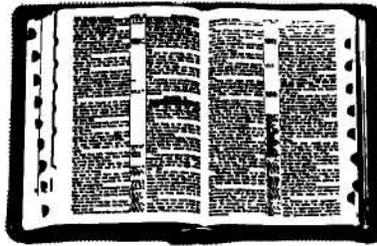


SEARCHING *the* SCRIPTURES

"See,
think
they v

ye
are
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

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THE SECURITY OF THE SAINT (5)

Ronny Milliner

2316 E. Hundred Rd.
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JESUS AS A NEIGHBOR

Think of the neighbors you have had. You probably had some good ones and some not so good. I remember one of our neighbors when I was a young boy who was always cursing his wife at the top of his lungs. And then there were the kids who lived down the street whom we found carrying off some of my toys. But we have also had a lot of good neighbors. A retired gentleman who was always ready to sit and listen to a young boy was such a neighbor. Or there was the elderly man who taught the two young newly-weds how to garden.

Think what it would be like to have Jesus as a neighbor. He certainly would not be vulgar, or in any way guilty of some evil or harm against you. One could not find a more dependable or kind neighbor.

But as one thinks more about this idea it may be that he would not want Jesus for a neighbor. What would it be like to have Jesus living next door? What kind of neighbor would He be?

A Consulted Neighbor

There certainly would be a steady stream of people coming to Jesus. Sick people would be coming to Him for healing like the two blind men (Mt. 9:27-31) or the centurion seeking a cure for his servant (Mt. 8:5-7). Multitudes would be coming to receive food from Him (Jno. 6:24-26). There would be people coming all hours of the night to talk with Him (Jno. 3:1-2). Little children would be coming to Him (Mk. 10:13-16).

Such a flow of traffic would surely destroy the neighborhood. There would be no peace and quiet. And you

would never be able to find a parking place. Then there's the kids. They would surely be running through your flower garden. Maybe having Jesus as a neighbor would not be so good an idea.

A Controversial Neighbor

Let's face it, wherever Jesus went He was always stirring up trouble. He was constantly in a dispute with the Pharisees (Mk. 8:11). His own home town of Nazareth rejected Him not once, but twice (Lk. 4:28-30; Mt. 13:53-58). Even His own family criticized Him (Jno. 7:3-5). Some of His people said, "He is out of His mind" (Mk. 3:21). There were times when He didn't always keep the best company in the world (Lk. 7:37-38). He was always stirring people up over different things in His teaching. His disciples said He offended the Pharisees over what He said about their traditions (Mt. 15:12). His own disciples didn't seem to react very favorably with what He said about divorce and remarriage (Mt. 19:8-10).

If Jesus moved into your neighborhood, you can be sure that things would soon be stirred up. There would probably be some people in the neighborhood going around wanting folks to sign a petition to force Jesus to move. Then what would you do? You would be forced to make a decision as to whose side you would take. Maybe it would be better not to have Jesus as our neighbor.

A Church-Minded Neighbor

Have you ever had a neighbor that had a one track mind? Some folks are sports-minded, that is, they eat, sleep, and talk sports. It's all they seem to have on their mind. Others might be career-minded or devoted to some hobby. All some folks want to talk about is their illnesses.

Surely you know what Jesus would be talking about all the time. He would always want to be telling you little stories that had spiritual lessons in them, like the kingdom parables (Mt. 13). He would even take a normally physical subject and turn it into something spiritual, like He did with the Samaritan woman when He turned the conversation from a drink of water to "a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jno. 4:7-14). So anything you tried to talk to Jesus about would probably end up on some spiritual matter.

There's just so much that one can take. Right? A

Condemning Neighbor

Jesus never hesitated to show the sinner his sin. He warned the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (Mt. 11:20-24). He certainly didn't hold back from telling the Pharisees and lawyers their problems (Lk. 11:37-52). With Jesus, it was always repent or perish (Lk. 13:3).

Mark it well that you would not be able to engage in any sin and get away with it, if you had Jesus living next door. If you were not at an assembly of the church, He would be over knocking on your door. You couldn't even have a good fight with your wife for fear that He might overhear. And sunbathing in the back yard would definitely be out.

Just think of all the changes you would have to make if Jesus lived next door. Would it be worth it?

A Commanding Neighbor

Have you ever had a neighbor who was always asking something of you? Some are always wanting to borrow something. Others ask you to do this or that.

Jesus would be demanding neighbor. He might ask you to watch and pray with Him some evening (Mt. 26:38-41). Or He might want you to become a fisher of men (Mk. 1:16-17). Just to be one of His disciples is pretty demanding (Lk. 14:26-33). And there He would be always ready to remind you of what you should be doing for Him.

Conclusion

Have we become so complacent and comfortable in our communities that for Jesus to move in would cause a tremendous uproar? Would you really want Jesus as a neighbor?

While He may not be our neighbor, let's not forget that He watches us every day that we live. He knows us better than our neighbor does!

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Editorial

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CATCHING UP

No, I am not going to tell you about my operation. It did sideline me for awhile though I am making progress and able to take on some of my work. Thanks are in order to Donnie V. Rader for helping to get the May issue of the paper ready for the printer. There have been many phone calls and cards and notes expressing love and concern, all of which were deeply appreciated, especially the prayers. I am knee deep in work which needs attention but which has had to wait. I am behind on correspondence and ask for the understanding of all concerned. But I have learned that the world will go on turning whether I do or not. My classes will be taught and sermons I cannot preach will be preached by others.

I have had to take time every day to walk and regain strength in my back and legs. I walk about a mile each time and some days I have walked better than three miles. That has given me time to admire the breathtaking beauty of a Kentucky spring. I did not realize how many white, pink and red dogwoods were in my neighbors yards and around the edges of the woods in Hilbrook Farms, the subdivision where we live in Bullitt County, a few miles south of Louisville. I have listened to the birds sing, watched the grass get greener every day, stopped to admire the little brook which runs in the woods behind our house and which merges with a larger stream which winds its way through the subdivision and ultimately empties into the Salt River. Azaleas have come to full bloom before my very eyes. Just after breakfast each day there is a stillness in the spring air. Except for an occasional airplane, or the distant rumble of a freight train, there is only the refreshing quietness of the morning air. That is good for a man whose life revolves around the calendar and the clock; a man who lives with deadlines — classes to teach, meetings to hold, printers deadlines to meet, urgent letters to answer and, well, you know the story. That all sounds so important. But it is good for a man to be made to realize, if he doesn't know already, that such things CAN wait.

It has been a good time to remember such statements as, "Stand in awe, and sin not; commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah" (Psa. 4:4). Again, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psa. 46:10). Further, my spirit has been renewed in daily beholding the needlepoint of God's own tapestry so vividly stitched upon the landscape of a glorious

Kentucky spring, and I have reflected upon the truth that "even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these" (Mt. 6:29).

All this has given time to reflect on the following words which were cross-stitched by a very special lady and which are framed and hang on the wall at the top of the stairs.

"God grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can
And wisdom to know the difference."

* * * * *

HEROES

It occurs to me that the present generation has a shortage of worthy heroes. The greatest heroes of all have been faithful servants of God who, in whatever stage of the world, acted and reacted upon the stage of human history with the courage of conviction, regardless of the consequences. The Bible is full of them. Time would fail to speak of Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Jeremiah, Daniel, Esther, Nehemiah, not to mention the apostles of our Lord, and our Lord himself. Then there are the lesser mentioned heroes who stood in the gap at critical times. Their heroism far exceeded that of those whose claim to fame is how fast they can run, how far they can throw a ball, or how many records they have sold. Many heroes of such vintage from my own youthful days have long been forgotten by the present generation. Mention one of them now and your children (and certainly your grandchildren) will say "Who was that?"

It occurs to me that my generation constitutes a link to a time and to special people who were truly heroes of faith. At various intervals, either in this column, or in my EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS, I plan to recall a few such people and events which I hope will be of interest to our readers, "lest we forget."

For starters, I remember *Franklin T. Puckett*. He was a man of imposing stature. There was a dignity about his carriage and a confidence in his air that made you know you were in the presence of one who not only walked with God, but who knew whereof he spoke. I have seen him quote lengthy passages from the word of God with exactness and such expression as to fasten the words in your heart. Much of his preaching was expository. He knew the text, the immediate context and the larger context of scriptural truth touching that subject. His preaching was compellingly logical and yet impassioned. He obviously believed what he preached. Sometimes he preached a long time, by today's standards, but those who heard him understood that he had something to say and that he said it well, and came away rewarded for the time spent at the feet of this giant of the faith.

Yet, with all his dignity (he looked like a Supreme Court justice ought to look), he had time to help struggling young preachers. I lived at Newbern, Tennessee during the time he preached at the old Market Street church in Dyersburg, Tennessee (that is now Lake

Road). On various occasions I needed help with a difficult passage, or in resolving an argument on the raging issues of that time, and always knew he would help me. He would say, "Come on down and bring your Bible and we'll get off upstairs and work on it." It was always more than worth the eight mile trip. "Upstairs" he had a room with a few books and a couple of rocking chairs. What a school room that was. He would listen to what I had to say, long enough to see what the problem was and then he would start methodically examining the matter. Sometimes it took two hours, and sometimes it took nearly all day. If so, his good wife (a true heroine in her own right) would interrupt us for lunch and then we would go back to it. Precious hours they were.

But there was another side to him that some never saw. He loved to play the fiddle and was quite good at some of the old Arkansas hoe-down pieces. Once, the incongruity of the situation struck me. Here was a man dressed in a dark suit and tie, with a sparkling shoe shine, with distinguished gray hair and noble features, patting that big foot and sawing off the "Arkansas Traveler." He was as meticulous in his fiddling as in his preaching. He wanted it to be the best he could make it.

But I remember him best as the moderator of the "Open Forum" at the Florida College lectures in the critical years of the early 1950's when it seemed the kingdom was on fire and a dreadful, wrenching division was in the air as the controversy over church support of human institutions was heating up across the land. Brethren from both sides (and many who were undecided) attended those programs and many of the speeches confronted the issues involved. The "Open Forum" became an open battlefield every day. He would arise with great poise and dignity, remind all present of the seriousness of the matters at hand, and appeal for wisdom and respect. Then he would firmly remind all that he intended to keep that session under control. I can still hear him saying "I will not hesitate to ask anyone of you to take your seat, if you get out of line and do not speak and act as a Christian should." He said it like he meant it and he enforced what he said when occasion required. I thought then, "There stands a man." I still think so. We could use a few like that now. Oh yes, I remember *Franklin T. Puckett*. He is one of my heroes.

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ACOUSTICS—THE SILENT KILLER

"There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely... ", acoustic tile in the ceilings of church buildings occupied by churches of Christ. This silent killer has done more to deaden or destroy good congregational singing than most brethren realize. I hope Solomon won't mind my using a variation of a popular phrase found in Ecclesiastes (5:13, 16), if I can succeed in getting the attention of brethren who are in the process of buying, building, or remodeling a church building.

The Lord knew what He wanted to accomplish by including the singing of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" in the worship of the church (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). There are other factors which influence the quality of singing, such as carpeted floors, upholstered pews, and a general apathy on the part of some brethren toward singing. God can hear a silent prayer or song, but if we are going to "teach and admonish one another," then we need the best possible environment in which to do it.

My conclusions are based on experiences with church buildings and congregational singing over a forty-year period. I have been personally involved in building programs with congregations where I have preached, as well as visiting in scores of other buildings in congregations in gospel meetings. I have led the singing, conducted a few schools in the rudiments of music, and have supervised the construction of several commercial buildings including school and church buildings, restaurants and hospitals. When I hear brethren talking about the installation of "acoustic tile" to improve the singing, I almost relegate that term to the realm of profanity.

I have pleaded with brethren on a number of occasions not to use any more sound-deadening materials than absolutely necessary. Even the clothing worn by people tends to deaden sound in an auditorium, but we can't do much about that factor. The term "acoustic" has different meanings to different people. Brethren are generally swayed by an architect or a contractor who tells them that a certain design will "help the acoustics." In practical application, this generally means it will deaden sound. Yes, you can install elaborate public address systems which will help the speaker or a choir, but churches of Christ generally don't have the latter (at least the ones where I preach). The congregation

does not have a microphone, and the transition from a building with plastered or paneled walls and ceilings, bare floors and pews to a sound-deadened environment can be frustrating.

In new construction or remodeling, there are fire codes to be considered but there are generally alternatives which can be chosen. Most architects are either ignorant or unconcerned about the part congregational singing plays in churches of Christ. As a result, I have known brethren to end up lowering a ceiling six feet and using different materials (at considerable expense), after letting an architect convince them that the roof of their building needed to be as tall as the Greek Orthodox building next door. I helped one congregation get their building plans approved by a city commission, but strongly suggested that they eliminate the acoustic tile from the ceiling plans. They listened to the architect. Later, when the singing was so adversely affected that something had to be done, they tried to fill all those little holes in the tile with paint. This helped some, but they finally tore off all the ceiling tile (what a mess—I returned for a meeting while this project was in progress), and plastered the entire ceiling.

Good singing is essential to the well-being of preachers, visitors, and all worshipers alike. Let us make it the best that we can.

DIVINE COMMUNIQUES

C. G. "Cobby" Caldwell

Florida College
Temple Terrace, FL 33617



HUSBANDS, WIVES, AND OCCUPATIONAL PLANNING

THE DIVINE MESSAGE: "THAT THEY (aged women) MAY TRAIN THE YOUNG WOMEN TO LOVE THEIR HUSBANDS, TO LOVE THEIR CHILDREN, TO BE SOBER-MINDED, CHASTE, WORKERS AT HOME, KIND, BEING IN SUBJECTION TO THEIR OWN HUSBANDS, THAT THE WORD OF GOD BE NOT BLASPHEMED" (TITUS 2:4-5).

I was recently asked to speak to a young women's organization on the subject of "Occupational Planning for Wives who are Christians." They asked me to address the issues involved in a wife's relationship when she seeks a career outside the home. I would like to share with you my comments to that group of conscientious young college women who have grown up with all the pressures imposed by American society in the 1970's and 80's.

General Principles

In all facets of life wherein we engage our interests, Christians accept principles which overrule other concerns. Several come to mind immediately when thinking about our topic:

A. Spiritual responsibilities take precedence over personal desires and self-interests (Phil. 3:7-16).

B. Loving things more than values is inconsistent with Christianity (1 John 2:15).

C. The love of money is a root of evil (1 Tim. 6:6-11).

D. Christians must learn to be content with those aspects of life which cannot be changed without compromising faith and spiritual interests (Phil. 4:11).

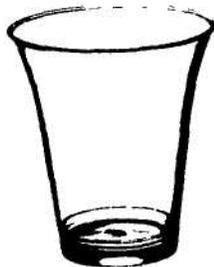
E. All the needs of family and loved ones must be met, including more than simply the provision of things.

Specific Roles of Husbands and Wives Dictated By Lord

In spite of affirmations made by leaders of modern women's movements, husbands are given primary responsibility for family financial provision (Gen. 3:19; 2 Thes. 3:6-12; 1 Tim. 5:8; 1 Thes. 4:9-12). On the other hand, wives are given primary responsibility for keeping the home. Women are not required to marry and have children to be Christians. If one does marry and have children, however, she must accept her proper role in the family as defined by God. Homemaking *IS* a

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career. The following Scriptures evidence God's attitude toward it:

A. "That they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober-minded, chaste, *workers at home*, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2:4-5).

The Greek word translated "workers at home" is *oikourgous* (from *oikos*, house, home; and *ouros*, a keeper or worker... deprived from *ergon*, to work). The idea relates to working for the home, taking care of the home, engaging in domestic enterprise. The wife's primary realm of operation is the household. There is a connection made by Paul in this passage between the way the wife responds to God's instructions regarding her role in the family and how others speak of the word of God.

B. "I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, *rule the household*, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling" (1 Tim. 5:14).

The Greek word translated "rule the household" is *oikodespoteo*. It means "to guide the house," or "to oversee the household." Again, there is a connection made between the woman's acceptance of her God-ordained role in the family and how others react to the word of God.

C. "But she shall be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety" (1 Tim. 2:15).

"Childbearing" is from *teknogonia*, and implies the duties of motherhood. This word is also used in 1 Timothy 5:14. There is no spiritual benefit to being able to consummate a sexual union out of which a child is conceived. On the other hand, fulfilling the role of motherhood is seen by God as important to the wife's spiritual well-being. That, of course, is viewed in light of her faithfulness to God in all things.

Some Attitudes and Actions Which Must Be Addressed

Regardless of our particular social notions, we must come to grips with the clear affirmations of these verses if we are to serve God. We cannot ignore them either theoretically or practically. Some questions must be answered:

A. *How much pressure are we putting on young women to train for out-of-home professional careers and why are we emphasizing that they must prepare to make a living"?*

There may be some legitimate reasons for parents of young women, or for the women themselves to want to be prepared to take care of themselves. They may not marry. They may be widowed. God forbid, they may marry one who will not hold their marriage sacred and find themselves divorced.

There are also, however, some very illegitimate excuses for pursuing careers. If the motive is an overwhelming need to have things, or if the motive is to satisfy certain psychological needs while wanting to be married and have children at the same time, some real soul-searching and Biblical study must take place. Or if

the desire is to prove oneself equal to men and able to do anything and go anywhere others can go, the God-ordained role of the wife must be understood and respected.

B. *How are young men dealing with the question of when to marry? How are they figuring on the ability of the mate to support the family with substantial financial compensation from a profession"!* Young men, position yourselves to support your wives before you take them as wives.

C. *How are married women with children who see a need for temporary financial help seeking to satisfy those needs? Is it absolutely necessary to go outside the home? Should not babysitting, typing, bookkeeping, sewing, cooking (cakebaking, etc.), crafts for sale, piano lessons, etc., be considered when possible so that one's "keeping the home" and "childbearing" will not be compromised?*

D. *Can we fully deal with the needs of our children when we work away from the home? They have psychological needs. When they are sick, can we care for them? When they have school activities which call for the presence of Mom, are we able to be there? They have spiritual needs. You want them to learn your values, not those of others who sit with them. You want them to sense your care and love. You want them to feel close to you. They have practical needs. Do they get their work done when not motivated by a parent who is there? Do they learn to take care of their rooms, their lives, their relationships with friends, etc., etc.*

E. *What is the impact on the husband? The male sense of worth is a delicate thing. Whether that should be or not, it is! The husband whose wife is away to work often questions his ability to support his own family. He is sensitive to the fact that he and his wife are going different directions. He feels deeply the problem of her inability to fully provide his and the children's wishes and the needs of the home. He may even be affected by the relation of her work to his. Women sometimes argue that he ought not to be as he is. If that is true, theory does not cut much ice in the divorce court when he no longer sees his wife as a wife.*

Think about what it all means to you. Is the extra money worth it all? I probably won't be your idea of the perfect, understanding male when I call your attention to these things, but please do not ignore them... FOR YOUR OWN SAKES!

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SINCERE WORDS

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

Dick Blackford

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CHARGING THE RICH

As man was leaving worship services he met an old acquaintance whom he had not seen in several years. In their brief conversation he said to his acquaintance, "I understand that you are in great danger." It was said seriously and was heard with much surprise. The friend addressed was not aware of any danger and eagerly inquired what was meant. The answer was, "I have been informed that you are getting rich."

No man can read the Bible and not be impressed by the number of scriptures that warn of the danger of riches. The young preacher was commanded "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high-minded nor have their hopes set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed" (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

General Admonitions

The negative charges of this passage are twofold: (1) *Be Not Highminded* That means don't be snobbish or smug. Don't value yourself because of your wealth. The fact that this charge is given implies that it is often a tendency of the rich to "think of themselves more highly than they ought to think." (2) *Nor Have Their Hopes Set On The Uncertainty Of Riches*. This, likewise, is recognized as a tendency or the Holy Spirit would not have mentioned it. Because there are so many things money CAN do, there is the danger of being lulled into thinking there is nothing it CANNOT do. Yet in a moment's time a sudden change in our economic system could knock the props from under all of us. The worst hurt would be the rich. Remember the stock market crash when many committed suicide? However, he who is trusting in riches when the Lord returns will be hurt even more. Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 19:24). While we might get bogged down in a hassle as to what the "needle" refers, there is one obvious truth in Jesus' teaching that must be admitted by all — *it will be hard for the rich to be saved!*

The positive charges are: (1) *Trusting God*; (2) *Do good*; (3) *Be rich in good works*; (4) *Ready to distribute*; and (5)

Willing to communicate. In a nutshell, these five positive charges are saying: "Without partiality, be ready at all times (not just seasonally) to help everyone because of your faith in God rather than possessions. You will be laying a good foundation to help you reach eternal life — you'll need it!"

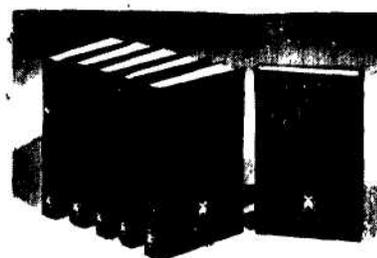
While the covetous nature of many who are rich is often deplored, let us not forget that one need not be rich to be guilty of covetousness. The same chapter warns those who have a *desire* to be rich. "But they that are *mindful to be rich* fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil; which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. 6:9, 10). Those who are not rich but "have a mind to be" are often self-defeated. Hoping to better themselves materially, they frequently succeed in doing the opposite spiritually.

Occasionally one wonders how the love of money can be a root of all evils (footnote, ASV). Stop and think for a moment and it will dawn on you. There is hardly a sin in that great "category of sins" that cannot be connected with money. Some of the "foolish and hurtful lusts" in which the love of money can play a part are: adultery, fornication, lasciviousness, homosexuality, drunkenness, theft, jealousy, strife, revellings, idolatry, gambling, extortion, etc. Sin is expensive in more ways than one. Many have reached after riches and fallen from the faith.

Many of us are too concerned about things, Things, THINGS! "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the THINGS which he possesseth"

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OBITUARIES

EARL FLY ASLEEP IN JESUS

Earl Fly, age 63, died last Sunday morning in the Jackson-Madison County General Hospital. He had experienced health problems for a number of years, and was only recently recovering from another stroke.

Brother Fly obeyed the gospel nearly forty years ago, and from that time lived a devoted and faithful life as a Christian. Only God knows the influence for good he exerted through his preaching and writing. Although he had been physically unable to engage in active work during the last several years, he continued to do what he could to advance the cause that he loved. He was especially encouraging to young men who were devoting their lives to preaching the gospel. He had given away nearly his entire library to these young preachers during the last three years. It was always a pleasure for me to see Brother Fly in the audience when I preached. I knew that he would always have a word of encouragement or appreciation for the work I was doing. He was a faithful member of the church here, and he will be missed very much. We mourn his passing, not because of lack of hope, but because of the broken relationship in this life. We extend our deepest sympathy to sister Fly, Ann, Ron and other family members.

Gary Kerr, Jackson, Tennessee
(Editor's note: It was my privilege to know Earl Fly since 1957 when he preached at Valley Station, Kentucky while the church there experienced great growth. Nearly every bulletin carried news of one or more obeying the gospel. We were also in Orlando, Florida at the same time. He preached at Holden Heights and I worked at Pine Hills. He moderated for me in a debate with a preacher of the Church of God named Lodge. We were often together over the years in gospel work and enjoyed playing music together on many occasions. He will be missed.)

* * * * *

JAMES A. RODGERS AT REST

James A. Rodgers (age 56) departed this life, March 22, 1987, following complications from a heart transplant. He was a most faithful preacher of the gospel for over thirty years in central and southern parts of Texas. His struggle to remain on this earth awhile longer was inspirational to all who were close to him and his fine family. He was a devout defender of the cross and loved by the many who knew him. He was an independent thinker and student of God's word. However, he did not seek to be different for the sake of being controversial. He thoroughly studied a passage and did not put his trust in what someone else had said. He loved to study and compare the scriptures with the original language.

He was a dear friend who defended the truth and preached the gospel. He was ever ready to help and

advise someone so they might be more fruitful as a child of God. He served as an elder for the Southern Oaks congregation in Lake Jackson, Texas for a short time before his health failed. He also labored with churches in Brazoria County, Texas for over half of his preaching life. He was indeed a man in a "straight betwixt two." He longed to go on, and yet wanted to see his family and friends grow to serve God better.

When the family received word of the availability of a heart, they rushed to the hospital to be with him. They had some last words together and he said to them "if it works, that's great, and if it doesn't work, that's great too." As he gave the O. K. sign to his family as he was taken into the operating room, I could only reflect on his courage, wit and the peace with which he was facing death. His brave and godly wife, Bettye, was ever with him and always a help to him and the family. They have three sons, James L., Gary A., and Bryan D., who are all faithful to the Lord and have married faithful, godly women. Also one daughter, Cathy who is faithful and married to a faithful Christian also. He left behind five grandchildren.

The funeral was conducted in Lake Jackson, at the Southern Oaks building. A capacity crowd was on hand to hear the gospel of Christ presented by Jesse Jenkins with the writer assisting. Albert Jennings, James' best friend and an elder and preacher spoke also regarding lessons to be learned from the life of this godly man. Congregational singing was led by Bill Primrose, faithful saint and friend. Prayers were led by W. R. Jones and Chuck Ainsworth. Opportunity was given for any to respond to the message presented, and the service was dismissed. His earthly remains were buried in Refugio, Texas with graveside services conducted by Terry Summerlin, who reflected upon his role as a Timothy in James' life.

A husband, father, preacher, fellow saint, and beloved friend has departed this life. But, as stated at the service, "our loss is the Lord's gain." He will be sorely missed, but we live in hope of seeing him as well as other faithful of the ages, when all the saved get to heaven. I dearly loved the man and will miss having him as a member of the congregation. But we believe that his family will carry on with the same kind of strength and dedication, so that the circle will not be broken.

Stan Adams, Lake Jackson, Texas

* * * * *

WRIGHT RANDOLPH HAS GONE TO HIS REWARD

Wright Randolph was born to Henry Robert and Minnie May Randolph in the Nubia community (Taylor County), Texas on April 29, 1902 and departed this life in Greenville, Texas on February 27, 1987. In June, 1924 he was married to Myrtle Huffman of Amarillo, Texas who preceded him in death March 29, 1964. A year later Wright married Ethel Cogdill in Canoga Park, California, a sister to the beloved Roy Cogdill. Wright is survived by his wife, Ethel, a daughter, Jeanine Anthony of Pinole, California; two brothers, Layton of Van Nuys, California and Sidney of Vinita,

Oklahoma; two sisters, Opal Bockman and Fay Britt both of Wichita Falls, Texas; four grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Wright became a Christian at the age of 16 in Nubia, Texas being baptized by W. A. Schultz. Prior to 1931 he preached in various places by appointment and began full-time work in Spur, Texas and later preached in Slayton and Floydada, Texas; Clovis and Albuquerque, NM; San Bernardino, Santa Barbara (twice), San Pablo, Montebello and Canoga Park, California; Cincinnati Ohio; Deming, New Mexico; El Paso, Texas and Lake Isabella, California. Bob Bolton says, "In addition, he was often used throughout the nation in gospel meetings, and as a gospel preacher he was forceful yet humble, unique yet not peculiar, profound yet simple, and was highly loved and respected by his peers. We might not have always agreed with him, but we never for one moment doubted his conviction and faith in the divine authenticity of 'the Book'. One of his favorite passages, which was cited at his funeral, was Proverbs 23:23, 'Buy the truth and sell it not.' "

Robert A. Bolton of Richardson, Texas spoke at the funeral which was conducted at the building of the Southside church, Greenville, Texas on Sunday afternoon, March 1, 1987. Burial was in the Rose Cemetery in Hobart, Oklahoma.

Again, Bob Bolton writes, "Brother Randolph believed with all his heart that he was ready to pass over into the presence of the Lord and made it a point to impress this fact upon all. As I visited with him some 24 hours before he died, I said to him as I prepared to leave: 'Wright, if we never meet again in this life, I'll see you in heaven.' In his weakened condition, this 84 year old 'soldier of the cross' managed a faint smile and softly answered, 'O. K.!' He knew he was dying, yet faced his departure with hope."

I (JWC) personally feel it quite an honor and privilege to have been asked by Ethel to submit this report, along with Bob Bolton, concerning Wright's life and death. Wright was a Christian. He loved the truth and preached it just as he understood it. What more need be said? He was a good husband, and while I never knew him while his children were growing up, I am sure just as good a father. He was fortunate in that in his life he chose two of the finest ladies I have known as mates. Both Myrtle and Ethel along with Wright, were our dear friends, and we spent many happy and I believe profitable hours in their presence. Many hours on the golf course Wright and I have talked about a number of things, but much of the Bible, the church and the Lord. When brother Bolton writes, "We might not have always agreed with him, yet..." reminds me of situations I have told many times in succeeding years. In the company with others, people would disagree with brother Randolph on Bible topics, and yet often before long I would hear of their asking Wright what the Bible said on various topics. They respected him as a Christian and as a Bible student. He was a good writer, and the first I knew of him was through his contributions to various papers. You never doubted his faith in God and the Bible as the word of God. Yet he was not afraid to

say "I don't know." I remember on one occasion while eating a snack on the golf course, I asked him about a difficult passage, and he said in effect, "I wish I knew." I have noticed that the greatest Bible students I have ever known often said, "I don't know." That is not a mark of weakness; but a sign of honesty and candor. If one doesn't have these qualities he can never know the Lord.

Our sincere sympathy to Ethel and the rest of the family. May the Lord bless and keep you.

Robert A. Bolton
Richardson, Texas

Jady W. Copeland
Lakeland, Florida

Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Ken Green

2212 Jordan Lane, S.W.
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FLYING BY INSTRUMENTS

Dr. Ed Wheat in his excellent volume, "Love Life For Every Married Couple," quotes a magazine article by Gloria Okes Perkins. The article compares times of trial and emotional instability with the clouds, fog, and air turbulence an airplane pilot experiences. The answer in both cases is to "fly by the instruments."

"When there is no visual contact with the earth . . . when no horizon is in view, stability can be achieved only by depending on what those vital gyros have to say.

"What is true for pilots in the skies is just as true in another sense for believers in the difficulties of life when normal conditions of stability seem to vanish in clouds of sorrow and confusion. Sooner or later every believer will have to fly by instruments spiritually and emotionally through bad times...."

"While piloting a plane in a thick fog, a pilot cannot be sure of his direction unless he gives full attention to his instruments. When flying through a thunderstorm, the turbulence will throw him about, and the darkness within the clouds will threaten to disorient him. Sometimes he will feel as though he is going up or down or turning around. But he cannot depend on his feelings. Only the gyros can be trusted, so the pilot must hang on to the controls in the turbulence and discipline his mind to concentrate on the instruments while he flies through the storm."

I worked in Air Traffic Control in the Air Force. My specific duties were divided between the control tower and the GCA (Ground Controlled Approach) unit. In

GCA, we monitored the aircraft on radar as it made its final approach and we maintained constant radio contact.

Continuously we advised the pilot of his position and his need to correct course so many degrees left or right and so many feet up or down.

In the thick England fog, there was a lot of instrument flying. Usually the pilot would never see the runway until he was right on top of it.

I'm not sure about others, but my own life has been pretty much that way. I've had to alter my course fairly often.

There seem to be some fellows around who learned all truth early in life and have never had to correct their course left or right. I have not been so fortunate.

While listening to some tapes of Brother Homer Hailey's Bible class at Florida College of some years back, I was even more impressed by his basic honesty than his superb knowledge. In one class period he asked the students to give attention to a Scripture they had studied some weeks before.

"I now believe I taught you wrong on that," said Brother Hailey. "I was reading some commentaries last evening, and I'm convinced this writer has the truth on the passage."

I suspect that anyone who hasn't altered his course recently, is not flying by the instruments.

Whether in marriage, employment, church, work, or just life in general, the way of man is not in himself. God has provided a navigational aid and we had better keep our instrument panels in good repair.

The article by Gloria Okes Perkins continues:

"The parallel truth for the Christian in troubled times is clear. Undisciplined feelings . . . can cause a crash unless one keeps himself stabilized by the facts of the word of God... every promise in the word of God is like a gyro giving information to stabilize him in a specific situation... With daily practice one learns not to panic but to believe a specific truth from the Bible fitted for his own unique circumstances. By experience one learns not to fight his feelings, but to look away from them to the "instrument panel" of the word of God which is utterly dependable.

"One discovers that if he will just hang on in the worst of the turbulence, no matter how disrupting, his mind and heart steadied by the great truths of the word and his eyes intently fixed on God Himself, he will eventually break through rain-black clouds to soar once more in the clear, tranquil atmosphere."

The words of Proverbs 3:5,6 should be memorized and imbibed by everyone: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."*

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WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

(Rom. 4:3)

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FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLIES

QUESTION: *Can you forsake the assembly by wilfully missing it once?*

ANSWER: No, one cannot forsake the assembly by wilfully missing it one time. He has neglected the assembly, but he has not forsaken it. "Forsake" (*egkataleipo*) means "to abandon, desert" (Thayer, p. 166), to leave behind, to quit. "Neglect" implies "giving insufficient attention to something that has a claim to one's attention" (Webster). A husband might neglect his wife, but that does not mean he has abandoned her.

Paul wrote, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed into Thessalonica" (2 Tim. 4:10). Demas forsook Paul in departing from him, being no longer a companion and worker in the proclamation of the gospel. The word "forsake" in Heb. 10:25 is from the same Greek word as is found in 2 Tim. 4:10 and connotes the same idea, i.e., desertion.

In reading Heb. 10:25 to which the querist apparently alludes, we notice, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." The verse does not say, "the assembly," as though only one assembly is under consideration. Some would make the day in this passage the Lord's day assembly. However, the day, in my estimation, is not the Lord's day, nor is it the second coming of Christ. The "day" in Heb. 10:25 could be seen, i.e., there would be observable signs to indicate its approach. This fits what Jesus said concerning the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. 24:1-35; Mk. 13:1-31; Lk. 21:5-33), and would be most applicable to the Jewish Christians living in Palestine to whom the Hebrew letter was most likely written. Therefore, the "day" is the time when Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Romans.

The verse states, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together," and this denotes, "Do not abandon, desert, the assemblies of the church; do not withdraw yourselves from the meetings of the saints of God." Some of them had already quit and perhaps had returned to the Jewish religion, or they were simply staying home, perhaps out of fear of the Jews and dread of persecution, and not attending the services. However, many persons who forsake the assemblies are not apostates, i.e., deny the Sonship of Jesus and the efficacy of His blood, but rather are backsliders who quit

servicing the Lord for other reasons than infidelity.

To hold fast our profession without wavering faith (10:23), we need the fellowship and encouragement of fellow-Christians in frequent assemblies. Hence, "And let us consider one another to provoke (stimulate) unto love and to good works" (10:24). For those who abandon the assemblies, and go so far as to apostatize from the gospel of Christ, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (10:26-27). The context of Heb. 10:25 shows, as well as the entire book, that more is involved in "forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" than merely missing one assembly of the church, or being spasmodic in attendance. Those saints, it seems to me, were being warned against defection from Christianity.

E.M. Zerr commented on "forsaking" in Heb. 10:25, "The word does not refer to those who are 'irregular in attendance' or who 'just come occasionally.'" (There are other scriptures which take care of such delinquents.) But it means those who remain away from the assemblies so long that they can no longer be considered as a part of the group" (*Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 230). Zerr does not offer any reason why some of the Jewish Christians had forsaken the assemblies.

R. C. H. Lenski said in reference to the statement, "as the manner of some is," the following, "This is more than just carelessness; it is the beginning of apostasy" (*Interpretation of Hebrews*, p. 354). Robert Milligan wrote, "The Apostle refers here, not to apostasy from the Church, as some allege, but simply to the neglect of public and social worship" (*New Testament Commentary on Hebrews*, p. 283). I disagree with Milligan for the reasons already given, and because of his comments on verse 26 where he says, "To sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth is the same as to apostatize from Christ, for which there is no forgiveness." If this is apostasy in v. 26, why is not apostasy the reason for abandonment of the assemblies in v. 25?

In conclusion, let me say that a Christian cannot justify himself in willfully missing just one service. Such action reflects a weakness of faith and a paucity of love. Obviously, a person like this needs to repent of his sin. But to call this behavior a desertion or abandonment of the assemblies of the church is farfetched. On the other hand, Heb. 10:25, and context, shows the importance and need of attending all the services of the church, even that one time the querist asks about.

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WHY INDIA?

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There are many reasons for taking the gospel to India. Millions now living will die in India without Christ. Jesus commanded that the gospel be taught to all nations. There are 10s of thousands of villages that have never had the gospel preached to them. India is a nation of 746 million souls. It is about 1/3 the size in area of the United States. 83% are Hindu; 11% are Muslim; 2.6% are "Christian"; 3.4% are Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis, and others. 15 Million are added to the population each year. We haven't touched the hem of the garment!

I don't want to be misunderstood in this article, please. I am not saying that every preacher needs to go to India or that every church has to have India in its budget. There are many places in the world and it is a matter of judgment as to where one wants to put forth their efforts for Christ. My point is simply that India is in the great commission of our Lord and someone must go! Those who can go should go and those who can help make it possible for them to go should do so. There is responsibility here for some and thus accountability before God.

Another reason for returning to India year after year is that the second teaching (Matt. 18:20) must not be neglected. It is not enough to teach and baptize people into Christ. We must also teach them to observe all things that the Lord has commanded. This is why it is needful to return and have Bible classes for the brethren and deal with their questions and needs. Many know almost nothing of the Bible and need a lot of very basic teaching. Many do not even have Bibles at all to study. Others can't read or write. We can't just baptize them and leave them. This is irresponsible. We will have blood on our hands (Acts 20:20, 26-27). We must continue to go to India.

Paul told Timothy (II Tim. 2:2) to teach other faithful men in order for them to teach others and so the chain goes. The gospel work in India among conservative brethren is still in its infancy. Not that many mature men there yet. We have special classes for those who preach. We tape the lessons and leave the tapes with them. We also take detailed outlines of the lessons and leave them. Tapes of good lessons by other preachers are also taken to give to the Indian brethren. These Indian preachers generally have many good Bible questions for us to deal with. They come into contact with many ideas from Hindus, Muslims, and others that need some attention and solid instruction from the Word of God. Many of these men are babes in Christ who go about on their own with little help from the village people and no financial help from the USA and

preach Christ, baptizing people. Their zeal shames us and motivates us to greater effort on our part to try harder to come to them and assist them in their growth in the grace and knowledge of Christ (II Pet. 3:18).

Some of these men have needs that we try to meet as we are able. Eye glasses so that they can read the Word of God for some, bicycles for a few so that they can get from village to village, and Bibles for those who need them. A Bible costs \$2.50. A daily wage person out in the village may earn 40 to 50 cents a day which is needed to buy rice for that day! It is not difficult for us to see then that a Bible is very difficult for them to obtain. It would cost a weeks wage with no money to buy food for that week. This is why we try to help with Bibles for the daily wage people who are Christians. These village preachers are always pleading for Bibles to give to the brethren.

The nation is unstable as far as opportunity in the gospel is concerned. We may be shut out of the country at any time. Anti-conversion bills have been hotly debated by the Indian law-makers for years. Some of the states and areas do have such and brethren that I know personally have been arrested for teaching the Bible. Some brethren from the states have been refused entry into India and others have been turned back at the airport customs (II Thess. 3:1-2). Those of us who go can only get into the country for brief visits. We usually go for four to six weeks at a time. We can only apply for a visitor or tourist visa. We cannot go and stay for an extended period of time. Even these short visits may be taken away from us at any time. I just do not know, really, one way or the other. I only know that for now the door is open to some of us and we had better go through that door or answer to God!

One very important reason to go to India is that the Indian brethren need to know that we care—that we have not taught them, baptized them, and run away to the safety and comfort of the USA. The Indian brethren are greatly encouraged by our visits. This is the way it was in the New Testament, by the way. We need to "see how they do" (Acts 15:36) as Paul did for those churches planted by his previous efforts. We need to visit and give one another comfort in the Lord (Acts 16:40; II Cor. 7:6-7,13). (Did you read these verses?) I have heard other preachers make the same point with reference to the countries in South America, the Philippines, etc. It is certainly so as far as Indian is concerned. I've been there nine times over the past ten years and I have experienced this very thing with the brethren many times.

Do be aware of the fact that false teachers from the USA and elsewhere will be happy to move in and "help" the brethren if we give place to them (Gal. 2:4, 5). We get letters that inform us that false teachers have visited the areas and brethren want to know how to deal with the doctrines. The cults are in India and the denominations have schools and hospitals there as well. To a babe in Christ, this can be terribly confusing. In a sea of Hinduism on every side, someone who believes in Christ and claims to be a Christian must be a good teacher. We know that this just isn't so. However, one

who is new in the faith and may not even have a Bible is fair game to these people. We have a great responsibility here that weighs heavily upon my heart (II Cor. 11:28). We must return to these churches and ground them in the faith.

There are various needs that cannot be dealt with "with paper and ink" (II Jno. 12) as well as they can be "face to face". Sure, we carry on a great deal of correspondence with Indian brethren. I write several letters to different people in India each week. There are questions that need to be answered, request for Bibles, bicycles, eye-glasses, etc., and other matters that need attention. However, many times I write back and say that I will sit down with you and discuss this with you face to face when, Lord willing, I see you next visit. Letters take 8 to 14 days to get to India by air mail. Sometimes letters are lost and never arrive. This has happened to important letters that caused grief. Several money orders have been lost or stolen. The mail is slow and not always reliable out in the villages

Sometimes when I answer a question, there are several other questions that come to mind. It goes on and on over a long drawn out period of time through the mail. There is no substitute for being there!

These are some of the reasons that motivate me to continue to go to India.

Arriving in India is like going back many years in time. There are ox-carts and modern automobiles on the same highway. The situation there is many times very distasteful to people from the West. The open sewers along the streets, the noise and filth, the strange food, and the backward conditions, are just a few of the matters of cultural shock that face the Westerner. However, this is more than offset by the opportunity to work with and teach some of the most receptive and gracious people that one would ever meet anywhere in the world. They have very little of this world's goods but they are willing to share with us what they do have and do everything that they possibly can do to make us as comfortable as possible. I have stayed in a mud hut with a straw roof in a village of untouchables while the family moved in with the water buffalo under a straw shelter. They simply refused to have it any other way! And they did this with joy and gratitude that we were there to teach them the Word of God. How can one's heart not be touched by people like this?

We have witnessed many times people sitting on the ground (blanket or a straw mat) for hours listening to the Bible being taught. They always ask for more and when can we return and teach them again.

Certainly there are difficulties in India. There are false brethren (II Cor. 11:26) who seek to take advantage of us and the brethren. There are Hindus and others who try to destroy the gospel work there. I could give several examples of this. These and other reasons are why I suggest that not just anyone jump on an airplane and head for India. There are pitfalls and one should go with others who have been there and know the circumstances first hand.

Those who go to India for weeks at a time surely need the full support of their families back home. The wife

and children need to know how very important the work of preaching the gospel of Christ is in India and be willing to part with the husband/daddy for those weeks. Not every family can do this and I'm not suggesting that they must. Again, however, some body has to go and if one can, others should encourage and support their efforts.

Those who want to go also need the support and understanding of the brethren as well. The brethren need to know and believe whole-heartedly the points made at the beginning of this article concerning the need for men going to India. They must be willing to carry on the local work in the absence of the preacher and not either have things pile up for his return or complain about his being away! Mature brethren must come forward here and keep things in proper perspective for the rest of the brethren. Again, some one must go; some one has to be gone from some congregation for four to six weeks. Some immature brethren think it must always be some other congregation, not theirs! If the one who wants to go to India cannot overcome this, then he probably needs to stay at home. It is a difficult situation and calls for mature judgment and understanding on the part of all (preacher, family, and brethren).

Brethren, the door is open at the present time for preaching the gospel of Christ in India. I would be happy to hear from anyone who is interested in this work. Into all the world! Phone: (502) 499-9942

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GOOD FROM BAD (Philippians 1:12-14)

**J. Mike Johnson
 P.O. Box 626
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The book of Philippians was written by Paul while he was in prison in Rome. His trial had probably already taken place and he seems to be waiting for the verdict. It appears that he expected to be released, but was uncertain about it. Paul, no doubt, did not enjoy being imprisoned. His movement was hindered. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note his attitude in Philippians 1:12. Here he said

"Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel" (NASB)

One would have thought that Paul's imprisonment would have hindered the gospel. Instead, it did the opposite; it caused the "furtherance", (NKJV), of the gospel. How did this happen? How did bad turn into good? Paul gives us an answer in the text.

The Gospel Spread

First, in verse 13 he says, "So that my bonds in Christ are manifest; ('become as well known', NASB); in all the palace, and in all other places;". Paul's imprisonment had given him the chance to preach the gospel in Rome; it had given the gospel publicity during his trial and at other times that it would not have otherwise gotten.

Paul always seemed to make the best of whatever circumstance that he found himself in. (Note his attitude on another occasion when he was unjustly arrested-Acts 16:23ff.) What happened to Paul was very bad. An event like this would cause most people to want to "give up", especially if, like Paul, their tribulation was for doing right instead of for doing wrong. However, Paul made the best of this bad situation. He saw it as a chance to preach the gospel in other places.

Today, we must learn to make the best out of adversity. We must use it for whatever good that we can whether the problem be sickness, persecution, loss of loved ones or pain and suffering. Also, like Paul, we should take advantage of all kinds of situations to teach others.

The Influence Of Paul

The second reason that Paul gave to indicate his imprisonment had helped further the gospel is found in verse 14. This verse says, "And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear." Paul's courage inspired others to boldly proclaim God's Word. Paul's good traits "rubbed off" on others. Courage is sometimes contagious. Often, one person can stand up

in a complacent world and do what is right, and cause many others to do right also. Many people want to do what is right, but they need a leader to get them started. Paul was such a person; we can be also. However, it takes courage to do this, and sometimes a person must stand alone. Certainly all of us probably have more influence on others, for good or bad, than we realize.

Summation

Many bad things can happen to us. However, the Christian can use the tribulation to his advantage. Romans 5:3 tells us that tribulation, (generally regarded as bad), produces patience (that which we need). Tribulation can be a stumbling block or/a stepping stone. It is up to us to turn *adversary into advantage*. Paul's outlook should help us to see this clearly.

PERSONALITY CONFLICT

Fred A. Shewmaker
58305 TR 1195
West Lafayette, Ohio 43845

When a problem arises in a local church and brethren allow it to escalate into church trouble, it is frequently explained that they are having a personality conflict. Many times that is a euphemism for the prevailing of an ungodly attitude among the members.

A personality conflict cannot disrupt the peace of a local church unless sin is committed. When there are personalities in a local church, which are not naturally compatible with one another, the word of God tells us how to avoid disrupting the peace of the church. "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:2, 3). Allowing personality conflicts to disrupt peace and destroy harmony in a local church violates Ephesians 4:2, 3. Plainly, that is sin.

Ephesians 4:2, 3 is written to "the faithful in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:2). Those who are faithful to the Lord must obey Ephesians 4:2, 3 in order to continue "faithful in Christ Jesus."

If my personality clashes with the personality of brother Brown and we both obey Ephesians 4:2, 3, how could it be possible for our personality conflict to destroy the unity of the local church of which we are members?

What if one of us — what if I deal with the conflict without lowliness and meekness, am not longsuffering and forbearing with brother Brown, but instead speak out against the traits of brother Brown's personality which peave me and constantly belittle his irksome mannerisms or forms of expression? What would happen in the local church if brother Brown in lowliness and

meekness were to be longsuffering and forbearing with my constant abuse of him? How long could that situation exist within a local church before the entire membership would see that my constant abuse of brother Brown was an expression of my own ungodly attitude? It should soon become apparent that I was not obeying the teaching to live righteously (Titus 2:12).

Possibly some one is thinking, "It would not be fair for brother Brown to have to bear such abuse in silence. I readily grant that such would not be fair to brother Brown. The question is: Whence came the idea, we may live the life of a Christian without being forbearing with those who treat us unfairly? How fairly was Jesus treated by those who condemned and crucified Him? "Like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth" (Acts 2:32 & Isa. 53:7). When they crucified Him, He prayed, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Jesus did not scream, "THIS IS UNFAIR!" Jesus said, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46).

When Jesus was on earth, He warned the ungodly among the people of God of the damnation of hell. We need to sound that same warning to every brother or sister who might allow a conflict between his/her personality and another member's personality to disrupt the peace and destroy the harmony or unity of the local church.

Factionous brethren or sisters should be dealt with according to the teaching of Titus 3:10. A local church does not have to put up with bickering and backbiting among its membership.

DRAWING NEAR BEFORE WITHDRAWING

Joe Shane
1040 North St.
Columbus, IN 47203

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us" (2 Thessalonians 3:6). This is a command given every Christian when another Christian turns back to the "world." It is something that must be carried out by every member of the congregation if it is to have the impact God intended. Most Christians recognize the New Testament teaching, here and in Matthew, Romans, First Corinthians and Titus, regarding corrective discipline within the church family. But does the fact that we carry out what has come to be known as "church discipline" mean we have dealt correctly with those whom we mark? I think an important question must be asked of every Christian, "What did I do to draw nearer to that brother or sister before the situation arose calling on me to withdraw?"

Discipline must be viewed in two parts, first there must be instruction and then the withdrawal. I fear we have short circuited the first part of this process far too many times. Instruction involves the teaching that is done publicly, but it is much more! It involves getting to know one another, knowing one another's strengths and weaknesses. It means having association with each other so instruction in the Christian way is personal and on going. How can I "rejoice with them that do rejoice," or "weep with them that weep," when I have made no effort to know them?

A good test for ourselves, as to what effort we had put into making someone feel they were a part of God's family, comes when it is necessary to withdraw from that person. Now most of us would say, "I felt terrible about it." But what does "terrible" mean? I think we have the mental knowledge of their lost condition that makes us feel sad when a brother or sister returns to following Satan; but how we feel about the particular person will depend on how close we were to that person. What if a Christian was never made to feel a part of the family of God? Or, having once felt a part of the family, fell away with little or no contact from other Christians. How effective would withdrawing be on that person — it would not be effective!

Every time we "withdraw" from someone, I ask myself, "Did I do all I could?" I fear sometimes the answer is NO! Paul said, "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men." 1 Thess. 5:14.

What part did you or I have in trying to restore those from whom we have withdrawn? If we never called, visited or made an effort to restore them to faithfulness we will answer to God one day! If we made one visit and laid it on the line to them, we have not done our duty! But if we in love and concern warned, comforted and supported them in efforts (plural) to restore them to the Lord, then we have fulfilled all that God requires of us. I fear most of us fall into the group that has made little or no contact. It is unrealistic to think one can walk into another Christian's home for the first time and simply tell them to straighten up, and think you have done all that you can. Paul's words to the Thessalonians required time and effort on the part of strong Christians. It requires a sense of "family" that will only come from much time together. It requires drawing near!

I am sure "church discipline" will not have the impact God intended if we have not first made repeated efforts to warn, comfort and support a weak brother or sister. Do not think God will be pleased that we have "withdrawn" from someone we have not tried to teach. It seems that it would be impossible to Scripturally "withdraw" from someone if I had never tried to draw near to them first.

WHEN YOU MOVE—Please allow two months for change of address notices. We have a cut-off date for changes each month. *Thanks for your help.*

THE NEWS LETTER REPORTS

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

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

SOUTHSIDE LECTURES

The Southside church in Pasadena, Texas will have a lecture series June 1-4. DEE BOWMAN will speak on "Temptation and Sin", "Love", "The Adversary", "The Resurrection." HOMER HAILEY will speak on "The Word Became Flesh", "The Virgin Birth", "The Authoritative Word", "The King In His Kingdom." C. G. (COLLY) CALDWELL will speak on "Salvation", "Opposition", "Providence", "Praising and Glorifying God." ED HARREL will speak on "Self-Control", "Predestination", "Faith" and "Joy." Congregational singing will be led by R. J. STEVENS.

JIM WHIDDEN, 721 Morningview Dr., Thomasville, AL 36784 — We have been with the church here since October, 1983. At that time over 75% of my support had to be raised elsewhere. At the present time, we are not only fully self-supporting but have also begun a training program for new preachers. In addition the brethren have indicated an interest in making my services available for gospel meetings with congregations unable to pay for such.

CARL McMURRAY, 5019 N. W. 30th Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32601 — My family and I have been working with the Northeast church for almost 5 years now. Many positive changes have taken place and the Lord has consistently blessed the efforts of these good people. With many conversions, the building is at capacity and the church is at peace.

We are now planning to move to Omaha, Nebraska to work with the LaVista congregation there. The church in Omaha is one of only three

in the state (and one of these is just a couple of families) and as such, accurately represents the state of the Lord's church throughout the Midwest. Mike Davis, who is working with them in Omaha, will remain and we will work together with him and his family. With half a million souls in this city, there will be plenty for two men to do. Having worked with the church in Sioux City, Iowa for five years also, previous experience says that two men would be better able to deal with the discouragement of very few other Christians. We are planning to move in late May, before seasonal cost increases in shipping. The Brownsburg, Indiana church and the Jordan Park church in Huntsville, Alabama have graciously committed to most of our support and moving expenses, though we presently lack \$ 1,000 per month support and \$1,700 in moving costs. If anyone is interested in this "mission field" in our nation's heartland, we would be glad to hear from you. Also, if anyone has contacts in Omaha or stationed at Offutt Air Force Base that we could contact, we would welcome that. References will be supplied to those interested.

I have also been asked to write concerning the church in Sioux City, Iowa. Having worked there 5 years I can vouch for the fact that it is a pleasant place to live and could bring forth fruit in the Lord's vineyard. But, they do need someone to come and work with them. The area contains just under 100,000 souls. The church owns its own building in a decent part of town. The reason they are small is not fussing that has divided many southern churches. I have generally found these mid-western congregations to be very close. The area is simply difficult. It could be a blessing to them and to any man who

could come to the Midwest and put his hand to the plow here. For further information you may call or write GLENN MYER, Rt. 2, Box 101, Bancroft, NE 68004. Phone (402) 648-7697.

WILSON ADAMS, 891 Autumn Valley Lane, Gambrills, MD 21054 — The work at Wildercroft in the Washington, D. C. area continues to be extremely encouraging. Attendance runs in the 160's and we have seen 10 baptized the first three months of 1987. We pray the Lord will continue to bless us and use us in whatever way He can. Each year I receive several calls in reference to "good places" to stay in the D. C. area. There have been several new and inexpensive (at least by D. C. standards) motels built on I-95 (the Capital Beltway) at the exit for Central Avenue (MD 214). There is a Days Inn, Motel 6, Motel 8, Knight Inn, and a Red Roof Inn is also nearby. These motels are near the subway as well as being only ten minutes from our building. And, if I may add one more observation... please, Please, PLEASE when traveling to places frequented by many visitors, don't call on Sunday morning and ask for transportation to services. It's probably too late. As you make your travel plans try and make as many arrangements as you can IN ADVANCE. Brethren are generally very receptive and ready to assist those needing transportation, directions, etc., if you only give them time to do so. Have a great summer — remember that the Lord comes first no matter where you are — and visit with us if your travel plans include the nations capital.

VIVION ROAD LECTURES

The Vivion Road church, 2026 N. E. Vivion Rd., Kansas City, Missouri 64118, will have a lectureship June 22-25, 1987 with **ARDIE BROWN** presenting a series on "Positive Christianity" and "Humanism." **BOB BUCHANON** will speak on "God's Heroes" and "Lessons From Ephesians." **L. A. STAUFFER** will speak on "Lessons From The Psalms" and "Premillennialism." For information on video or audio tapes, or housing during the lectures, please write to the church at P.O. Box 28478, Kansas City, MO 64118. Phone (816)452-3684.

RAY MADRIGAL, 165 Hillington Dr., Paducah, KY 42001 — After six years of preaching in Bridgeview, Illinois, we have recently moved to Paducah in northwestern Kentucky. Our work in southwest Chicago was fruitful and rewarding. We left the Bridgeview church at peace and on a productive note. Twenty-one sinners were converted to Christ while over twenty unfaithful Christians were restored. We rejoice in God's blessings. We look forward to what God has in store for us in Paducah. If you know anybody in the Paducah area who might be receptive to the gospel, or of some neglectful Christian in need of encouragement, please let us know. Phone me at (502)554-7639.

DENNIS G. ALLAN, P.O. Box 17, Auburn, Michigan 48611 — In June, 1985 we moved to the tri-cities area of Michigan. This includes Saginaw-Bay City-Midland. The work in this area began with 9 Christians and several children meeting together in 1979 when several left a congregation in the area because of violation of the Biblical pattern. In spite of disappointments, this small group pressed on and led others to Christ. Some good families have moved to the area, others left a nearby congregation because of erroneous teaching and practice and some have been baptized into Christ. There are presently 26 members with attendance in the mid — 30's. There is much opportunity. We are thankful to God for the good done.

I would like to inform you regarding the needs of Fred and Beverly McKinney who are members here. They have done much faithful work over the years. Brother McKinney has been disabled from his preaching work the past few years because of a rare and serious combination of physical ailments. Though limited by health problems, the McKinneys have been a stable and encouraging influence here. His health has shown some improvement but it will be sometime before he can return to regular work of any kind. With the help of sister McKinney's employment, assistance from relatives and individual Christians, and small amount from here and congregations in other areas, they are managing to meet the immediate costs of food and shelter. However, these means have not been sufficient to even begin to help with over \$25,000 in medical bills which have accumulated over the past several years. Any help, on a onetime or repeated basis would help relieve faithful and deserving saints. Inquiries may be made directly to Fred McKinney, 1520 Taylor St., Bay City, MI 48708, phone (517)892-

1351, or to the writer at the address which heads this notice. My phone is (517)662-7645.

CECIL WILLIS, P.O. Box 15, Woodlake, TX 75865 — I have just returned from a preaching trip to Fairbanks, Alaska. The meeting was my seventh in Alaska. I first preached at Fairbanks in 1966, so I have had first-hand contact with the brethren there for over 20 years. The church at Fairbanks began in the early 1960's. The membership has fluctuated, usually mirroring fluctuation of the job market. With the present recession in the oil market, the congregation now is at a rather low ebb numerically. They now number 16 members. Eleven of those 16 members are under 30 years of age, and some of these have been Christians only a few months. It has been several years since the congregation has had a preacher to work with them, and they need one now. They are building a nice little meeting house. The basement portion is completed and they are meeting in it. The upper portion is roughed in, and many of the materials needed to complete that part have been purchased, and more work will be done on the building this year. They have no indebtedness on their building.

Contributions at Fairbanks run about \$200.00 weekly. Several of the members are students and have little or no income at the moment. Utilities on the building run about \$400 per month. They will be able to pay \$500 per month toward a preacher's support, which is about what it costs to rent a one-bedroom apartment in Fairbanks. It is my intention to move to Fairbanks in May. Living expenses are a little higher there than in the lower 48 states. So the brethren tell me I will need about \$2,000 per month, in addition to what the Fairbanks church can supply. If necessary, I will get a secular job in order to help them in the work. The brethren feel I can be of some help to them in the Lord's work in this city of 25,000 (with 70,000 in the marketing area).

The latest statistics (1985) show 521,000 people in Alaska distributed over an area more than twice the size of Texas. There are only four small faithful churches in the state: Anchorage, Fairbanks, Sotolna, and Barrow. Dean Crews at Anchorage is the only faithful preacher in the state. He has been trying to work a little with all four churches. But Fairbanks if 450 miles from Anchorage and Barrow is more than 1,000 miles north of Anchorage. All four of these churches would number no more than 100 saints. By comparison, Texas has more than 350 faithful churches, in an area half the size of Alaska. So there is a vast harvest field for the work of every willing Christian.

There are four large military installations in Alaska. Two of these are located at Fairbanks. There are thousands of young military men stationed there, usually for four year terms. These bases hire many thousands of civilian employees, in addition to the military assignees. There needs to be a vigorous church near these strategic centers.

If the church where you worship can consider additional preacher support, please inform them of my need in Fairbanks. Over the years, I have assisted in raising support for literally hundreds of gospel preachers. As best I can remember, this is the first time I have ever needed to raise support for myself (excepting \$100 a month for six months one time). I am willing to get a secular job to help these brethren, but doing so would hamper the amount of effort I could make in teaching the gospel. I do not mean to indicate that Fairbanks is a more needful area than some other, or that I need support more than some other brother. But it is true that Fairbanks is a needful field, and I would like to go to work there. So, if you or others whom you know could help, I would be most grateful.

FROM AFAR

ROMEO V. TORRELIZA, Burgos St. Poblacion Sur, Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur, Republic of the Philippines — As in days of old, I will rehearse what God has done with us. There was growth in all phases of our work in 1986. Ten were baptized into Christ. We distributed tracts and invitations at the town proper, at two colleges in the area and put signboards at strategic places to let people know we are here. I was invited to preach in a gospel meeting at Pakiling, Bucay, Abra in January, 1987. Four were baptized in this effort. **PAUL WILLIAMS**, P.O. Box 324, Eshowe, 3815 South Africa — We had a two weeks tent meeting in Eshowe. Each service lasted about two hours including a children's class, singing, the Jule Miller film strip, sermon and question period. Except on rainy nights the tent was comfortable full with 60-80 people. Six were baptized. The four high school teachers who were baptized while in Eshowe College of Education in 1985 scheduled a week-end meeting in their school hall March

13-15. Paddy Kendall-Ball, who works with them regularly, Michael Gumedede and I preached. The brethren were encouraged because a good number of young people attended. The question periods were profitable, and two young women in their 20's were baptized.

PREACHERS NEEDED

SUMMERVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA — The Bacon's Bridge Rd. church needs a preacher. The work started one year ago with 3-9 people but now 30-40 attend. Majority of support will have to be raised elsewhere. Contact RAY GOFF, Van Buren, Ladson, SC 29456. Phone (803)875-3842.

TUALATIN, OREGON — This congregation of 19 members began in July, 1986. We presently carry the preaching duties, but are in process of seeking a full-time preacher. Tualatin is 12 miles south of Portland on I-5 near its intersection with I-205. This is a rapidly growing area of metropolitan Portland. A new Mormon temple is being built about 4 miles from here. We are able to supply \$700 per month support. Contact Leon Fermerick (503)246-2430, 9615 S. W. 62nd Ave., Portland, OR 97219.

PREACHER NEEDED

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI — A full-time preacher is needed to work with a congregation of about 85. We are self-supporting and without elders and deacons at present. If interested, please write to the Affton Church of Christ, 6915 Weber Rd., St. Louis, MO 63123.

DEBATE

KEN GREEN, 2212 Jordan Lane, Huntsville, AL 35805 — I am to debate Hayes of the Emmanuel Church of Christ July 1, 2 and 4, 5. Hayes will affirm one person in the Godhead Monday and Tuesday in the Jordan Park building and I will affirm three persons in the God-head Thursday and Friday in their building on Drake Ave.

IN THE NEWS THIS MONTH

BAPTISMS	315
RESTORATIONS	62

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)
