. In addition to classes in the home of a lawyer, we had opportunity to address one of the groups with which a man was working who was trying to find the truth. Our message was warmly received and other study efforts will be made by brethren in that area.

We visited some villages of "untouchables", being the first white people in one village. At Julapalem village we taught adults and children for hours at a time. We lived in their midst a week and I fell in love with the people and the children. After the rain subsided, we preached in other villages during the day and returned to Julapalem for evening services. After Sunday morning service we walked about 3 miles to the Krishna River where 6 people were baptized.

While we were there Bill and Gary traveled north by railroad to the town of Kozipet. There they worked with Vinaya Kumar, a school teacher, who took time off to work with them.

Thanks to the generosity of many brethren in the USA, we were able to purchase 551 Bibles to distribute to "daily wage" people. These are poor people who make only enough per day to buy rice for their families. In addition to these Telegu Bibles, we distributed 2,000 of a first principle outline "Learn What Your Bible Teaches." T. George Fred had translated this also into Telegu. Two members from Expressway in Louisville worked on the layout and printing. People were so eager for it that we had 4,000 more copies printed at Hyderabad. Bill Beasley worked with Vinaya Kumar who translated L. A. Mott's tract "What Is The Church of Christ" into Telegu. They had 10,000 copies printed and distribution was made as we traveled from place to place.

All total, we traveled about 20,000 miles by air and between 1500 and 2000 miles within the country by car, bus, train, auto rickshaw,

bicycle rickshaw, boat, ox cart and many miles of walking. We had good health during the trip and rejoice in the good done. We thank all who made it possible for us to go. The rising threat of Communism makes me wonder how much longer this door of opportunity will be open. That makes these trips all the more urgent. Indian preachers need much teaching to be grounded in the faith so that the work will continue even if the door is closed for us to travel to India to teach.

Lord willing, I plan to travel to India again. I feel compelled by the gospel after seeing such tremendous opportunity. Until I can return, it will seem like a fire burning within me. Remember the good brethren in India in your prayers.

PREACHERS NEEDED

JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE—This self-supporting congregation of about 85 in upper east Tennessee needs a full time preacher in a town of 50,000. Everett Hardin, who was here for several years, has moved to Fletcher Avenue in Tampa, Florida. If interested, contact Olie Williamson, P. O. Box 38, Greeneville, TN 37744. Phone (615) 639-7212 or 638-6172.

PREACHER AVAILABLE

I know of a preacher, 34 years of age and with 11 years of experience, who is interested in making a move in 1987. I would be happy to put you in contact with him. You may write to me — DON POTTS, 417 East Groesbeck, Lufkin, TX 75901 or call (409) 632-1800

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