

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.

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THINK ON THESE THINGS

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SINS OF THE TONGUE

Man's heart is the spring from which all language flows (Matt. 12: 34, 35). We should be careful to be swift to hear and slow to speak (Jas. 1: 19); we should speak to edify (Eph. 4: 29).

What The Scriptures Say About Speech

"O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12: 34-37).

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1: 19).

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col. 4: 6).

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Eph. 4: 29).

We need a clear definition of the Bible terms used to describe some of the sins of the tongue. The definitions of these words are taken primarily from W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary Of New Testament Words, and Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary.

1. **BACKBITING**—W. E. Vine says the word is formed from **kata**, "against," and **laleo**, "to speak." It is used in Rom. 1: 30: "Backbiters;" in 1 Pet. 2: 1: "Evil speaking," and "backbiting" in 2 Cor. 12: 20. The word means, "to censure, slander, reproach, or speak evil of the absent." (Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary) The result of backbiting will devour and destroy both the backbiter and those against whom he speaks (Gal. 5: 15). The man who is not a backbiter is identified as in the tabernacle of the Lord and dwelling in His holy hill (Psa. 15: 3). Among those whom God has given up because of their evil is the backbiter (Rom. 1: 28-32). Backbiting is slander, evil speaking of others in their absence, and he does so openly; he is usually a liar.

2. **GOSSIP**—"One who runs about tattling and telling news; one who talks too much about the affairs of others.

Gossip is related to: 1. **Idle talk**—Tattlers: the noun does not appear anywhere in the New Testament, but the verb is in 3 John 10. "Prating"—To utter nonsense; idle accusations; empty charges. "Gossip" would well translate the word. It is associated with a busybody and being idle. "And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not" (1 Tim. 5: 13); 2. **Tattling**—"Wherefore, if I come, I remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church" (3 John 10). It signifies to talk non-sense, to babble; the adjective **phluaros**, babbling, garrulous; to raise false accusations.

3. **SLANDER**—"A false tale or report maliciously uttered, and tending to injure the reputation of another: "... and a whisperer separateth chief friends" (Prov. 16: 28); in 1 Tim. 3: 11, the wives of elders and deacons in particular must not be slanderers, but sober and faithful in all things.

Slander is related to: 1. **False accusers**—"Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good" (2 Tim. 3: 3). 2. **Whisperers**—(Pro. 16: 28; Rom. 1: 29).

Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers" (Rom. 1: 29). Speaking evil reports into one's ear; secret slander. To insinuate, hint evil reports of others, while trying to avoid personal responsibility. He is a very dangerous person.

4. **LIARS**—(Lying - deceit), Rom. 1: 29; Eph. 4: 25; Rev. 21: 8. Pseudes—"false, a falsehood." Used of false witnesses, Acts 6: 13; false apostles, Rev. 2: 2; adjective for many words; calculated to deceive; it is elsewhere rendered "lie," John 8: 44; Rom. 1: 25; 2 Thess. 2: 11; 1 John 2: 21, 27; to deceive, not telling the truth as it is. To deliberately tell or insinuate anything but truth; an effort to mislead.

Lying comes from the devil (John 8: 44; Acts 5: 3, 4). God hates liars (Prov. 6: 17); Rom. 16: 17). All liars will receive eternal damnation (Rev. 21: 8, 27; 22: 15).

5. **SWELLINGS**—"Phusiosis, denotes a puffing up, swelling with pride..., 2 Cor. 12: 20, "swellings." "For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults" (2 Cor. 12: 20). "Huperonkos, an adjective denoting of excessive weight or size, is used metaphorically in the sense of immoderate, especially of arrogant speech, in the neuter plural, virtually as a noun, 2 Pet. 2: 18; Jude 16, 'of great swelling words, "' doubtless with reference to Gnostic phraseology. It means arrogant boasters in Rom. 1: 30. It is empty claims; pride in speech.

6. **STRIFES**—Several related words will be considered under this term because they belong under the definition by Greek Lexicons and English Dictionaries. Some are found in 2 Cor. 12: 20: "For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults. "

W. E. Vine says: "Eris: strife, contention, is the expression of enmity, Rom. 1: 29." Debates: used in a good sense (Acts 17: 17; Gal. 2: 5; Jude 3; Heb. 12: 4): to struggle against, reason with opposition. It is used in a bad sense: contention, wrangling, quarreling (1 Cor. 1: 11, 12; 3: 3; 2 Cor. 12: 20; 1 Tim. 6: 5). It is strife, party spirit (Gal. 5: 20; Jas. 3: 16). Other words that have similar meaning are: faction, contention, dispute, fightings, strife of words (1 Tim. 6: 4).

7. **MALIGNITY**—Vine says of this word: "lit., bad manner or character,... hence, an evil disposition that tends to put the worst construction on everything, malice, malevolence, craftiness, occurs in Rom. 1: 29, as the accompaniment of dolos, guile." The word signifies depravity of heart; the act of applying words or actions of others in the worst possible sense. The idea is to hurt, injure and destroy others.

8. **FALSE ACCUSERS**—To falsely accuse one of evil, a form of slander. "Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good" (2 Tim. 3: 3).

9. **TALEBEARING** (Prov. 11: 13; 26: 20-22). A walk-

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Editorial

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VICTORY THROUGH CHRIST

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15: 57).

I like to win. Defeat is agonizing. All that talk about good sportsmanship is nice, but I'd still rather win! I don't want my team to just barely win, either. I want them to win overwhelmingly. In time of war, the prospect of victory inspires the battle weary soldier and the sacrificing citizen at home. The price is high. But the prospect of victory is sweet.

Our text speaks of victory of far greater importance than the mundane affairs just mentioned. This victory is over the grave and is achieved in the resurrection. And it is the thought of that victory which enables us to be "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (v. 58).

The means by which victory is accomplished is "through our Lord Jesus Christ." We cannot do it on our own. This was the confidence which inspired Paul and he expressed it often. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom. 8: 31, 37). "Now to him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3: 20). "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4: 13). But, over what shall we have victory? Victory Over Sin

"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3: 23). But that is not the end of the story. We can have victory over the guilt of sin. Our age has psycho-analyzed sin out of existence. Why, we are not guilty, of all things, we are just disadvantaged! It's the fault of our parents, or the environment, or else we will blame it on the government. Victory over sin begins with a recognition that we have sinned and that we are guilty before God. We will not be free from the guilt of sin by divesting ourselves of our "religious hang-ups" or abandoning our principles, but by respecting the law of God and amending our ways accordingly.

The law of Moses with its sacrifices could not take away sin (Heb. 10: 4). We have been redeemed through the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1: 18-20). That was the price paid to free us from sin. We realize the benefits of his shed blood in obedience to the gospel. "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteous-ness" (Rom. 6: 17-18).

Victory Over Life's Trials

Through our Lord, we shall have victory over sorrow. Job was right when he said "Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble" (Job 14: 1). Paul wrote of our God "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation" (2 Cor. 1: 4) and in the next verse spoke of "our consolation" which abounds by Christ. Sorrow bows us down, but it is a great teacher enabling us to rise up with even greater strength to serve the Lord victoriously.

We shall have victory **over difficulties**. Life is full of hills to climb, some appearing to be steeper than we can manage. Paul learned from his thorn in the flesh that when he was weak, then was he strong. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. The Psalmist said "And call upon me in the day of trouble: and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Psa. 50: 15). Our strength is small but our God has unlimited power coupled with unending love and we can win.

We shall have victory **over fear**. There are fears on every hand. Will some dreaded disease overtake me? Will I be the victim of crime? Will the banks all fail? Will I lose my job? Will I lose my children to the Devil? What about the earthquake? What about the war? When will it be over? We have to be careful about fears. They become evidences of little faith in God. Paul said "comfort the fainthearted" (1 Thes. 5: 14). John warned that the "fearful" will be lost (Rev. 21: 8). So, it is imperative that we gain the victory over fear. It helps to remember several basic things. God is on his throne. The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open to their prayers (1 Pet. 3: 12). The kingdoms of earth pass away, one by one, but the kingdom of heaven remains (Heb. 12: 28; Dan. 2: 44). Even if we should lose our lives to disease, crime, war, there is an eternal reward for the faithful. It does not all end at the cemetery. We are saved by hope (Rom. 8: 24). "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will **fear no evil**: for thou art with me" (Psa. 23: 4).

We shall have victory **over the world**. "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 Jno. 5: 4). Jesus said "Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world" (Jno. 16: 33). How did he do it? He grappled with the powers of evil and won by relying upon the word of God. "It is written" he told Satan. There is our help. "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psa. 119: 11). We can win this battle but not by neglecting Bible study in our private lives and not by neglecting opportunities to study and learn when Christians assemble. The more we saturate our minds with the word of God, the less appealing will be the offerings of this world.

We shall have victory **over death**. That is where we started. Through the ages men have asked Job's question: "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job. 14: 14). Our victory will be realized in the resurrection of the dead. Oh, I know that some sneer at such a thought. If a plastic surgeon can remake a face disfigured in an accident, cannot the One who made the surgeon and gave him life and breath, reshape broken and decayed bodies into a heavenly form? The body may be burned or torn beyond

recognition, or disappear into the depths of the sea, or be blown into countless fragments: but please know this: The Almighty who made them in the first place, is able to gather them from the ends of the earth, and reform them into immortal and incorruptible beauty beyond comparison. So then, the casket at the cemetery is not the sign of defeat; it is merely the threshold of victory. "Death is swallowed up in victory." All of that leads to Paul's challenge in 1 Cor. 15: 58" Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. "

"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place" (2 Cor. 2: 14). Indeed, we are going to win!

(Continued from page 2)

ing busybody; trader in scandal. One who tells all secrets of evil and seldom reports good. "From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling" (1 Tim. 1: 6). "Neither filthiness, nor foolish talk-ing, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks" (Eph. 5: 4). "It denotes more than mere idle talk" (W. E. Vine). "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision" (Titus 1: 10).

10. CORRUPT COMMUNICATIONS—It means shameful, disgraceful speaking; it is used in Eph. 5: 4, of obscenity, all that is contrary to purity. "Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks" (Eph. 5: 4). "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Eph. 4: 29). This signifies profanity and vulgarity; a conveyer of the basest garbage and filth of the mind. "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth" (Col. 3: 8).

11. BLASPHEMY—As an adjective, "blasphemous, abusive, speaking evil... "railing." As a verb, "blasphemeo, to blaspheme, rail at or revile, is used (a) in a general way, of any contumelious speech, reviling, calumniating, railing at etc., as of those who railed at Christ, e. g., Matt 27: 39... (b) of those who speak contemptuously of God or of sacred things, e. g., Matt. 9: 3..." (W. E. Vine). "Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord" (2 Pet. 2: 11). "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, un-holy" (2Tim. 3: 2). The noun form: The word 'blasphemy' is practically confined to speech defamatory of the Divine Majesty." (W. E. Vine).

To understand the meaning of these words is to realize the horrible consequences of their use by Christians under any circumstances. Not only will the soul of the one using these words be in danger of eternal damnation, but the souls of many will be doomed to eternal punishment because of their use. Any use of any speech as characterized above is sin against Almighty God. All such speech comes from the heart and indicates its condition. Think on these things.

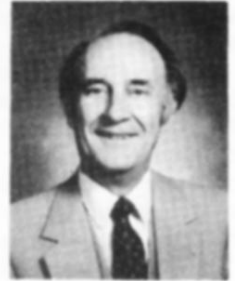
WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

(Rom. 4:3)

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BODILY EXERCISE

QUESTION: *What does Paul mean by the statement, "For bodily exercise profiteth little" (1 Tim. 4: 8)?*

ANSWER: Quoting the whole verse, Paul says, "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." The consensus of many is that "bodily exercise" is physical training, such as gymnastics, and that it has little significance in contrast to godliness. Although I am in the minority, it seems to me that Paul is speaking of the *regulating* of bodily appetites and desires rather than gymnastics.

W. E. Vine said "the immediate reference is probably not to mere physical training for games but to discipline of the body such as that which the Apostle refers in 1 Cor. 9: 27, though there may be an allusion to the practices of asceticism" (Vol. 2, p. 60). Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 9: 27, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Hence, controlling the body in 1 Cor. 9: 27 is the same as "bodily exercise" in 1 Tim. 4: 8.

R. C. H. Lenski wrote, "Keeping the body with all its bodily desires well trained in the godly life is worth something, we must even say that it is a part of true godliness. Yet it is not the whole thing nor even the main feature; it is only 'little' when it is compared with all that real godliness comprises. "

Only a part of godliness lies in the body, while the foundation of godliness lies in the spirit and its spiritual virtues. This is why "bodily exercise profiteth little." It just encompasses a part of our Christian life while godliness embraces the whole, even all things.

The New American Standard version renders 1 Tim. 4: 8: "for bodily discipline is only of little profit." The Revised Standard Version has, "for while bodily training is some value, godliness is of value in every way. "The Greek word translated "exercise" is *gymnasia* which Thayer says, "a. prop, *the exercise of the body* in the palaestra, b. any *exercise whatever*" (p. 122). The "any exercise whatever" could well be the *discipline* (NAS) or *training* (RSV) of the bodily appetites in harmony with divine regulations.

Some contend that "bodily exercise" in 1 Tim. 4: 8 is the ascetic practices in v. 3 of the context. But "forbidding to marry" and "commanding to abstain from meats"

are doctrines of devils (v. 2). Paul certainly would not have said that these diabolical doctrines are of some value.

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DEALING WITH SIN

For the last year or two we have been considering a number of sins such as stealing, gambling, social drinking, immodesty, dancing, smoking and misuses of the tongue. With this article we will conclude our study of worldliness by taking a look at the question of how we are to deal with sin. What can be done about these sins in our own lives and the lives of others?

The answer is not as hard as some might think. In fact, the Bible answer is rather simple.

Recognize The Difference In Law And Opinion

If the opposition to the practice of social drinking, smoking, dancing, mixed swimming, gambling and lying is just a matter of opinion, then these are not sin. Remember, that sin is a violation of the **law** (1 John 3: 4). If **law** is not transgressed, there is no sin (Rom. 4: 15).

The subjects that we have studied for the past several months are violations of the law of **God**. Passages have been given in each article that demonstrate that each practice is contrary to the word of God.

The way to deal with these matters is not to dismiss them by saying "that's just his opinion," Rather, it is a matter of law which means that we are talking about **sin**. The first step in dealing with sin is to recognize that it is sin.

Recognize The Consequences Of Sin

Sin has consequences that are serious. Even a brief look at these fruits will make us want to deal with sin properly.

1. **Spiritual Death.** Sin separates man from his God (Isa. 59: 1-2). This separation is referred to as death. The apostle Paul wrote, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned" (Rom. 5: 12). James wrote about the same principle, saying, "... sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (Jas. 1: 15).

2. **Hell.** The separation from God now is not the only consequence. Those who persist and die in that condition will be eternally severed from God in the fires of hell (Matt. 25: 46; Rev. 14: 10-11).

Again, Paul instructed the Romans saying, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6: 23). Notice the contrast between the "eternal life" on the one hand and the "death" on the other. This death must refer to (or at least include) the eternal separation from God. The book of Revelation refers to being cast into the fires of hell as the "second death" (Rev. 20: 14-15).

Don't:

1. **Ignore it.** Ignoring sin does not cause it to go away. It still remains (John 19: 41). The Hebrew writer urges us to obey "today" because as time marches on the chances are greater that we will become hardened in sin (Heb. 3: 7, 13). Thus, to ignore sin would only harden our hearts in it.

2. **Hide it.** Those who endeavor to hide their sin from others and put on an appearance of being righteous are called "hypocrites" in the Bible (Matt. 15: 8-9; Matt. 23). Hiding the dirt under the rug doesn't remove the dirt; it only keeps a few from knowing where it is. Hypocrisy doesn't remove the sin and certainly doesn't conceal it from God.

3. **Deny it.** Isaiah dealt with people who called "evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; and put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter" (Isa. 5: 20). They, like many today, had things all backwards. Some will deny that the practices we have been studying are sin. Others will admit that they are sin, but will deny that they are guilty when in fact they are guilty.

Why can we not ignore, hide or deny our sin? Because the day is coming when "we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5: 10).

The Child of God Who Sins Must:

1. **Repent.** When Simon sinned, Peter told him to "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness..." (Acts 8: 22). Repentance is a change of mind (Matt. 21: 28-29) that is prompted by godly sorrow (2 Cor. 7: 10) and results in a change or reformation of life (Rom. 6).

It is easy to see from the nature of repentance that one who repents of sin **ceases to practice the sin.** Repentance involves turning from the evil (cf. Matt. 12: 41 and Jonah 3: 10).

If the sin does not cease, there has been no repentance (2 Cor. 12: 20-21; Rev. 9: 20-21). The Christian does not continue to practice sin in his life (1 John 3: 6, 9).

2. **Confess his sin.** He must confess his sin before God in order to obtain the cleansing by the blood of Christ. John said, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1: 9).

Should sin be confessed before brethren? We must either (1) confess **all** of our sins before the brethren, (2) confess **none** of our sins before the brethren or (3) confess some of our sins before the brethren and some merely before God. In light of Jas. 5: 16 the last of these must be the correct answer. The text says that there is a time to confess our sins one before another which would rule out the idea that we confess none of our sins before brethren. Obviously, the first possibility would not be true, for that would mean that we confess every private thought that is wrong.

Which sins need to be acknowledged before brethren can be determined by how public the sin is. Public sin, where many in and out of the church are aware of it, must be confessed. What other conclusion can be drawn?

3. **Pray for forgiveness.** Simon was also told to "... pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8: 22).

Conclusion

Two principles need to be remembered about the sins we have been studying.

1. Sin cannot be tolerated. Preachers, elders and all of God's people must take their stand against sin.

2. Sin in our life must cease in order to please God and go to heaven.

EMOTIONAL AND CHARACTER EFFECTS ON CHILDREN OF DIVORCE

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Divorce is a tragedy for all who are involved. Many times an "innocent" spouse is left for no apparent reason and then has a lifetime of consequences to deal with. Friends and family are stunned and the divorcee has to live with the "stigma" that will follow him or her from then on. But perhaps the worst effects will be felt by the children of the divorced couple. Many times the children are thought little of while the divorce is in process, except for being tossed around and fought over by the selfish couple. The parents are concerned with who will keep the child, but really that is not in the forefront of the child's mind. The child wants the parents back together! Yet because of what has happened, consequences will follow the child that go far beyond the problem of who keeps him.

I speak in general terms, realizing that not every divorce will follow the same pattern, nor will every child react the say way. Some behave boldly as if they are able to accept the situation. Others are quite obviously devastated. But the hurt is there. There are many effects that will be felt by the children, even long after the actual divorce. Consider two:

1. **Emotional.** Divorce is a traumatic experience. While many children try to hide the hurt, they are quickly decaying inside. The self-image that the child has will almost certainly go from bad to worse. He might view the adult world as horrible, while his own world is not much better. He feels worthless and alone. Loneliness is almost inevitable. He is not an adult yet and does not have the adult mental capacity to deal with problems. He seems to be on an emotional roller-coaster that starts down and never goes back up. Horrible thoughts go through the mind. There is the self-pity, the deep depression, and perhaps the thoughts of suicide. Many children have taken that route. Many try to escape the reality by turning to drugs—any way to get away from it. Usually, the child thinks the divorce is his own fault. Maybe if he weren't there, the parents never would have had trouble. Eventually, bitterness and perhaps hatred sets in. Untold damage is done emotionally to the child. He will

carry emotional scars that never quit hurting. Years passing may help some, but the emotional effects will always be felt. I just wish for people to know the potential for emotional disaster in a child when the parents divorce. If you know of a child going through this kind of stress (age can range from a tot to late teenage years), seek to help him or her. Be aware that the damage may be so great that he or she needs professional help. Just look at the number of kids that are committing suicide and are hooked on drugs. Not all of this is from divorce, but you can almost be sure that children who have these problems come from a troubled family situation.

2. **Character.** Jesus taught that thoughts from the heart determine action (Matt. 15: 18-20). Consequently, one who has nourished his mind with depression and bitterness will manifest that by his action. A child's personality is developed over the years that he spends with (or without) his parents. This is why parents are to bring up their children in the training and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6: 4). They are to help the children develop the character to serve God the rest of their lives. Now you can imagine what kind of effects that divorce will have on the character of the child. Chances are that the child will become introverted (keep to himself, afraid of any social atmosphere), or very extroverted (going out of his way to get attention). Both of these extremes are dangerous traits for anyone to develop. If a person becomes introverted, it will be difficult for him to make friends. If he chooses to be a Christian, he will shy away from taking stands for truth against a majority. It will be a battle that lasts a lifetime. On the other hand, if the person is extroverted, he will turn people off by his overbearing personality. It might reach the point where he is not taken seriously. Both extremes are undesirable. Of course, these traits are developed by those who have not been put through a divorce, but I believe the potential for them to develop are greatly increased by divorce. A child wants and needs attention. He wants to know that he is needed and loved. He does not feel this when his parents are divorcing. Thus, he will do what he can to gain the attention he feels he has lost.

When a baby is born, he is in the hands of those who will help mold him for life. Parents cannot take lightly this responsibility of raising and training their children. If you are among those who think divorce is an alternative when you are not getting along with your spouse then 1) don't get married and 2) if you are married, don't have children. If you do have children, then I pray that you realize how important of a job you have. Remember, example says much more than words. And if you show your child that marriage is not important or worth working hard for, then you have greatly failed him.

THE WORLD IS IN TROUBLE!
DON'T FORGET TO PRAY!

Using the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Ken Green

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HAVE YOU NOT READ THIS SCRIPTURE?

Jesus repeatedly and continually directed people to the Scriptures. There was never a question with Him as to the authoritative nature of the word of God. He raised questions like, "What is written in the law? How readest thou?"; or, "Have you never read in the law?". He made statements like, "It is written..."; and, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures...". His constant plea was that folks read, search, examine, and believe the Scriptures.

In Mark 12: 1-10, we have the parable of the wicked vinedressers. This story is something of an allegory that parallels the history of the nation of Israel. As the Lord reached His conclusion, He asked, "Have you not read this Scripture: The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?"

The ASV is more emphatic: "Have ye not read even this Scripture?"

Jesus seemed to be perplexed and appalled at the ignorance of God's word that He confronted. If He walked the earth today, I'm sure He would still be asking: "What is written...? Have you not read even this Scripture?"

I. The Place and Purpose of Baptism. Some teach that baptism is completely non-essential. Others, that it is important, but not necessary for salvation. Our concern is: What does the word of truth say?

Sometimes we tend to deluge people with Scripture when we discuss such matters. Perhaps we would do better if we focused on one statement and asked, "Have you not read even this Scripture?" Let's take Mark 16: 16. If one will not accept this plain statement, it's doubtful that he would accept a half-dozen others that might be cited.

Jesus said that "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved." Two prerequisites are here given for salvation. The statement is grammatically parallel to: "He who enrolls and is taught shall be educated;" or "He who fights and is whipped shall be humiliated"; or "He who marries and is bossed shall be henpecked." Obviously in these examples, both conditions are necessary for the conclusion to be valid. One who enrolls in school is not educated unless he is also taught. But many quibble that the Lord does not say in the second part of the verse, "He who believes not and is not baptized shall be condemned." He only said, "He who believes not shall be condemned." Therefore, we are told, baptism is not necessary to salvation.

The Lord, however, was not speaking of salvation in the second clause. If one desires to know what is needful for salvation, this is revealed in the first clause. Jesus said what He meant and meant what He said. Had He made both unbelief and neglect of baptism conditions of condemnation, then one would not be condemned if he performed either of them. What would happen then to one who had been baptized and did not believe? He couldn't be saved and he couldn't be damned!

As I heard one preacher say, "You could be baptized till the bullfrogs call you brother, it would accomplish nothing if you don't believe!" Have you not read even this Scripture?

II. **Jesus Christ—always the same.** Those who believe in modern-day miracles often quote Heb. 13: 8. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever." Their implication is that if Jesus performed miracles on the earth in the past, He must necessarily be doing the same today. Their assumption is that the verse demands that He has not changed in any fashion.

It might do well to inquire, "Have you not read even this Scripture?": Phil. 2: 5-7. He was in the form of God, but was made in the likeness of man. Obviously then, He did make a change. Heb. 13: 8 does not necessarily imply that Jesus has never changed in any sense. **But** He has not changed in His divine character. Heb. 1: 10-12 affirms the same truth. "**Have you not read even this Scripture?**"

III. **The Perfect Revelation.** Many today speak of "lost books of the Bible," Others promote and defend "latter day revelations." According to these, the word of God has not been perfectly revealed and preserved for all generations.

We wonder if some "have not read even this Scripture": Matt. 24: 35. The Lord here promised that "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

IV. **Fun and Frolic at Church Expense.** When I was a boy and my parents obeyed the gospel I do not remember any controversy over the mission of the church. In the 40's and early 50's, brethren were pretty much in agreement that fun and frolic were not the work of the church. The denominations were denounced for their perverted view and unauthorized activities.

For several years now many churches of Christ have been employed in the entertainment and recreation business. **We wonder if some "have not read even this Scripture":** Romans 14: 17. The apostle informs us that "... the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

V. **Premillennial Theories.** The radio preachers continually speak of "the last days, the rapture, the coming kingdom, the Jews being gathered to Jerusalem, and the thousand year reign of Christ on earth.

I have often asked the question, "**Have you not read even this Scripture?**" 2 Peter 3: 8-13: According to this passage, the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. When this day comes, it will not be

followed by a seven year tribulation, or a millennial reign, but of the passing away of this world by fire. **VI. Apostasy Impossible?** Can a saved person lose his salvation? Many say "No!" Evidence to the contrary is found on practically every page of our New Testaments. But let us ask, "**Have you not read even this Scripture?**": 2 Thess. 2: 1.


According to this passage, "that day" (the return of Jesus) will not come except there come a falling away first. If Christians cannot fall away—this leaves one in the unenviable position of denying that the Lord will ever return.

We would be wise to follow our Lord's example and asking, "**Have you not read even this Scripture?**"

**CONTRASTING VIEWS
ON PARENTAL
RESPONSIBILITY**

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Being good parents has never been the easiest task, and that responsibility is made even more difficult by the attitudes prevalent in an unbelieving world. Our sin-saturated society has exerted a powerfully detrimental influence on family relationships as a whole. The "nuclear family" is under heavy assault from certain very vocal feminist and humanistic organizations. The increase in "single parent households" and the spiraling number of "latchkey kids" portend an even greater disintegration of many families. Our hearts should go out to those Christians who are striving to bring their children up in the fear of God. The attitudes of the world toward parenting **are** completely at odds with God's revealed truth. The aim of this article is to point out these conflicts and to encourage Christians to recognize those differences and to rely on God's instructions.

"Children are a heritage from the Lord" (Psa. 127: 3). When He has blessed a husband and wife with children, this "heritage" should be approached with the attitude of Manoah, Samson's father. When told that they were to have a child, Manoah's request of God was, "Teach us **what we** shall do for the child who will be born" (Judges 13: 8 NKJV). All parents need heaven's help in meeting their responsibilities. This is a matter of primary importance if parents are to bring their children up in the right way.

Attitudes to Avoid

The world would **shift responsibility for child-rearing to someone other** than the parents — babysitters, the schools, government agencies, neighbors, television, or others. Why? The causes are numerous. First, being parents is both physically and emotionally demanding, even exhausting at times. Some just do not

want to be taxed that much. Too, it interferes with so many outside activities. Some are galled at being deprived of their pleasures. It may be, in some cases, that the parents want so many things that both have to work even to "make ends meet." Children have to be turned over to others.

Christians, however, know that God has required them, especially fathers, to bring their children up in the training and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6: 4 NKJV). No one else can do for the children what dedicated, God-fearing parents are told to do.

The world's attitude is to **provide little or no supervision, to allow unrestricted freedom** of action, and to **reject the idea of corrective discipline** (corporal punishment). The potential disaster of this attitude is seen in the wise man's words: "A child left to himself brings shame to his mother" (Prov. 19: 15). The Scriptures tell us that Eli's sons "Made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them" (1 Sam. 3: 13). The sad results can be seen by reading the whole story in that context. The Bible still says, "He who spares his rod hates his son; but he who loves him disciplines him promptly" (Prov. 13: 24). Read similar words in Proverbs 22: 15; 23: 13; and Hebrews 12: 7-11.

The world's attitude seems to be that **loving children** means giving them whatever they **want** every toy in the store, all the latest designer fashions, a car at sixteen, plenty of spending money, no curfew rules, etc. And this is called "love"? One of the great Satanic deceptions is that the more things one has, the happier he will be. Our Lord would remind such people, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12: 15). Love cannot be bought; children cannot be bribed by this sort of pretense. Our children need **genuine** love. They need some of our time; they need companionship, affection and nurturing. Such gifts to our children are not tied to money and things, but to hearts. Some youngsters will grow up not knowing how to love a marriage partner, their children or anyone else, simply because they never witnessed it in their parents. The relationship their parents had with them did not cause them to feel loved, nor did they learn the feeling of security that such love brings.

The world's attitude is that **religious, spiritual instruction is not important**. The kids can make their own decisions when they are old enough to do so," they foolishly say. The very thing that will instill a sense of true values, God's word, they slight. The emphasis in many homes today is on material things — sports, recreation, physical fitness, education, making money, and pointing children toward training themselves for the most lucrative professions.

The most basic possession anyone can have is "unfeigned faith" such as Timothy had (2 Tim. 1: 5). Parents should desire this for their children above all else. That kind of faith comes from being trained in the sacred writings. Paul wrote to Timothy, "From childhood you have known the holy scriptures..." (2 Tim. 3: 15). Do you wonder why Timothy had this deep, genuine faith? Paul stated that such faith "dwelt first in your grandmother

Lois and your mother Eunice" (2 Tim. 1: 5). What better can parents do today than to imitate this grandmother and mother? It is good to be concerned about the schoolwork of children. It is even more important, however, to be sure they are being taught what will lead them to salvation. When children grow to maturity with no interest in God's word, attending worship and living righteously, it just may be because the word of God did not mean much to their parents, was never read and discussed in those formative years. Parents, work on your own "unfeigned faith," and make every effort to create it in the hearts of your offspring.

The attitude of worldly parents is to have **no care about the influence their own lifestyle is having on their impressionable children**. Many youngsters simply duplicate what they have seen in their parents. When the home is characterized by drinking, drugs, profanity, marital infidelity, unscriptural divorce and remarriage, those practices may very well show up also in the children. When Jesus speaks of the power of influence in His reference to the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5: 14-16), surely parents need to learn that lesson. Training children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord involves setting good examples as well as giving verbal instruction. The home is the chief arena where spirituality and morality are viewed by our children. Be sure they **see** the right things as well as **hear** them.

It is easy to be swayed by the world's standards, but parents who love the Lord and want what is best for their children will resist the temptation to surrender their God-given responsibilities. Helping your precious children reach heaven will have been worth every inconvenience and sacrifice. May God bless those loving, caring, concerned fathers and mothers whose hearts are set on their task. Such parents are not perfect, and are sometimes frightened by their fearful responsibility, but they are striving earnestly to do their best. May they live to see the day when those children will "rise up and call her (them-BK) blessed" (Prov. 31: 28).

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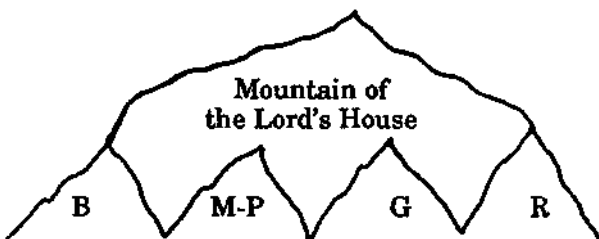
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WHAT HAPPENED IN ACTS 2?

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Most members of the church easily recognize the first chapter of Acts as a bridge between the gospels and Acts of Apostles; the real story of this book beginning in chapter two. While the second chapter of Acts is a familiar one to most, it would seem that a very few know what really happened in that chapter. In teaching classes in various places, I have often ask, "What really happened in Acts 2?" Several replies which have been received are: Establishment of the church, The Apostles being baptized with the Holy Spirit, Salvation being offered for the first time in the name of Christ, and preaching of the first gospel sermon in effect. Surely all these things, and more, did occur; but, does that really answer our question?

Acts 2 can easily be seen as a fulfillment of prophecy, but what prophecy? Yes, Peter did say that Joel 2: 28-32 was being fulfilled. Is that all? Let us now read Isa. 2: 2-3, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Let us illustrate what Isaiah said by placing four mountains before us and another mountain on top—the Lord's house was to be established in the top of the mountains.



The reader is now asked to stop and read Dan. 2: 31-35, and notice the mountain that was to fill the whole earth. Daniel offers an explanation and identifies four kingdoms: Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Greek, and Roman. From this we can identify our four mountains (B, M-P, G, R). The word "kingdom" basically means "sovereignty, royal power, dominion, or rule." It would be of some assistance to remember this, first of all, when the word "kingdom" is mentioned. So, Isaiah 2 was referring to the simple fact that the rule of the Lord was to be set up—over all! We could simply write the word "rule" over each of these kingdoms, and see the position that the rule of the Lord was to have; it was to be over all. That is, it would demand a higher allegiance than all earthly

powers (Ac. 5: 29). This "rule" was not to just control the actions of men, but, "The kingdom of God is within you," (Lk. 17: 21)—a rule from within the hearts of men. Acts 2 identifies the beginning of the reign of Jesus Christ, as the "King of kings" and "Lord of lords." This was the beginning of a system that was to bridge the gulf between man and God (Jno. 14: 6). Here, in Acts 2, Peter speaks of Christ being, "By the right hand of God exalted" as both Lord and Christ (Ac. 2: 33). But, let us be sure that we grasp this.

We wish to get a view of three pictures at this point. The reader should consider these verses carefully. In Ac. 1: 9-11, we have an account of the Ascension of Christ, His leaving the earth to return to heaven—from whence He came. His entrance into heaven is prophetically set forth in Psa. 24: 7-10. Now, let us get the third picture, that of the crown being placed upon His head, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed," (Dan. 7: 13-14). We may recall that the angel Gabriel said to Mary in Lk. 1: 33, "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." No wonder, then, that Peter said in Ac. 2: 36, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ." The thousands listening to Apostolic preaching on the Day of Pentecost had a decision to make; "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey," (Rom. 6: 16). Three thousand got the point; and they yielded in obedience to King Jesus. What had Isaiah said? "He shall teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Dear reader, do you see that what really happened in Acts 2 was that the **RULE OF THE LORD WAS SET UP**; and that all the other things were merely fruits or results of this one great fact? Without the **RULE OF THE LORD** there would have been no church, no coming of the Holy Spirit, no preaching of the gospel, and no salvation. The Lord, of course, does that ruling today through His word (Lk. 10: 16; Psa. 119: 89; Heb. 1: 1-2).

Now, let us go back to Acts 2 and get the whole picture. Just maybe those three thousand saw something which we have missed. We must remember how the Jews had treated Jesus, all the efforts to ensnare Him, the premature efforts to destroy Him, and finally their crucifixion of Him. Truly it could be said, "He came unto his own, but his own received him not," (Jno. 1: 11). These Jews are now face to face with a fact which they never expected. The very one whom they had crucified now had all authority, He was King at God's right hand, and to Him they were going to have to give an account! No wonder they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Ac. 2: 37). They were murderers, destined to hell, and their only way of escape was to turn to this One now reigning, the one whom they had crucified. They got

their answer in verse 38; and, in verse 41 three thousand of them complied. What were they doing? They were submitting to the rule of King Jesus; they were recognizing Him as Lord and King in their lives. Certainly these became the "church;" but "church" refers to people, and not something into which people may get! In spite of their past, they were now an acceptable part of His church; and they would continue to be such as long as they lived in submission to the King.

Apostacy And Restoration

Many have the wrong idea about these two words; they simply miss the point—almost completely! Apostacy does not destroy the rule of the Lord, even though men may rebel against this rule. Nothing has happened to that rule, it is still there and people can still submit to it, and thus become an acceptable part (be added) to His church. Watch the expression, "Stick with the church!" No! no! no! Stick with the Lord, with the truth. If you will do this, you will be an acceptable **part** of His church. When you fall away (apostacy), it is not, "from the church;" but, it is **FROM THE LORD, FROM THE TRUTH, FROM HIS RULE!** And that is what you must return to. It is not, "return to the church;" but, it is a return to, or being restored to the **RULE** of heaven, the **LORD'S RULE**. This is true whether we are talking about apostacy of an individual or a church Collectively). Sometimes people will say, "O, I never left the Lord, just the church." When one quits doing what the Lord said do with reference to the church, **THAT ONE HAS LEFT THE RULE OF THE LORD**—let us not try to play games with the Lord.

The Invitation

When we invite people to become members of the church, what are we doing? We are inviting them to submit to the rule of heaven, to come in obedience to King Jesus, to submit to His authority. If one leaves, he has left the Lord and needs to return to Him. Ignore the gospel and you will not be an acceptable part of His church. We have no more of an alternative today than did they on Pentecost. If men would really recognize the position of Jesus as it began in Acts 2, I am convinced that the scene of that occasion would be more often repeated. And our allegiance would be recognized for what it should be—total and complete submission to the King of heaven—the Lord Jesus Christ. He awaits your submission!

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THE LOVE OF GOD—ROMANS 8—NO. 3 THE HOLY SPIRIT AND ASSURANCE—VS. 15, 16

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

Our last article in this series closed on the note of assurance (v. 14). In the foregoing verses we find that theme extended, amplified, and strengthened.

Unfortunately there are many in the religious world today who suffer untold misery because they are in doubt about their salvation. They are sincere and want to go to heaven, but for some reason that on which they rely for assurance is not real—it is not certain—it does not satisfy.

I cannot document the reference just now, but some time ago I read from a book which discussed briefly this problem from the viewpoint of the denominational world. Instructions were given to preachers on how to comfort their members who came to them suffering doubt about their salvation. The instructions went something like this: "Tell them not to worry; that this feeling comes to everybody; that it will go away soon; just pray to God, then forget about it." After preaching along this line at one place, a sister in Christ told me after services that before she learned the truth, she had an experience just like that after thinking she had been converted at the "mourners bench;" that I had accurately described what her preacher said as he tried to comfort her.

The strange thing to me about all of this is, these are the preachers and people who rely on what they say is supernatural evidence of pardon. They sometimes pat themselves on their left bosom saying, "I know that I am saved because of what I feel right here." Yet, here is evidence that such is not reliable—it does not last—it does not satisfy!

The New Testament Writers

The writers of the New Testament spake, wrote, and lived "in full assurance of faith" and exhorted us to do the same (Heb. 10: 22). At no time do we find them expressing a single instance of doubt. Note the following: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5: 1). Paul says "we know." Again, "we are always confident" (v. 6),

and again in verse eight: "we are confident, I say..." Hear Paul in another place: "... for I know who I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim. 1: 12). John, the beloved, said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3: 2).

God does not want us to go through life with a feeling of uncertainty and suffering the misery of doubt. He has provided us with assurance. Our text tells how we may have such—even that which characterized the New Testament writers.

The Blessedness of Our Assurance

Verse fifteen emphasizes the blessedness of our assurance. The contrast is between the spirit of a slave in bondage to a cruel tyrant and an adopted child crying unto a tender, compassionate father. The expression "Abba, Father" might appear redundant at first glance since the word "Abba" means "father." However, when the word is understood in the light of its Aramaic meaning we see why it was not translated, and all appearance of redundancy vanishes. Authorities point out the "Abba" in the Aramaic always denotes filial affection and parental tenderness. What a beautiful relationship! Some authorities say the word "Abba" came to be used as a personal name for such a father. Our English word "father" of itself only denotes progenitorship. The context must determine the kind of father. Understanding this difference adds deeper and richer meaning to our Lord's prayer in Gethsemane: "... Abba, Father,... take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mk. 14: 36; Cf. Gal. 4: 6).

Even the word "adoption," when understood in the light of Roman law and as understood by the recipients of this letter, adds to the blessedness of our assurance. According to Roman law an adopted child had to be treated, in all respects, including the matter of inheritance, as a natural child. No favoritism could be shown—ever. Imagine what this meant to Gentile Christians. What a lesson to be learned by Jewish Christians!

Evidence of Pardon

Verse sixteen identifies the basis of our assurance. It involves the testimony of two witnesses, namely, the Holy Spirit and our spirit: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

Let us look first at the Holy Spirit and His testimony. How does He bear witness? The answer is simple: **Through His word!** This ought not to appear strange, because we find a precedent in the Old Testament: "Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands" (Neh. 9: 30). When one hears the words of a man guided by the Holy Spirit, he is hearing the words of the Holy Spirit. This word is that revealed unto the "holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3: 5), and which is the gospel (1 Pet. 1: 25)—God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1: 16). Paul called this

word "the sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6: 17). This sword is so powerful that nothing—absolutely nothing can perform a more thorough operation on the heart of men: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4: 12). It is interesting to observe in further confirmation of how the Holy Spirit bears His testimony that the inspired apostle John closed every one of his letters to the seven churches of Asia saying, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2 and 3).

This testimony of the Holy Spirit, however, of itself does not suffice for proof of our salvation. Our spirit must testify, or bear witness **WITH** the Holy Spirit. Notice, our text does not say "the Holy Spirit bears witness **TO** our spirit that we are the children of God." Rather, it says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness **WITH** our spirit, that we are the children of God." True, the Holy Spirit bears witness **TO** our spirit, as we have shown, but we have no proof of our salvation until we have believed and obeyed what the Spirit says. Then, our spirit can bear witness **WITH** the Holy Spirit—the two harmonize **WITH** each other. For example: The Holy Spirit says to the alien "believe" (Acts 16:31), "repent" (Acts 17: 30), "confess" (Rom. 10: 9), and "be baptized for the remission of sins" (Acts 2: 38). My spirit says that I have "believed," "repented," "confessed," and been "baptized for the remission of sins." Thus, the testimony of the Holy Spirit and my spirit harmonize. The Holy Spirit bears witness **WITH** my spirit that I am a child of God! Here is assurance—evidence of pardon—as strong and as sure as the word of God. If one doubts after understanding this, he needs another lesson on a different subject, namely, **Faith In God.**

This same assurance has been provided for the child of God. Day by day he walks "in full assurance of faith" as he conforms his life to the revelation of the Spirit. This does not mean that perfection is demanded of him. While some commands directed to the Christian are **absolute**, most of those involving his faithfulness to the Lord are **relative**. Limited space precludes a careful study of this point of distinction just here. However, suffice it to say that absolute commands are those in which one does not grow or become proficient with the passing of time and practice. He either obeys it or he does not, and that is it. Relative commands are those in which we do grow and become more proficient with time and practice. In the latter we are judged on the basis of our time, opportunity, and ability (Matt. 25: 14-30; 2 Pet. 1: 5-8). Of course, if he sins, God has provided for forgiveness through genuine repentance, confession, and prayer (1 John 2: 1; Acts 8: 22; 1 John 1: 9). This puts salvation within reach of every man and enables him to have assurance all along the way from earth to heaven.

Let us continue to be thankful for the love of God which has provided us with blessed assurance so that we can say with Peter, "Whom having not seen, ye (we) love; in whom, though now ye (we) see him not, yet believing, ye (we) rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pet 1: 8).

Things Most Certainly Believed

Julian R. Snell

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THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOB THE CRY FOR A DAYSMAN

Our title continues to presume upon the understanding that Job was not a man living in the gospel age, he was an Old Testament patriarch who lived hundreds of years before Christ. However, since the Bible is the unfolding of God's eternal purpose in human redemption, we must recognize that every book of that sacred volume is in complement to this purpose. Within the Old Testament there are types and shadows which look to the New Testament for the anti-type and the substance. Sometimes these reference are glaring, sometimes they are subtle, but in either case there is the ultimate pointing to Jesus Christ, the savior of the world. Within the book of Job we are treated, for the most part, to the subtle inquisitiveness, pleading and longing, the questioning that finds answer only in Christ. While we are attentive to Job's questions we are more intent on the answers from Jesus.

We have been initially impressed with the man, Job, and his character, perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil. Interesting is the eloquent address of the philosophers, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, as is the impassioned responses. Couched in the fact that in Job we see a man stripped to the nakedness of his own individuality, we listen to his friends and hear his replies from the depth of his nature. The first of these is "There is no daysman" (Job 9: 33). This statement occurs in the first series of controversies as Job replies to Bildad. Bildad has argued that God is just (8: 3). Job answers by agreeing, I know it is so (9: 2). He then raises a question "How should a man be just with God?" This is a legal question, somewhat argumentative. In meaning it seems to say, "How can man argue his case before God, so as to justify himself?"

The friends of Job have sought to establish Job's suffering as punitive, on account of sin. Based on this, Job cries for a daysman since he could not argue his case before God in such a way as to disprove their position. Seeing that impossibility, his cry comes from the depth of his being. Our line of study is to consider this cry and show the final answer as revealed in Christ. We are made aware in the progression of the book that Job's cry for a "daysman" is born of double consciousness. An awareness of the greatness and majesty of God and of his own comparative littleness. Here is the cry of a man who knew God and his

matchless power and might (cf. 9: 5-10), but in the recognition of his own smallness felt he could not reach God. His cry, in effect, is, "Oh, if I only could. In his need for God, Job also realized his need for a "daysman," an umpire, arbiter, a go-between, one that could lay hands on both parties. Indeed, here is expressed an abiding need with all men.

Man's nature demands God for full realization of self. Life in its fullest sense requires conscious dealing with God. While it is true, God deals with every man, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17: 28), the mere contact with God is not enough. Life is complete only when dealing with God is direct and conscious, when God touches on the very purpose of life, to not only give the breath of life but to dominate and control every breath. Herein we glorify the Father and in this is given true purpose for life.

Search as we might there is no answer to the cry for a daysman to be found within the book of Job. We must turn to the New Testament for the answer. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. 2: 5-6). There is indeed a daysman, a mediator. The two words have essentially the same meaning. There is one of authority who can lay hand on both God and man. An authority based upon the reality of his humanity plus the fact of his deity. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2: 6-7). A mediator "who gave himself a ransom," did something making way of approach to God possible.

What separates between man and God? Isaiah says, "iniquities" or "sin" (Isa. 59: 1-2). Here is man's failure to reach God. Sinless man needs no mediator, will not cry out for a daysman. Ideal man walked and talked with God in the Edenic relationship, but, sin severed that relationship. The fact of sin separates every responsible being from God as it dims the true sense of God and the sense of man's spiritual nature. A sense which can never be accentuated through human mentality alone. Zophar argues that man cannot know these things because they are beyond his finding out (Job 11: 7-8). Indeed, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10: 23).

Thankfully, the possibility of fellowship with God severed by sin, can be restored. We have a mediator, ransom has been paid. When sinful man yields to the Christ, through the full and complete obedience of faith, sin's barrier is removed. It is by Him we have access to eternal hope. "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5: 2).

And so it is that Job's questioning cry for a "daysman" carries across the ages to Jesus Christ for answer. A cry born out of a sense of lack of contact with God and ultimately identifying with the breach caused by sin. It is thus that the recognition of that hopeless state is produced. God spans the breach, separation does not have to exist, we have our "daysman," our mediator, our access to the grace and mercy of God. For all men contact with God is possible, forgiveness is real, fellowship with the Father is a continuing thing for all who will accept it. "But if we

walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn. 1: 7).

**SIMPLICITY
IN
CHRIST**

P. J. Casebolt

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PARADOXICAL THERAPY—A BELLYFUL

Recently (Nov. 22, 1987), an interesting and informative article appeared in **Parade Magazine** concerning the subject of "paradoxical therapy."

The principle behind this method of therapy is described as "inverse logic" and "fighting fire with fire." But, we are cautioned "that it is not suitable in every case." The technique works best "if all other efforts to solve a problem have failed."

In layman's language, paradoxical therapy often works when people get a bellyful of the problem.

To me, one of the most interesting statements in the article was that "Paradoxical therapy was first suggested more than half a century ago..." With maybe a slight variation, I think this principle of treating or even curing problems has been around longer than "half a century."

The law of gravity was around a long time before men like Newton and Galileo "discovered" some things about it (Job. 26: 7). The earth was round before the expeditions of Columbus and Magellan proved that fact to the world (Isa. 40: 22).

And, God was using the principle of paradoxical therapy thousands of years before modern-day psychiatrists "discovered" it. Thousands of people were treated and "cured" of their problem simply by giving them a bellyful of that which ailed them.

When Israel said, "Give us flesh, that we may eat," God said that they would have it "until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you" (Num. 11: 13-20). By our standard of measurement, the "flesh" Israel wanted piled up about three feet deep for a day's journey in all directions (v. 31).

When God's people took the liberty which belonged to others and kept it for themselves, God gave them more "liberty" than they wanted—"to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine" (Jer. 34: 17).

Because Israel insisted on serving strange gods in the land which God had given them, God "allowed" them to serve strange gods in a strange land, in captivity to those heathen nations whose gods Israel wanted to serve (Jer. 5: 19).

God told his people, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not. But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee..." (Isa. 30: 15-17). The people ran until they were tired of running.

Because Israel feared the sword, and would not trust in God to protect them, God brought the very sword which they feared upon them (Jer. 42: 14, 22; Ezek. 11: 8).

Because mount Seir had "shed the blood of the children of Israel," God said, "blood shall pursue thee" (Ezek. 35: 5, 6). The same "therapy" was administered to the enemies of God's people in a vision which John saw on Patmos (Rev. 16: 6).

As the author of the **Parade** article indicates, this method of treatment may not be suitable in every case, but it works best when drastic measures need to be taken, and all else has failed.

Some of God's people today seem to be going through a stage of this thing called paradoxical therapy. They helped to instigate the flood of institutionalism, sponsoring churches, recreation and entertainment and other brands of the social gospel. Now, at least a few of them seem to be getting a bellyful of their "quail."

But, there are some people who do not need therapy. They just "fear God and keep his commandments," and generally go about the day to day business of being normal, spiritually healthy people of God.

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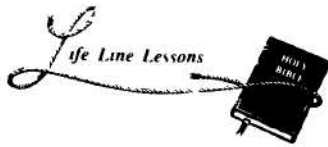
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ROBERT H. FARISH AT REST

Robert H. Farish died at about 7: 30 PM Wednesday, December 12, 1990. He was lucid and independent until the end: he and Mother drove to Scott and White Hospital in Temple, singing along with one of R. J.'s quartet tapes, and he walked into the emergency room at about 5: 30 PM Wednesday. He had an aneurysm of the aorta, which gave way and defied repair, and he died in surgery.

Funeral services were conducted at the Leon Valley church building in Temple on Saturday morning. Tim Coffey and Elmer Moore preached. Jimmy Roberts led congregational singing. Prayers were led by Robert Welch, Tom Roberts and Jim Ward.

Dad was 78 years old. He and Mother were married 55 years and had four sons, five grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren. He preached the gospel 60 years, doing local work in Mississippi, Indiana, Alabama, Texas, Georgia, Kentucky and California. He held gospel meetings in probably half of these United States, and wrote articles and tracts which have received wide distribution. He did his last "fulltime" work in Refugio, Texas and had been living in Belton nearly two years. —Patrick Farish

(Editor's note: We have lost another great soldier of Christ. This writer personally profited much from the writings of brother Farish, especially in the 1950's and 60's. Sometimes it seems that we are losing more preachers than we are gaining. It is especially difficult to bid farewell to those who fought for truth in crucial times and whose courage and faithfulness emboldened many to stand and be counted. We shall miss him. Our sighing for Heaven grows heavier day by day. CWA)

DENVER NIEMEIER, 10356 N. State Rd. 267, Brownsburg, IN 46112—On Feb. 13, I left the Traders Point church in Indianapolis, Indiana after an association of almost 23 years. Five years were spent as the preacher and since Feb. 18, 1971 as an elder. There are four good, capable men remaining to serve as elders. The work is strong, sound and my leaving is peaceable.

February 17, I began working with the church in Jamestown, IN, located 20 miles west of Indianapolis just off I-74. This is my second time to preach here, having worked here from 1961 through 1966. I

look forward to being in the harness again. I will be able to conduct four meetings each year and have two openings for this year. The church at Jamestown will continue enabling me to hold meetings where churches are unable to support their own meetings. **HAL SNYDER**, P. O. Drawer I, Newport, NC 28570—We are now publishing THE VISITING PREACHER which is designed to acquaint readers with the New Testament church and the faith and practice of Christians. This bimonthly bulletin is sent FREE to any and all who may benefit from it.

DEBATE

THOMAS N. THRASHER, P. O. Box 1941, Decatur, AL 35602—A public debate on "congregational benevolence" is scheduled for June 3-4, 6-7, 1991 (7 PM each night). Sessions on Monday and Tuesday nights will be held in the building of the church of Christ on Sparkman Drive in Huntsville, AL. The proposition will be: "The Bible teaches that a church of the Lord's people may make a contribution from its treasury to a home for orphans." Roger Jackson affirms and Thomas N. Thrasher denies.

On Thursday and Friday nights the discussion will be conducted in the building of the Union church of Christ near Somerville, AL. The proposition will be: The Bible teaches that, in benevolence, a church of the Lord's people is restricted to the relief of needy saints only." Thomas N. Thrasher affirms and Roger Jackson denies.

For additional information contact me at the above address or call (205) 353-3085.

CHUCK SCOTT, 2637 Walnut Bottom Rd., Carlisle, PA 17013 — Rejoice with us in the recent baptism of two more here at Walnut Bottom. Over the past year 6 were baptized and 3 restored. Lloyd Barker will be here for a meeting in March.

TOMMY L. MCCLURE, Route 2, Box 179, Marvell, AR 72366—After forty-three years of local work, Janette and I now live in the country near Marvel, AR, about 90 miles down the Mississippi River from Memphis, TN and about 30 miles west of Helena, AR. I plan to hold meetings, preach on week-end appointments, lead singing for meet-

ings where there is no adequate song leader, and do much long-awaited writing. I am interested in hearing from congregations within reasonable driving distance for week-end appointments, places wherever located for meetings or song leading. No congregation has to have a huge bank account for me to be of service—expenses, or a little over, if affordable, will be fine. Contact me at the above address or call (501) 829-3759.

WAYNE S. WALKER, 310 Hayes St., Dayton, OH 45410—The Haynes St. church has four gospel meetings planned for 1991: March 17-22 with Grover Stevens of Lubbock, TX; June 17-21 with Dan Clarkson of Brookville, OH speaking to teenagers and adults in vacation Bible study on "living For Jesus"; Sept. 22-27 with Wayne Chappell of New Castle, IN; and Dec. 6-8 with Gary Eubanks of Acworth, GA dealing with the false doctrine of Charles Holt and the Examiner. Our building is fairly close to both I-75 and U. S. Hwy. 35 not far from downtown Dayton.

FROM AFAR

BARCELONA, SPAIN—EFRAIN PEREZ reports that the work at Badalona congregation goes well. He has had a helper recently in Gregory Roark who arrived there to study and who hopes to be able to work later in Spain as a teacher. He attended a Spanish speaking congregation in New York City. Two more were baptized in December. Average attendance for the month was 48. Efrain also made a trip to the Canary Islands to follow up on some contacts there for teaching the gospel.

SOUTH AFRICA—Paul Williams reports from Eshowe that three more have been baptized there. One of these was from a correspondence course and one was an ancestor worshipper. The Eshowe church has started supporting a native man to preach. He is David Ngonyama. The church has few wage-earners but they are giving well.

PREACHERS NEEDED

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE—The Hillview congregation is looking for a part-time or full-time preacher who is mature and sound in the faith. This congregation is self-supporting. If interested, contact Clyde Dean (615) 356-2482, Jimmy Jordan (615) 646-5564 or Donnie Brown (615) 952-2701; or write to: Hillview Church of Christ, 7471 Charlotte Pike, Nashville, TN 37209.

PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI—The Chico Road church is seeking a full-time preacher. We are a small congregation which has lost several members over the last few years and that has weakened our ability to support, therefore outside support will be needed. If interested, please contact: Clyde Johnson (601) 769-9640, Dr. Leo Hastings (601) 872-3473, or Charles Hagan, Sr., 1217 22nd St., Pascagoula, MS 39581, (601) 762-9557.

TORONTO, OHIO—Small congregation in southeast Ohio near Pittsburg is looking for a full-time preacher to work with them. Salary plus house and utilities furnished. Some outside support may be needed. Those interested should contact Larry Sapp (614) 537-9351, or write to the Dennis Way Church of Christ, Toronto, Ohio 43964.

GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN—The Hillcrest congregation meeting at 1621 Hillcrest Dr., Green Bay, WI 54313, needs a preacher to work with us beginning about May. Average attendance is about 30 and we can provide partial support. The city of Green Bay has a couple of colleges, a prison and a metropolitan population of over 100, 000. Those interested should contact Wilmer Kersten (715) 758-8615, or Nolan Glover (414) 497-0769, or write the above address.

EDITORIAL LEFT-OVERS

THIS MUST BE SOMETHING ELSE

I don't usually get too excited about the book reviews in some of the periodicals. They do serve a needed place and, of course, the reviewer appraises books as he sees them. In the January, 1991 issue of GOSPEL HERALD, published in Beamsville, Ontario, Canada, Keith Thompson reviews a book entitled A JEWISH SAVIOR THROUGH GENTILE EYES, Studies in the Gospel of Luke by Rubel Shelly. You may recall that in a recent "Left-Overs" column we quoted from speeches Rubel Shelly made in West Memphis, AR in which he belittled "pattern theology" and attempting to make the church of the

present like the church of the first century. Thompson's review has this closing paragraph about Shelly's book:

"Shelly writes in a very engaging style. He uses illustrations from such diverse sources as a Soviet poet, Olympic games and Charlie Brown! He quotes Psychology Today and the Guinness Book of World Records. He cites authors like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Francis Schaeffer, A. W. Tozer, Leon Morris and C. S. Lewis. An excellent source book for personal reading or class use. Also it would make an ideal gift for someone who needs to know what the gospel is all about."

Shelly has become a liberal's liberal. He is under heavy attack from some of his former colleagues in this country. If such material fills the minds of Canadian brethren (and remember, it is recommended for "class use") then this will contribute to a further weakening of conviction among them.

WAR IN THE GULF AND GOSPEL WORK

Just as doors of opportunity were opening in many places, especially in eastern Europe, the war in the Persian Gulf has shifted our attention to the hostilities there. The travel plans of many may be altered. Americans living and working in the Middle East as well as other places will have to take extra precautions because of the threat of terrorists. Christians everywhere are praying that this conflict will soon be over. It would be added tragedy should congregations, now supporting faithful men to preach around the world, lessen their interest or withhold their support. War points up the universal need for the gospel to be preached and to change the thinking and behavior of those who yield to it.

ARMAGEDDON—ARMAGEDDON

The presses are rolling and publishing books to convince the world that the events in the Middle East are the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. "Specialists" on prophesy have had to back down time and again on their predictions. But they don't quit. Now the script is being rewritten to work Saddam Hussein into the picture. The comment of Adam Clarke on Revelation 16: 16 is interesting. He says "But what is the battle of Armageddon? How ridiculous have been the conjectures of men relative to this point! Within the last twenty years (Clarke wrote this over 150 years ago—CWA) this battle has been fought at various places, according to our purlblind seers and self-inspired prophets! At one time it was Auaterlitz, at another Moscow, at another Leipsic, and now Waterloo! and thus they have gone on, and will go on, confounding and being confounded."

The world has been told with absolute certainty that Kaiser Wilhelm was the "Anti-Christ." Then it was Adolf Hitler, then Mussolini, and even Henry Kissinger. The speculators have tried to turn the European Common Market nations into the ten horns of Daniel's prophesy. Every crisis in the Middle East has become the excuse for re-figuring the prophets and the signs of Matthew 24. Consider the following:

"Not in the lifetime of most men has there been so much grave and deep apprehension; never has the future seemed so incalculable as at the present time. The domestic economic situation is in chaos. Our dollar is weak throughout the world. Prices are so high as to be utterly impossible. The political cauldron seethes and bubbles with uncertainty. Russia hangs, as usual, like a cloud, dark and silent, upon the horizon. It is a solemn moment. Of our troubles, no man can see the end."

Now, if you think this came from a recent newspaper editorial, think again. It came from Harper's Weekly, October, 1857! (quoted from The Kingdom of God and the Planet Earth by Jim McGuigan). All of which reminds us that God is still the governor among the nations and still rules in the affairs of men.

One more observation. When this conflict with Iraq is over, I hope our leaders will have the good sense not to try to continually police that region of the world. Arabs and Jews have been in conflict since the days of Isaac and Jacob.

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RESTORATIONS	55

(Taken from bulletins and papers received by the editor)