



# Gospel Gleaner

Volume 10

Number 1

## HOMOSEXUALITY

Gary Colley

Homosexuality, which is a selected, chosen, sinful practice ("life-style"), simply means "eroticism for one of the same sex" (Webster). This abominable practice is gaining in popularity and has done so since the so-called "sexual revolution." Though we love and sympathize with families who are involved, we still cannot in any way condone this transgression of God's will. Pretending it is alright does not make it correct. To uphold it is not to anyone's glory, but to one's shame! Now it is claimed that those who are practicing the sin "just cannot help it" and "perhaps" were just born to be a participant of this "sickness" and should have "equal rights" with upright, moral, and law-abiding citizens. May it be plainly stated that:

(1) The Bible clearly condemns homosexu-

ality as sin (Genesis 13:13; 18:20; 19:4-5; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:21-24, 26-29, 32).

(2) The Bible never condemns sickness, but shows compassion toward the sick (Matthew 25:34-36); therefore, homosexuality, which is condemned in the Bible, cannot be classified as "sickness."

(3) Those who have allowed themselves to be overcome, to practice such sin, have clearly not sought the promised "way of escape" from sin (1 Corinthians 10:12-13); and, without repentance, God says He will give them up "to uncleanness, through the lust of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves" (Romans 1:24). †

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# CRITICISM

Bill Dillon

Whoever said, "nothing is sure but death and taxes" could have added "and criticism." No man is beyond criticism because none are perfect. However, much criticism against brethren falls into the unjust category. This is the category where splinters are larger than beams and gnats are bigger than camels. Before attempting to remove a splinter from another's eye, one needs first to remove the beam from his own eye (Matthew 7:3-5). I



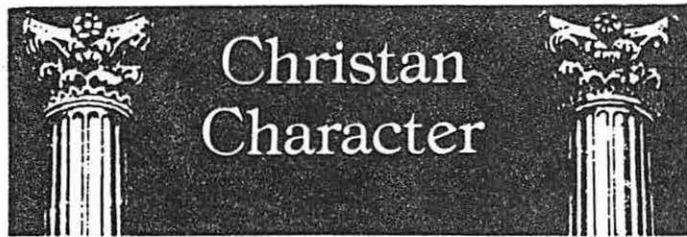
have yet to see an eldership, a preacher, a teacher or any brother who could not be criticized in some way by some brother. Yet, perhaps only a fractional part of the criticism given would have anything at all to do with an individual's relationship to God. Even if the criticism were just, we should go to them about the matter. If fairness and honesty prevail, an even stronger relationship between brethren can result.

Unfair criticism may have its origin in one or more sources; immaturity, weak faith, deceitfulness, malice, jealousy, revenge, etc. If such motives exist, then the critic, always talking of others in a negative manner, is sinning. They are not only sinning against themselves and those against whom they speak; but are sinning against the body of Christ itself. Such work separates brethren and hinders the peace and progress of the church. The bitter fruit of unholy criticism has ever been ill-will, hardness of heart, self-justification and self-righteousness.

Has your criticism of others been fair? Has it been just? Was it according to the truth of God? Do you need to repent?

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## OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

Ronnie Whittemore



Men and women have been struggling against wickedness since the beginning. Satan beguiled Even into sinning against God by placing doubt in her mind concerning God's instructions in the Garden of Eden. Satan's tactic was to emphasize what God

prohibited rather than pointing out the many positives which God allowed. This worker of iniquity continues to use this same method with great success, even today. However, God has given men and women ways in which to overcome the wiles and temptations of Satan. Men and women would be wise use them.

### Be Determined

The prophet Daniel serves as a great example of courage and conviction. When taken into Babylonian captivity, Daniel was given the name of Belteshazzar, taught the language of the Chaldeans, and ordered to eat the king's meat and drink the king's wine. "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" (Daniel 1:8). Notice that Daniel "purposed in his heart." He was determined to overcome this temptation. He was convicted in heart

and possessed the courage of life to fulfill that conviction. Another Old Testament character, Joseph, also serves as a great example of dedication and loyalty. After being sold into slavery by his brethren, Joseph served Potiphar in Egypt. The Bible records that "...Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured. And it came to pass...that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me" (Genesis 39:6-7). But Joseph resisted this temptation each time ("she spake to Joseph day by day") because he had determined in his heart that such a sin was against his master and the God of heaven. In Genesis 39:9 Joseph said, "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" The first step to overcome Satan is to form a firm purpose in our hearts.

### Pray for Protection

When Jesus' disciples asked him to teach them to pray, Jesus included in that model prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:13). A quick survey of various passages in the book of Psalms teaches of man's dependence and need for God (Psalm 9:9; 46:1; 57:1; 59:16; 62:7). The Hebrew writer recorded that through God, "...we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Hebrews 6:18).

### Hide God's Word in Our Hearts

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119:11). How can one refuse sin and follow righteousness unless he knows the will of God (Ephesians 5:17)? Jesus knew the importance of the Word. Thrice He answered Satan with scripture. His first answer was, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). David testified of the necessity of God's Word. "They word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

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## OVERCOMING TEMPTATION . . .

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It would be quite difficult to sin against God if upon each temptation, we answered with scripture. If one is tempted to commit fornication, then answer with 1 Corinthians 6:18 and 2 Timothy 2:22 or 1 Thessalonians 5:22. If tempted to forsake the assembly, then answer with Hebrews 10:24-25. If tempted to steal, then answer with Romans 13:9 and Ephesians 4:28. If tempted to lie, then answer with Colossians 3:9 and Revelation 21:27. If tempted to gossip and slander, then answer with James 3:8. With God's Word in our minds and upon our lips, determination in our hearts, and God as our refuge, temptation can be overcome.

### Use the Way of Escape

One cannot overcome temptation by courting it, nor can one overcome sin by flirting with it. God has provided a way to escape every temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13). Sometimes the way is easy. Other times the way is difficult. But usually the best way is by exercising proper prevention. A person must know his own weaknesses. If one has weakness for drinking alcoholic beverages, why eat at restaurants which serve these drinks? Why attend gatherings where these drinks are available? Why choose friends who engage in such activities? If one has a weakness in controlling his passion for the opposite sex, then avoid situations of compromise. Do not

flirt with another's spouse. Young people, do not purposely be alone with your date in a car on a deserted street on a dark night! And readers, above all, do not lie to yourselves and say, "Oh, I'm strong enough to resist. That won't bother me." Be honest with yourself. Remember, Joseph fled from Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39:13).

### Resist the Devil And Draw Nigh unto God

One does not resist Satan by compromising. Moses, speaking for God, told Pharaoh, "Let my people go." But Pharaoh, seeking a compromise and a means of enticing the people back to Egypt, said, "Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds to stay" (Exodus 10:24). But Moses replied, "...there shall not an hoof be left behind..." (Exodus 10:26). The apostle Paul refused to give way to the Judaizing teachers and their doctrine (Galatians 2:5).

In like manner, we cannot resist Satan by allowing false teachers to fill the minds of the young people or older people with their compromises whether it be in "youth rallies," or "in the name of religious activities," or in the spirit of cooperation. We resist Satan by submitting to and drawing nigh to God (James 4:7-8). Someone has said well, "By drawing nigh unto God, we draw away from the devil because the devil cannot stand to be near God." Friend, flee sin! Say NO loudly and quickly! Do not give an inch to Satan! †

Have You  
Obeyed the  
Gospel?



### The Christian's Relationship With Christ

- ✞ He is *crucified* with Christ (Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:6).
- ✞ He is *buried* with Christ (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12).
- ✞ He is *raised up* in a new life with Christ (Colossians 2:12).
- ✞ He *lives* with Christ (Romans 6:8; 2 Timothy 2:11).
- ✞ He *reigns* with Christ (2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 1:5-6).
- ✞ He is a *joint heir* with Christ (Romans 8:16-17; Galatians 6:6-7).
- ✞ He *suffers* with Christ (1 Peter 4:12-13; 2 Timothy 3:12).
- ✞ He *shares in glory* with Christ (Revelation 3:21; Romans 8:17).





## THE CHRISTIANS' HOPE

Guy F. Hester



The definition of the word *hope*, according to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, is "to cherish a desire with expectation of fulfillment; to long for with expectation of obtainment; to expect with desire: TRUST."

There may be, and often are, varying degrees of expectation connected with the word *hope*. The little girl says to her playmate, "I sure hope grandma comes to see me today." The expectation of grandma's coming may be rather remote, yet there is the hope that is little more than a wish.

However, the Christians' hope is not wishful thinking. There is *full expectation*! The Hebrew writer said, "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil" (Hebrews 6:17-19). Thus, the Christians' hope is based upon the promise of God, who swore by Himself, since there was nothing or no one greater by whom He could swear (Hebrews 6:13). Since it is "impossible for God to lie" the Christians' hope is just as real as God Himself. Just as God provided cities of refuge for those in Old Testament

times to flee, who killed his neighbor unawares, and find safety therein (Numbers 35:11-15; Joshua 20:1-9) just so, God has provided refuge and safety for the penitent sinner in Christ. However, there is no hope out of Christ (1 Thessalonians 1:3; Colossians 1:27; 1 Timothy 1:1). What is the Christians' hope in Christ?

### Salvation

*There is the hope of salvation:* "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, *the hope of salvation*" (1 Thessalonians 5:8). "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:1-2). We are saved when we obey Christ (Hebrews 5:8-9).

### Anchor for the Soul

*There is the hope of an anchor for the soul:* "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil" (Hebrews 6:19). We can rest assured that though the tempest will blow and the storms of life will come (Matthew 7:24-27) that the faithful in Christ will not be swept away because he is securely anchored in Christ. Just as the ship on the storm swept sea lets down its anchor into the unknown depths where it takes hold of the unseen and holds the ship and keeps the passengers safe, so does our faith, when the storms of hardship and difficulty come, reach into the unknown and take hold of the unseen and keeps us safe and secure in Christ (Romans 8:24). It is impossible for one to be removed from the love of Christ. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these

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# WHAT "TRUTH FOR THE WORLD" IS NOT!

Rod Rutherford

For the past two years, **Truth for the World** has been available for Christians to use to preach the gospel to the whole world. Despite much progress made, and considerable publicity given to this good work, we find that many members of the church are still either completely unaware of what **Truth for the World** is, or else have an incomplete picture of this ministry. This article is penned in the hope that it will clarify misconceptions of **Truth for the World** and encourage even greater use of it to reach the lost.

**Truth for the World** is not simply a thirty-minute television program on which the gospel is firmly, kindly and plainly preached. **Truth for the World** does indeed have such a program available with Jim Dearman as speaker. It is currently broadcast weekly on twenty-two stations in eight states of our country and in three large cities in Russia. These quality, professionally done programs are available to congregations at cost to use in their local areas to spread the gospel. However, **Truth for the World** is much more extensive than a television program! **Truth for the World** is not simply a radio program as some seem to think, even though one, fifteen and thirty minute radio programs are available with Jim Dearman and other able speakers forcefully and effectively preaching the gospel message of salvation.

**Truth for the World** is heard on forty-seven stations in our country and around the world. These stations include several powerful shortwave stations which cover entire continents. The gospel is broadcast each week in English, French and Chinese to a potential listening audience of three billion people, *more than one half of the world's total population of lost souls!* **Truth for the World** is one of the most far reaching radio works done by Christians today, but it involves much more

than radio preaching.

**Truth for the World** is not just a work of teaching the gospel by the printed page, as perhaps some may have thought. However, the preparation and distribution of gospel literature is an essential part of the work. Two Bible correspondence courses are available with hundreds of students all over the world currently enrolled. Seventeen gospel tracts have been written specifically for **Truth for the World** and others are planned. Tens of thousands of these tracts have been distributed around the globe. A bimonthly teaching paper in simple English is circulated in eighty-one nations. **Truth for the World** utilizes gospel literature as a means of reaching, teaching and grounding the lost. But it is much more than a literature ministry.

**Truth for the World** is not simply a campaign work of the church even though campaigns are a vital part of the follow-up to the television, radio and literature efforts. The thousands of contacts being made by **Truth for the World** are sent to loyal brethren for further teaching wherever such can be found. If no faithful Christians are in the area of contacts, **Truth for the World** will utilize the services of more than forty faithful men who have committed to work on a two to three week campaign every other year. Although **Truth for the World** is more than a campaign approach to evangelism, campaigns are an essential part of the work.

**Truth for the World** is not a missionary society, para-church organization, or some other unscriptural method of doing the work God designed His church to do. It is a mission work of the Knight Arnold Church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee conducted with the cooperation of sound congregations and loyal

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# Rebellion Against Authority

## Numbers 16:1-11

### (Part One of Two)

Dennis Gullledge

#### Introduction



After 215 years of captivity in Egypt, the Israelites were delivered under the leadership of Moses and began the long journey to the land of promise. However, due to their unfaithfulness to Jehovah, they were made to wander in the desert for 38

years. They were a complaining and dissatisfied group of people who often murmured against God and the leadership of Moses and Aaron. Everyone over the tender age of 20 who sang the song of Moses after they emerged from their "baptism into Moses in the cloud and in the sea," perished in the trackless wastes, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb.

The real problem facing Israel was their lack of faith. The Hebrew writer states the problem thusly: "And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:18-19). If we follow the events which transpire after they depart Sinai in Numbers 10, this truth will be immediately apparent to us. First, we see the complaining begin: "And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp" (Numbers 11:1). Second, we notice the rebellion of Miriam and Aaron against Moses: "And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had

married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it" (Numbers 12:1-2). It does not appear that the matter of Moses' wife was the real reason for their uprising. Their real problem was with the authority of Moses. Third, we note the faithless report of the ten spies after their surveillance of the land of Canaan (Numbers 13:31-33). Fourth, there is the continued murmuring of the people in Numbers 14, and Joshua's timely warning in verse 9: "Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not." Finally, we learn of God's attitude toward presumptuous sin, which is soon to present itself in all its sordid glory: "But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people" (Numbers 15:30).

Our lesson opens with a full scale rebellion against the authority of Moses and the priesthood of Aaron. We cannot possibly appreciate Numbers 16 until we see the aforementioned problems growing. We ought continually to remind ourselves of the dangers of dissatisfaction and discontent. Look where it led Israel: ❶ Into a mindset of murmuring and complaining; ❷ Into a rebellion against God's delegated authority in Moses; ❸ Into a rebellion against God. A simple analysis of our test will reveal the following (Roy Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, September, 1980):

1. The Rebellion Described (verses 1-3).

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## REBELLION AGAINST AUTHORITY . . .

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2. Moses' Initial Response to This Rebellion (verses 4-7).

3. Moses Makes a Specific Charge Against the Rebels (verses 8-11).

What lessons can we learn from all this? I suggest, that in part, we learn:

### The Awfulness of Division

If these men had succeeded in their rebellion, there would have been a distinct division within the nation of Israel. Some would have followed the factionists. As it was, however, Israel was united upon the one true God. This points up one of the most important lessons that people in the Lord's church will ever learn, if indeed we ever learn it: the danger of allowing discontent, complaining and dissatisfaction to rule the day and lead into rebellion against God and factional attitudes. The late brother Ira North once said,

Somehow we have never been able to get across to the average congregation the tragedy of division. In the early years of my ministry I believed that it would take 50 years to get over a first class church fuss. In my latter years, I have changed my mind. I am not sure a congregation ever really gets over a tragic fuss and split. The animosity is passed from generation to generation, and it is like the bird with the broken wing, it never soars as high again (*Balance: A Tried And Tested Formula for Church Growth*, Nashville, Gospel Advocate Co., 1983, p. 59).

The subjects of our study were factionists. A factious person may be correct in the point he contends for. They said, "all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them" (verse 3). What they said was true but, did not establish their conclusion. God had specified the functions of both Moses and Aaron. There is a faction within churches of Christ currently, basing an argument on Galatians 3:28 that says, "All

Christians stand upon the same level." That is exactly right! Then the argument is advanced, "If so, then, why cannot a woman do anything a man can do in the work of the church?" The answer: For the same reason that every Israelite could not do what Moses and Aaron did! God made the distinction and established the order (Cf. 1 Timothy 2:12).

For a clearer picture of the awfulness of division within the church of Christ, look at the situation that existed at Corinth. The apostle Paul cautioned them, "That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another" (1 Corinthians 12:25). *Schism* means "a rent or split." A schism will not necessarily involve a group pulling off. Schisms exist in a congregation when you find uncharitable attitudes, discontent that has grown into discord, fights, feuds, word battles, backbiting and contentions. Brethren may separate into various cliques and behave uncharitably toward each other. Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10). The word *divisions* may also be rendered *schisms*. They may come together into the same place for worship and yet be uncharitable. When the Corinthians came together in their assemblies they fell into *divisions* (Greek, *schismata*). It is just as true today that a local body of Christians can come together into the same place for the same purpose of worshipping the same God in the same way at the same time and yet be schismatics. It may be that there are no obvious divisions within a congregation, but there may be splinters, or partisan attitudes.

It naturally follows that schisms will lead to factions. The apostle Paul was aware of the problems existing at Corinth when he said, "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it" (1 Corinthians 11:18). By *factions*, the Bible means a

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## REBELLION AGAINST AUTHORITY . . . (Concluded from page 8)

difference in personalities and the inability to work together. Factionousness is an attitude that militates against brotherly love, fellowship and unity by promoting and encouraging separations, or a divisive spirit.

When factions develop within a congregation, heresy naturally follows. A heresy is a party following a self-chosen opinion as a result of a faction. Note the heresies that existed at Corinth: "For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you" (1 Cor. 1:11). As a result of their following self-chosen opinions Paul said, "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Corinthians 11:19).

Then comes the inevitable apostasy, when discontent leads to a schism, forms into a faction, breaks up into heresies and creates a division. This is what would have happened if these Israelite rebels had been successful. In these thoughts on division, I am speaking of problems that are often seen in the local congregation. Goebel Music was correct, when he wrote, "Any time any one begins to rip apart, with the sawblade of dissatisfaction, the blood-bought body of Christ, he ought to find himself at the foot of the cross and feel the almost unbearable weight of the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus the Christ" (Behold the Pattern, Goebel Music Publications, Colleyville, TX, 1991, p. 564).

The precious commodity of unity in the church runs much deeper than what we often like to admit. We view unity as all of us doing the same thing--what we can see. Real unity extends beyond what is discernable to the naked eye to unity of mind and purpose--that which we do not always see, but which is the driving force behind us either to pull us apart. The Jerusalem church knew that kind of unity which transcends what we can see: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them

that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common" (Acts 4:32).

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## WHAT "TRUTH FOR THE WORLD" . . . (Continued from page 6)

brethren in many places.

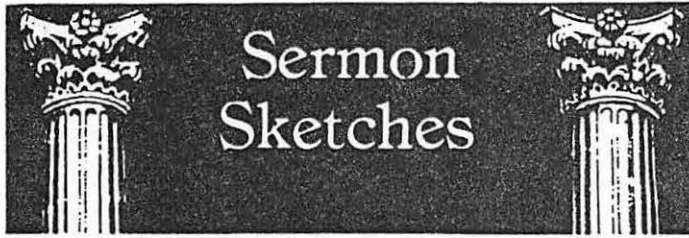
**Truth for the World** is a *total* approach to world evangelism using the modern media as the primary means of getting the gospel to the greatest number in the shortest time. If you would like to know more about this important and exciting approach to world evangelism, please call us at 601-895-9740 or write to us at *P.O. Box 751135, Memphis, Tennessee 38175-1135*.

### Facts To Know About Christ

- With God in the Creation (Gen. 1:26-27)
- Promised to the Word (Gen. 3:15)
- Born of a Virgin (Matthew 1:21-25)
- Performed Miracles (John 20:30-31)
- Died on the Cross (Romans 5:8)
- Ascended to Heaven (Acts 1:9)
- Brought the Gospel (Romans 1:16)
- Built the Church (Matthew 16:18)
- Became the Saviour (Ephesians 5:23)
- Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18)
- Is the Way to Heaven (John 14:6)
- Will Serve As Judge (Acts 17:31)

### HEATH CHURCH OF CHRIST SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday Morning Bible Class	9:00
Sunday Morning Worship	10:00
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00



## THE GRACE OF GOD

### Titus 2:11-14

M. W. Kiser

#### Introduction:



1. This is one of the clearest passages in the Scriptures on the grace of God and its results.
2. We understand grace to be "unmerited favor," and that for the eternal good of man (Romans 2:5).
3. We know that man did not deserve it; nor could he make any legal claim to it.
4. Yet, we know it is the sum and substance of the very gospel story (Isaiah 55:1; Romans 6:23; Revelation 22:17).
5. There comes from this text, three wonderful thoughts, concerning the grace of God. Namely:

#### I. Saved By Grace.

- A. Jesus brought salvation to man (Matthew 1:21; Luke 19:10; Romans 3:23).
  1. The word *grace* stands for the gospel story (Ephesians 3:2).
  2. All men are the subjects of the gospel (Mark 16:15; Romans 16:25-26).
- B. This does not speak of a "universal salvation."
  1. This message must be believed and obeyed.
  2. Rejection and unbelief brings

damnation (Mark 16:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

- C. Man has always had to act to appropriate the grace of God.
  1. Noah (Genesis 6:8; Hebrews 11:7).
  2. The Ephesians (Ephesians 2:8; Acts 19:1-6, 18).
  3. Surely, we are cleansed by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7; Revelation 1:5).
  4. But, salvation is conditional (Romans 6:16-18; Hebrews 5:8-9).

#### II. Taught By Grace.

- A. It teaches us about things we need to give up.
  1. *Ungodliness*--anything that is not to God's glory (1 Corinthians 10:31).
  2. *Worldly lust* (James 4:4).
- B. It teaches us about things we need to take up. "We should live..."
  1. *Soberly*--sensibly. This pertains to our relationship to self (Colossians 3:5-10).
  2. *Righteously*--This pertains to our relationship to our neighbors (Romans 12:17-21).
  3. *Godly*--This pertains to our relationship to God (Colossians 3:15-17; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Acts 10:34-35).
- C. It teaches us when to do this. "In this present world." Every area:
  1. *Our conversation*. Speech determines the tone of our temperament.
  2. *Our desires*. The springs of all we nearly do in life.
  3. *Our work*. The things we do out of duty and necessity.
  4. *Our recreation*. Even to the areas of pleasure and relaxation.

#### III. Encouraged by Grace.

- A. Grace causes us to look for the second coming of Jesus (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 John 3:1-3; Hebrews 9:28).

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## THE CHRISTIANS' HOPE . . .

(Continued from page 5)

things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35-39). As long as we faithfully follow the teaching of his word and "walk in the light" (1 John 1:7) we can know that our anchor will hold. It is both sure and steadfast.

We have an anchor that keeps the soul,  
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll,  
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,  
Grounded firm and deep in the Savior's love.

### Resurrection--Life after Death

*The Christian has hope in the resurrection and life after death.* "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:19-20). To the Thessalonians Christians, Paul said, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

### Eternal Life

*There is hope of eternal life in heaven.* Paul speaks of the "hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2), and that "we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7). When faith becomes sight, then hope becomes reality (1 Corinthians 13:13). "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Romans 8:24-25).

Since the Christians' hope is only in Christ,

how does one get into him? The apostle Paul gives us the answer: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27). Have you been baptized into Christ? If not, you are **without hope!**

My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Route 1, Box 501A, Fulton, MS 38843

## THE GRACE OF GOD . . .

(Continued from page 10)

1. This is the preeminent hope of the Scriptures. As in the old, they were looking for the "hope of Israel," now we look for Him again.
2. It is a blessed hope because of what comes with it (1 Corinthians 15:9).
3. Thus, it becomes motive for living a pure life.
- B. Grace causes us to be a peculiar people (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
  1. This world *peculiar* does not mean eccentric; but purchased.
  2. Therefore, we are to act as those who belong to another.
- C. It will cause us to be eager to do good works (James 1:27; Galatians 6:10).

## Conclusion:

1. Indeed, this one of the clearest passages in the Word of God regarding the grace of God and its results.
2. As Job of old, we proclaim, "Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit" (10:12).
3. We have not even come close to exhausting this subject. †

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*Thanking you.*

*Yours in Christ,  
Ken Chumbley  
Farmington, MO*

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*A friend passed to me a copy of the GOSPEL GLEANER and I liked what I read.*

*Would like very much to be on the mailing list. I am semi-retired from preaching, still preach one Lord's day each month and a Wednesday night class each week. But I still try to read brethren who stand by the truth. They seem to be dwindling in number year by year.*

*Keep up the good work.*

*Yours for Truth,  
M. S. Hudgins  
Centerville, TN*

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# Gospel Gleaner

Volume 10

Number 2

## **"THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE"**

W. L. Totty

Though man may be wise in the knowledge of the world, yet, if he does not fear the Lord and gain instruction from his word, he is not as wise as he thinks he is. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7). Solomon was not speaking words of his own wisdom. He was proclaiming the wisdom of God who created all things.

Our faith shall not stand in the wisdom of men today, but we must hear and speak as did the apostle Paul. He told the Corinthians brethren, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Corinthians 2:4-5).

Many folk are more impressed with the worldly wisdom of men than with the wisdom of God. They are even many times influenced to look upon those who revere God and his word with disdain and contempt; however, the one who denies that God is all-powerful and all-wise is but a fool, even though one is wise by the world's standards. Now, don't charge me with having said so, for I am only repeating

a message from God Himself. David, by inspiration of God, in the long ago said, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 14:1; 53:1).

The younger generation today, in part, tend to think that they are much wiser than the generation of their parents, for they look at all the opportunities that they have, the new scientific discoveries and inventions in the world about which their elders could not have had knowledge, and conclude that they are much wiser. But they fail to take into consideration the fact that their fathers brought them to the point that they could discover and invent and enjoy all the wondrous things of this world. To the young, Solomon gives sage advice. He tells them to hear the instruction of their fathers and not to forsake the law of their mothers. "When parents who fear the Lord tell their children not to associate with youngsters who are known to be into mischief, the children shouldn't question their advice. Solomon said: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not...My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path: For their feet run to

(Continued on page 10)





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# The Peace Of The Church

Bill Dillon

The prophet Isaiah said, "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever" (Isaiah 32:17). Few things are more highly prized in the estimations of men than peace. Christ promised peace to his followers (John 14:27). The gospel of Christ is the gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15). Children of God are to make peace a high priority in their lives. 1 Thessalonians 5:13 says, "And be at peace among yourselves." Colossians 3:15 exhorts, "and let the peace of God rule in your hearts..."

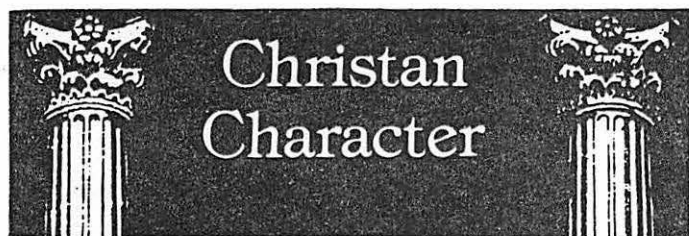
The peace of the church is often disrupted by differences among brethren. Sometimes the differences are over vital doctrinal concerns, at other times, differences find their origin in personality clashes and personal preferences of one stripe or other. Sometimes the offenses of the past linger on for years and years. Because grievances are never settled scripturally (Matthew 18:15-20), they fester like open wounds and the stench of rotten hurts contaminates and chokes the sweet atmosphere of the present. The peace of the church is disrupted and the work of the church paralyzed all because men and women are too petty to forgive and too small to forget. Old hurts gnaw at the bowels of the soul and the quarrels of the past mingle their muddy waters with the streams of the present, with the result of polluting the future oceans of endeavor.

The Bible teaches Christians to settle their differences and as far as humanly possible to live in peace (Romans 12:8). Peace is such a cherished possession, we should give anything for it-except the truth! We should endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3). 1 John 4:8 is a somber verse for grudge bearers, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

He who loves as God loves, is at ease (at peace) with others



(Continued on page 10)



## RESPONSIBILITIES

Ronnie Whittemore



One of the primary problems of our society today is the reluctance and refusal of our citizens to accept responsibilities. Nearly any major news story, especially if it is criminal or political, contains an underlying principle of someone

avoiding his personal responsibilities.

It is a disgrace to any country and especially the United States when confessed killers are able to get a "hung jury" upon the basis that they were victims. Unfortunately what occurs in our society often affects the Lord's church. There are many brethren who have forgotten their obligations and duties to the Lord in various areas.

### Leaders Have Responsibilities

Obviously, leaders have responsibilities in the Lord's church. Elders (also called bishops, shepherds and presbyters) are the overseers of the church who have the obligations to feed, tend, guard, watch, warn and guide the flock (1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28-32; Hebrews 13:17). Deacons are those special servants who have met certain qualifications (1 Timothy 3:8-13) and who have agreed to be active in service to the Lord as the elders request. Evangelists are men who herald, proclaim and publish the truth of God to sinner and saint alike. He has the duty to "...preach the word; be instant in

season, out of season; reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:2). Every member of the Lord's church should support the efforts of elders, deacons and preachers. Paul reminds us that we all have different roles in the church, but we are all members of the same body (1 Corinthians 12:27). If we refuse to support the leadership and work of the church, we will shirk our responsibilities and hinder growth in the kingdom.

### Christians Have Responsibilities In Worship

Concerning New Testament worship, the Bible is quite clear as to the Christian's responsibilities. It must be emphasized that God is the object and audience in our worship. Because many people try to please themselves or their neighbors, they introduce things into worship that they like, but not necessary those things that are approved by God or are pleasing to Him. For some years now, most religious people see nothing wrong with mechanical instruments of music in worship. The reason that they accept this type of music is because it pleases them and they have given little or no regard to whether or not such music pleases God. Paul wrote plainly in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 that God ordained "vocal" music in worship to Him. In Acts 16:25, Paul and Silas while imprisoned in Philippi, sang praises unto God and the prisoners heard them. They did not sing unto the prisoners and God heard them. Paul and Silas understood that God was the object and audience of their worship and not men. As Christians, we must understand that our worship is directed to God and we follow His instructions, not our own.

### The Church Is Not Charged With Some Things

The church is not a civic organization nor is it a social club. While there may be social

(Continued on page 4)

## RESPONSIBILITIES . . .

(Continued from page 3)

activities as we associate with one another as Christians, those activities are by-products of our Christianity and not our emphasis. The New Testament is clear that the primary focus of the church is to evangelize (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-48; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:14-17; Colossians 1:23; 2 Timothy 2:2). Benevolence and edification are also works of the church approved by God which are a means to an end. Our kindnesses, good deeds, personal growth and church growth aid us in opening doors of opportunities to teach our neighbors across the street or throughout the world about Christ and salvation.

### The Home Has Responsibilities

It is a mistake for church members to shift their home and personal responsibilities to the church. If a "youth minister" is nothing more than a "director of entertainment," then he is taking the place of parents. That is wrong! Any minister (regardless of his appeal to an age group or special interest group--young or old, singles or married) has a prescribed work of evangelism (2 Timothy 4:1-5). His emphasis is spiritual, not earthly. For a man to assume the role of a "minister" which requires him to provide entertainment or recreation is to abuse the office of a minister. And just because one sprinkles a little spirituality into his duties to give an appearance of authenticity to his position, does not make it so. Paul wrote that there are some who have "a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof..." (2 Timothy 3:5).

It is important that parents recognize that they have spiritual obligations in the home. If these responsibilities are left undone, then there will be a void in the lives of parents and children.

Brethren, we must understand that we all have responsibilities to the Lord in the various roles and works in which we are engaged. At the same time, the church cannot function properly in the way that God has designed it, if it is assuming the responsibilities of the

home. Likewise, the home will not function properly in the way that God has approved, if parents shirk their responsibilities to the church. It has often been stated that God designed three institutions: the home, the church, and the government. Specific guidelines are recorded in the Bible concerning their functions and duties. They are distinct institutions with different purposes and functions although we are citizens in a government, parents or children in a home and members of the church. We are able to recognize that we have duties to perform within the frameworks of those institutions. If we are able to understand that the government is not the church and the home is not the church, then why can we not understand that the church is not the home? For example, this writer is an evangelist in the church with specific duties to perform. I am also an husband and father in my home with certain obligations to my wife and children. I am a citizen of the United States with the responsibility to live according to the laws and regulations of my country. While there may be New Testament principles that guide my behavior as a citizen, father, husband and minister which may overlap (such as, honesty, kindness, etc.), my roles are quite different in the church, the home and the government.

Brethren, the work of the church is hindered and hampered when we cloud its identity and goals by confusing our roles as Christians. The duties of the home are also frustrated when we neglect our proper roles as parents or children and thrust those responsibilities upon the church.

If we want our homes and the church to be successful, then let us be proper parents, children, husbands and wives in the home, elders who oversee the flock, deacons who serve the Lord, evangelists who preach the Word and members who live and teach the gospel to our neighbors. If we behave in any other way, we lose our identity. We cannot achieve our goals. Let each one of us recognize our roles in the Lord's church and in society and fulfill our responsibilities as Christians. ☩

3078 Gurley Pike, Gurley, AL 35748



# Faith Fundamentals

## PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD

Guy F. Hester



There is an Old Testament passage that says, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (Amos 4:12). While this passage does not refer to the final day when all shall stand before God and give account of himself, I believe that it certainly can be given this

application without doing violence to the actual context; which as to do with God's repeated attempts to bring Israel back to Himself and away from idolatry in which they were engaged. After every attempt had failed, God, in essence, says, *"Alright, Israel, get your gods ready to meet me in open combat and see who the God of Israel really is."* But we want to make an application of this statement as it relates to our making preparation to meet our God in judgment.

The first step to be taken in preparing to meet God is a realization and acknowledgment of the fact that God is (Hebrews 11:6). Many refuse to believe in God because they have never seen Him. Several years ago, the Russian cosmonauts who circles the earth in space said that they knew for sure that there is no God because if there was, they would have seen Him. The fact that you cannot see Him does not prove that He does not exist. We cannot see pain, but pain is very real. You cannot see electricity, but who denies its existence. You cannot see hope nor sorrow but

these are so real for every one of us.

The only way to account for things is to begin with a self-existent being. Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Evolution accounts for nothing. The atheist reminds me of the story of the dog that was being shipped on a baggage car. Some one asked the baggage man: "Where does this dog go?" He replied, "I don't know; he don't know; don't nobody know; 'cause he done gone and chewed up his tag." According to atheism, nobody knows where we came from, why we are here, or where we are going.

Nature, itself, testifies to the existence of God (Psalm 19:1). This world could not have just happened. It has been estimated that if the twenty-six letters of the alphabet were tossed into the air the chances of them falling back in the proper order would be less than one in five billion. But there is more order than this in the universe. To argue that the world is the work of blind chance is as unreasonable as to argue that Webster's Unabridged Dictionary is the result of an explosion in a print shop.

The Bible testifies to the existence of God (Genesis 1:1; Ecclesiastes 12:1, 7; Acts 17:27). The atheist does not know there is no God unless he knows everything there is to know. If there is just one thing in all the world that he does not know, it might be the fact that there is a God.

God and man must meet Him in the judgment. Justice demands the judgment. It would be unjust for the good and the evil to be rewarded alike. †

### HEATH CHURCH OF CHRIST SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday Morning Bible Class	9:00
Sunday Morning Worship	10:00
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00

# "LET ME SELL YOU SOME INSURANCE!"

Allen Webster



They can be annoying. They are persistent. They have the answers. They are insurance salesmen! Actually, they have a lot in common with preachers. By comparison, they ask for your short-term investments; we ask for long-term commitments!

## Let Me Sell You Some Life Insurance

When he says "life insurance," he means he will pay your beneficiaries in case you die. But Jesus offers a far better deal. He promises that you will never die! "John 6:50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever..." (John 6:50-51). "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11:26). Of course, this is spiritual life insurance. Physically, one will suffer and die in *spite of* his faith, and, sometimes, *because of* his faith (Matthew 10:28).

This is a great policy! The premiums never go up. Initially, one invests with faith, repentance, confession and baptism (Acts 2:38; 8:35-38). Subsequently, Jesus requires one to "come after me...deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Nothing yields higher returns. "Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom..." (Luke 6:38).

You will never be canceled, unless you choose to discontinue. "My Father, which gave

them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:29).

Do you have this insurance? You need it!

## Let Me Sell You Some Health Insurance

When he says "health insurance," he means medical treatment will be covered if you get sick. God's Word has insurance against getting sick. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones" (Proverbs 17:22).

Generally speaking, one who follows the principles of the Bible will suffer fewer sicknesses than others. God gives children the secret to a long life: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; *That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth*" (Ephesians 6:1-3).

Prayer can extend one's life (cf. 2 Kings 20:3-6). John prayed for Gaius: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (3 John 2). "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

If one treats his body as the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20), he will live longer. He will not abuse it with alcohol, nicotine, over-eating or senseless injuries.

Do you have good health insurance? You need it.

## Let Me Sell You Some Home Insurance

When he says "home insurance," he means  
(Continued on page 10)

# REBELLION AGAINST AUTHORITY

## Numbers 16:1-11 (Part Two of Two)

Dennis Gullledge



In part one of this article, we began with an analysis of our text and went from that to beginning the applications which we might make from it. Rebellion against authority has always rendered disastrous affects (as has the abuse of authority) in society, in the home and in the Lord's church. With part two of this article we will continue the applications by noticing:

### The Power Of Personalities In A Congregation

The Bible reveals powerful personalities known for their discontent and rebellion against God's delegated authority. We have already noted Miriam and Aaron and their act of rebellion in Numbers 12:1-2. The text of our present study tells of Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On (Numbers 16). The apostle John wrote of the contentious "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will 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 9-10).

A common practice is evidenced in each of these instances of rebellious personalities, but especially in the matter of Korah, Abiram, Dathan and On: "And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown" (Numbers 16:2). The common practice of

which I speak is that of someone, or a few, stepping out to form up a rebellion and others falling into line with it. When factionalism exists in a church, the tension mounts and the pressure builds up until someone eventually lights the proverbial match in this type of explosive situation. And even if "men of renown" lend their influence and power to rebellion that is against God, that in no way makes the opposition right in the creating division. In a rebellion, you lose people with leadership abilities, although right along with them you also the major source of discontent.

### The Need to Respect God's Way

No one who rebels against God's way ever views himself as doing so. A group may rise up in a congregation where there is no deviation from God's way of truth, either in the pulpit or in the eldership, and split the church wide open, engendering countless tears and endless strife; and they will view themselves as perfectly justified in so doing and will without exception consider themselves the pursuers of a God-given liberty to do as they please.

These men in Israel felt that they had every right to do as they did: "And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?" (Numbers 16:3). What they said was true. They were holy as compared to other nations (Exodus 19:6; Leviticus 20:26). Yet, this did not establish their conclusion, which was, "We

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want to be priests along with you" (Numbers 16:10). They wanted to change God's way in worship since they had rejected the priesthood as appointed by God. They thought that their complaint was merely with Moses, but how often do we fail to see the real picture? Moses said, "For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the LORD: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?" (Numbers 16:11). These men wanted to change God's way in worship.

Those akin to them are alive and well in the church of Christ today. Many brethren are crying for change in the church. The church today is in the throes of change, and change is fine wherein change is permissible. However, if we change God's way, God is against us no matter how we may view ourselves.

## The Danger Of Allowing Attitudes Which Bring On Rebellion

There was the complaining and dissatisfaction which was seen in the children of Israel previous to these events. There was the seething discontent for God's delegated authority and God's appointed way. There was strife and contradiction, as Jude describes this entire affair as "the gainsaying of Korah" (Jude 2). The word "gainsaying" means "strife" (Hebrews 6:16) and "contradiction" (Hebrews 7:7; 12:3). This is the opposition and strife of religious people. They spake against Moses, and they complained against Aaron. Roy Deaver has well said, "It is mighty easy for us to place the 'blame' on the wrong person, or in the wrong place, or upon the wrong factor" (*Biblical Notes*, September, 1980). Then, there was the sin of envy which took control of these rebels against authority. The inspired psalmist wrote, "They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the LORD" (Psalm 106:16). Such dangerous attitudes have no place in the heart of a faithful Christian. Wherever they are found, trouble cannot but

follow close behind.

## The Need To Be Content In Our Sphere Of Service

The instigators of this rebellion were those who were privileged to act within a valuable sphere of service, but they were not content with that: "And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi: Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?" (Numbers 16:8-9). The privileges that God grants to us, in our respective places is not a small thing in itself and should not appear small to us. Those who desire to usurp honors forbidden to them put a great contempt upon the honors allowed them. When envy works, as it did here, we are never satisfied with where we are or what we are doing.

The great blessing of being a Christian is having fellowship with God. If that is the best, all else is secondary. If I appreciate the great fellowship I have with God; and everything else being secondary, I will not have the problems of satisfaction these men had. My attitude should be that, wherever I am and whatever I can do, I will do to the best of my ability.

We ought to learn the lessons contained in Scripture. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). In this chapter we have a clear, forceful and unforgettable demonstration of God's attitude toward rebellion against His delegated authority. This certainly applies to the authority of elders in the local congregation (Hebrews 13:17; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Peter 5:1-4). Simple contentment with God's way will produce happiness, unity and growth. †

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# Sermon Sketches

## LESSONS FROM THE FALL OF JERICHO *Joshua 6:20-21*

M. W. Kiser

### Introduction:



1. This is the start of the campaign to take Canaan.
2. The ruins of this ancient city have been uncovered and the Bible story confirmed.
3. Here are some lessons:

### I. The Meaning of "Grace" and "Faith."

- A. The city was a gift of God (6:2); yet it was taken by faith (Hebrews 11:30).
- B. Our salvation is by both grace and faith (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; Romans 6:23; Romans 5:1; Galatians 3:26).
- C. Some say they do not understand why there are conditions to salvation.
  1. Grace and faith have never excluded such ordained acts of God.
  2. Faith must be active (Galatians 5:6; James 2:22, 26; Romans 1:5; 16:26).

### II. Respect For God's Pattern Of Procedure.

- A. God's ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 11:33).
  1. He always acts with righteousness and holiness (Psalm 145:17).
  2. His ways are truth and judgment (Daniel 4:37).
  3. His ways are everlasting (Hebrews

3:6).

B. Notice these Bible examples of God's ways being different from man's.

1. The passover night did not accord with human reasoning (Exodus 12).
2. Neither did the healing from the serpent bites (Numbers 21:7-8).
3. Nor did the requirements for Naaman's cleansing (2 Kings 5).
4. And, what about the circumstances of our Lord's coming and kingdom.
  - a. We would have looked for Him in a palace, not a barn!
  - b. We would have chosen doctors of the law, nor fishermen, etc.
  - c. We would have wanted a kingdom of the world (John 3:3, 5; 18:36).

C. There is indeed application of this principle for us today.

1. The gospel plan of salvation is not the product of human genius.
  - a. Men question the subject for baptism (Mark 16:16).
  - b. Men question the action of baptism (Colossians 2:12; Romans 6:3-5).
  - c. Men question the design of baptism (Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21).
2. The table of remembrance is not the product of human reasoning.
  - a. Our Lord instituted it (Matthew 26:26-28).
  - b. His inspired apostles delivered it to the church (1 Corinthians 11:23).
  - c. Any other practice is a perversion (Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:25).

### III. God's Way Will Always Succeed.

- A. We learn that the strongest foes and highest walls cannot stop the Lord.
  1. The flood of the wicked world. Here was deliverance and damnation.
  2. The Red Sea ordeal. Here again was deliverance and damnation.
  3. The fall of Jericho's walls enforce the

(Continued on page 11)

## "THE FEAR OF THE LORD . . ."

(Continued from front page)

evil, and make haste to shed blood" (Proverbs 1:10, 15-16). This is good advice also to the person of any age.

Some folk may think that doing evil is smart and the "in thing" to do and that they will be admired for their boldness and bravery and being able, as the saying goes, to "get away with murder." God, through Solomon, said, "It is a sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom" (Proverbs 10:23). The Bible also says, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise" (Proverbs 12:15). Young folk (older folk, too), if you follow the crowd to do evil, you are doing so to your own hurt (Proverbs 1:10).

Let us not be fools, but wise. Let us fear the Lord and hearken unto the counsel of God.

*THE INFORMER*

*April 13, 1980*

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## THE PEACE OF THE CHURCH . . .

(Continued from page 2)

and they are at ease (at peace) with Him. Christian love prompts the heart to extend the best in courtesy to all others and gaze forward with hopefulness to the future.

How beautiful the peace of the church:

"Behold, how good and how pleasant is it for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments" (Psalm 133:1-2). †

P.O. Box 192  
Mountain Home, AR 72653

## "LET ME SELL YOU . . ."

(Continued from page 6)

"house insurance." That is, if you are the victim of robbery or natural disaster, your personal belongings will be replaced. What the preach means by "home insurance" is far better. The Bible gives the principles by which successful homes are run. When families use God's "marriage manual" they are virtually insured against serious problems.

There is more to the statement, "The family that prays together stays together," than just catchy wording. When two who have the right to marry (cf. Matthew 19:9), find each other (cf. Proverbs 18:22), fall in love, remain pure (Hebrews 13:4) and join in a sacred union (Matthew 19:6), they lay a strong foundation that will weather life's storms.

When he continues to love her as his own body (Ephesians 5:28) and she loves him as strongly (Titus 2:4), there will be no mistreatment. When he dwells with her according to knowledge (1 Peter 3:7) and she submits to his God-given authority (Ephesians 5:22), there will be no thoughts of divorce (Malachi 2:16).

When God blesses this union with children, and they are wanted, welcomed, cherished, nourished and nurtured by the "Good Book" (Ephesians 6:4), they will grow up healthy physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Do you have good home insurance? You need it! †

## Let Me Sell You Some Fire Insurance

He means your house is protected against fire. But one day the whole world will be on fire (2 Peter 3:10). Are you insured against the fire that will never be quenched (Mark 9:44)? Get some insurance! †

## Special 24-Page Issue Coming This Fall!

same lesson on us!

B. Whatever the Lord promises to man, He is able to perform.

1. When God attaches a promise to a certain command, and when we obey that command, He will fulfill His promise! (Hebrews 7:25).
2. This is true whether or not we can see any logical connection between the two.

C. Now, let us glance at some often questioned commands and promises.

1. Acts 2:38--"for the remission of sins,

and ye shall receive..."

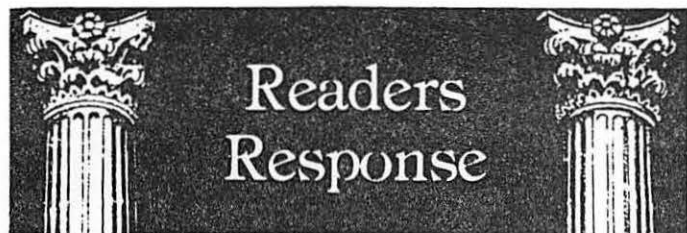
2. Matthew 18:20--"gathered together...my name...there am I..."

3. Revelation 2:120--"be thou faithful...and I will give thee..."

### Conclusion:

1. There are some walls that need to be broken down today.
  - a. Those that hinder you from becoming a Christian.
  - b. Those that hinder you from the living the Christian life.
2. This is a wonderful story about working, waiting and winning.

922 Heritage Drive, Sylacauga, AL 35150



Dear Christian friends:

Please send GOSPEL GLEANER. I enjoy reading S.T.O.P. as well as other papers and booklets put out by the true church of our Lord. Brethren used to know and be aware of liberalism that is trying to creep in and have in many places. Our prayer is that all saints must keep on guard.

Thanks.

Oscar & Wilma Danielson  
Wewoka, OK

Dear brethren:

I saw your address in "Seek The Old Paths" from Corinth, MS. I like to read good things. Bro. Garland Robinson recommended you in the July issue.

Please add my name to your mail list and if possible, send me any back issues you can. I will be glad to pay postage and cost. Just let me know how much.

Thank you.

Fred Stacey  
Simpsonville, KY

Dear brethren:

Please include me on your mailing list of the GOSPEL GLEANER. We ministers need all of the "sound" information we can have to teach this confused world and those liberals of the church.

Thanks much.

Yours in Christ,  
John H. Brown  
Magnolia, AR

Dear brethren:

I would like to receive the GOSPEL GLEANER on a regular basis. I was impressed by the two I was able to read. Please send them to the following address...

Thank you very much.

In Christ,  
Ben Thompson  
Rockford, AL

### What Must I Do To Be Saved?

<b>HEAR</b> the gospel Romans 10:13-17	<b>CONFESS</b> faith in Christ Romans 10:9-10
<b>BELIEVE</b> in Christ Mark 16:15-16	<b>BE BAPTIZED</b> into Christ Acts 22:16
<b>REPENT</b> of past sins Acts 2:36-47	<b>LIVE FAITHFULLY</b> Romans 12:1-2

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## READERS' RESPONSE

(Continued from page 10)

*Dear brothers:*

*Being a native Tennessean, I'm very happy that "Seek the Old Path" writers recommend your doubt fine publication the GOSPEL GLEANER. My husband and I hungry for excellent articles written by faithful brethren of the great South.*

*Our Southwestern churches are not very strong and we miss the straight forward truth that we were reared in.*

*However, please place us on your mailing list. We are looking forward to our first publication.*

*Our sincere thanks and our prayers are with you.*

*Delsie & Bob Zimmerlee  
Las Cruces, NM*

*Dear brethren:*

*A friend passed to me a copy of the GOSPEL GLEANER and I liked what I read.*

*Would like very much to be on the mailing list. I am semi-retired from preaching, still preach one Lord's day each month and a Wednesday night class each week. But I still try to read brethren who stand by the truth. They seem to be dwindling in number year by year. Keep up the good work.*

*Yours for Truth,  
M. S. Hudgins  
Centerville, TN*

*Dear brethren:*

*Would you please add my name to the mailing list for your paper. I have seen some copies of it and I appreciate the content of it.*

*Thanking you.*

*Yours in Christ,  
Ken Chumbley  
Farmington, MO*

## CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED

(April - July)

Arlington church of Christ McMinnville, TN	\$ 75.00
Heath church of Christ Kevil, KY	500.00
Mabelvale church of Christ Mabelvale, AR	100.00
Mrs. Edward Garey Savannah, TN	50.00
Glenn Jobe Schaumburg, IL	3.00
Ruby Mathis Belknap, IL	25.00
Dathel Russell Cahokia, IL	10.00
Martha Whittemore Indianapolis, IN	100.00





# Gospel Gleaner



Volume 10

Numbers 3 &amp; 4

## ONE NATION UNDER GOD-KNOWS-WHAT

David Dawson

Its amazing the way things turn around, and just how quickly they seem to do just that. It wasn't but long ago that Satan reigned with an iron hand from the Kremlin, and now the former realm of Godless communism is opened up to Christianity, with millions of Bibles being distributed there and churches in America advertising for people to go to Russia to the preach the word of God.

Meanwhile, here in America, the "land of the free and home of the brave," this great "Christian nation," this "one nation under God," things have been changing as well.

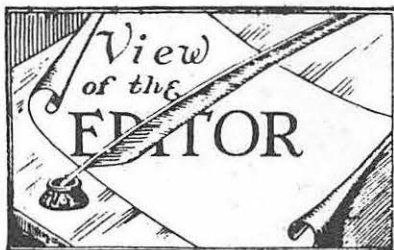
Not too many years ago, the word "pregnant" wasn't used in mixed company; now we openly discuss all sorts of delicate subject matter, even in front of small children. Our little ones are being taught that homosexuality is an "alternate lifestyle," perfectly acceptable, and we are handing out condoms to our teenagers and telling them we "know they are going to engage in fornication, but to do it safely," thereby giving our approval, instead of teaching them that the ONLY safe sex is abstinence, not to mention the fact that fornication is sin. We, like Israel in Jeremiah's day have lost our ability to blush (Jeremiah 6:15).

Separation of church and state is a good concept, and helps to guarantee religious freedom, but our courts have gone overboard in their pursuit of this idea. Separation is one thing, but persecution is another, indeed. Let me quote a few instances I read about just recently. Last December, a town in Virginia banned caroling in public places, and carolers were forced to sing behind barricades. An eleven year old girl was told that by reading her Bible on the school grounds, she had established a national church. Another student was ordered to stop reading his Bible on the school bus. A second-grader wasn't allowed to show a videotape to her class because it continued a religious song.

There is a god that is being taught our young ones in school. It is the many faced god of humanism. Its doctrine is that of sex-education (and where has that taken us?), ethical relativism, nature-worship, acceptance of "sexual diversity," and evolution as fact and not as theory.

We, in our pursuit of "the American dream," have abdicated our responsibility to rear our children and insisted that government do this

(Continued on page 15)



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The GOSPEL GLEANER is dedicated to restoring New Testament Christianity. We welcome your comments and questions regarding any article found herein.

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# Absolutely Not

Bill Dillon

Admiral Richard Byrd, the famous Arctic explorer, related that one day he found himself in a blinding snow storm. The blizzard was so intensely white that he couldn't even see his hand in front of his face. The snow was so bad that after taking a few steps, Byrd lost all sense of direction. The explorer was in danger of freezing to death unless he found his way safely back to his cabin.

Fortunately Admiral Byrd carried a pole with him used for testing for holes in the ice. He firmly planted the pole in the ground and tied a rope securely to it and stepped off in one direction, holding tightly to the end of the rope. He came back to the pole and started out in a new direction. On the fifth try, Byrd found his cabin and made his way to shelter and safety.

Admiral Byrd later related, "There's no question that unless I'd had a central focus point to always come back to, I would have been lost."

The above incident tells much of what is wrong with the world. The world has lost its central focus. The world has cast aside any absolute moral standards in exchange for the "it's-all-a-matter-of-opinion code." The end result is going to be that the concepts of truth and falsehood will be replaced by likeable and dislikeable.

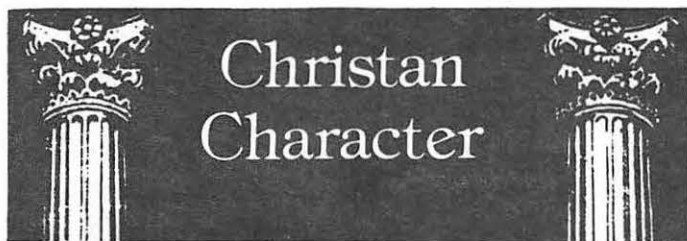
Dr. Gene Edward Veith, in his new book Post Modern Times, writes, "According to a recent poll, 66 percent of Americans believe that there is no such thing as absolute truth." The rise of moral relativism is seen in the popular beliefs that human life has no special significance, outrageous art forms are culturally enriching, etc. The day of moral inversion has arrived.

To disbelieve in moral absolutes is self-contradictory. The very statement--"there is no absolute truth"--is an absolute truth. But there are none so blind as sinners trying to justify their own iniquities. Today the rejection of truth is not just engaged in by a lunatic fringe of society but by two-thirds of the average American public! It is not correct to say, "we are drifting," it is correct to say "we have drifted."

No mature, spiritually minded people desire to be loosed from the authority in religion, i.e., the Bible. If life is to be meaningful and significant, God's Word must serve as man's law for living. God's Word is still a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path (Psalm 119:105). There can not be genuine holiness of heart and happiness in life until men recognize the truth of the old saying, "There's no other way but His way." †



P.O. Box 192; Mountain Home, AR 72653



## GLORY BELONGS TO GOD

Ronnie Whittemore



Many men and women in American society are obsessed with giving and receiving honor and glory. In sports, awards are given to teams and/or players for winning their respective championships. Some businesses grant special recognition to the

"employee of the month" which may come in the form of a name on a plaque, a selected parking spot or other special privileges. The Nobel prize is conferred each year to men and women who excel in extraordinary fields. Such honors may serve as an incentive for some to work harder and more diligently in their jobs or vocations. While competition may have its place on earth concerning carnal and worldly things, one must be careful that he not overlook the Giver and Provider of all good things (James 1:17).

In Matthew 20, the mother of James and John came to Jesus with a request. She asked the Lord to "grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom" (verse 21). This request along with the reaction of the other apostles was an indication of the misunderstanding which they had concerning the Lord's kingdom. Jesus answered with the charge for His disciples to be humble and willing to serve, not be served (verses 27-28).

Brethren, sometimes we, too, make a similar mistake as we attempt to give "credit" to preachers, elders, deacons, teachers and

members of the body of Christ. Certainly, it is appropriate to commend and encourage one another. We should also show our appreciation to brethren for their good deeds and kind words. Paul wrote, "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (Romans 13:7). Yet, at the same time, we must be careful lest we judge a brother, a church or a work to be a success or a failure due to certain statistics.

### Should We Praise According To Numbers?

A brother told this preacher one time that God is interested in numbers, even at the expense of doctrine. He offered as proof the "about 3,000 souls" converted on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:41 and the "about 5,000 men" who obeyed in Acts 4:4. His point was simple. The Holy Spirit recorded these large numbers, therefore, the Lord is interested in numbers. Therefore, the church should do all that they can to draw crowds and achieve high attendance in our worship assemblies. And if that means to change the doctrine or neglect needful truth in order to obtain that goal, then so be it.

One must remember that the Holy Spirit *nowhere* mentions conversion with a "watered-down gospel." He records for us the event of Noah in which only eight souls were saved (1 Peter 3:20-21). He records the directions given to the evangelist, Philip, to leave a great meeting in Samaria to find one man who needed the truth of the gospel (Acts 8:26-39). Paul spoke to multitudes in the synagogues, but he also spoke to individuals, households and in the courts of kings (Acts 9:15-16). It should also be noted that the 3,000 on Pentecost may have been small in proportion to the number of Jews assembled that day.

Sometimes men and women obey the gospel and sometimes they do not. But neither success nor failure can be measured by how many people were converted, but whether or not the truth was presented.

(Continued on page 4)



## Should We Honor According To Statistics?

While numbers may be helpful in giving a gauge to measure our efforts, one must be careful that he not use such statistics to measure whether or not God's work is being done. Missionaries and evangelists sometimes parade numbers of "responses" as though they alone serve as a testimony to their work ethic. There have been many instances in which people have been "immersed" in water and counted as a "baptism" when they were not converted. There is a distinction between "getting wet" and being "baptized." Some people are motivated by money, possessions, favors and social status. In some countries, for example, a "baptismal certificate" serves as an important document, such as a birth certificate. Sometimes prisoners agree to be "baptized" because they think that they will receive special privileges. Missionaries must be careful what they offer to people, even in the way of benevolence, lest that bottle of aspirins be the motivation of someone to "get wet."

Rather than being so enamored by the statistics of *baptisms* and *restorations* which a preacher reports, we should be concerned with the doctrine which he teaches and his manner of life. Is he a faithful steward of his talents, the Lord's money and his duties?

## Should We Give Glory To Men Rather Than God?

Brethren, we should not give honor and glory to a preacher for the number of "responses" which he has any more than we should criticize him for the lack of "responses" which he has. What gets lost in our desire to give "credit" or "blame" is this: All glory belongs to God. All salvation is granted by the Lord, not man. And one cannot be saved unless he obeys the WORD OF TRUTH.

A very wise preacher once commented at a

lectureship how thankful he was for the various preachers who appeared on that lectureship because of their individual personalities and abilities. He acknowledged that sometimes one preacher is able to reach a person with the truth when other preachers had failed. The sinner was saved through his obedience to the truth which was the same truth taught by all the preachers; however, a certain personality, good deed or kind word, opened the door of the heart to the gospel. But the gospel saves, not man! (1 Corinthians 1:18, 21-23).

Brethren, this preacher appreciates encouragement and praise when he teaches truth. This preacher is thrilled when a soul recognizes that he need to obey that truth. But please be careful to give honor to whom honor is due: God saves man from his sins. He deserves our praise; He deserves our honor; He deserves our glory!

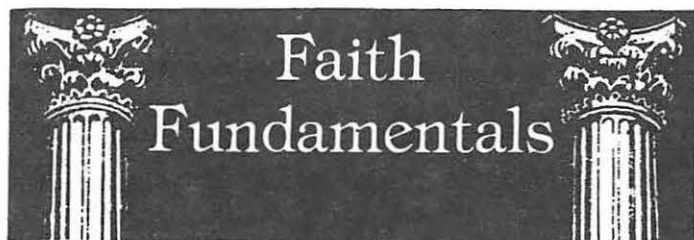
"O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise" (1 Chronicles 16:34-35). †

3078 Gurley Pike; Gurley, AL 35748

### Facts To Know About Christ

- With God in the Creation (Gen. 1:26-27)
- Promised to the Word (Gen. 3:15)
- Born of a Virgin (Matthew 1:21-25)
- Performed Miracles (John 20:30-31)
- Died on the Cross (Romans 5:8)
- Ascended to Heaven (Acts 1:9)
- Brought the Gospel (Romans 1:16)
- Built the Church (Matthew 16:18)
- Became the Saviour (Ephesians 5:23)
- Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18)
- Is the Way to Heaven (John 14:6)
- Will Serve As Judge (Acts 17:31)





## WHEN WILL THE CHURCH GROW?

Guy F. Hester



Church growth is a subject that everyone talks about but few are doing anything about it. We often lament the fact that "the church is not growing like it used to grow." At one time the church of Christ was the fastest growing religious body in America.

However, in the past few years the church has not grown, instead it has diminished in membership. What has happened? When will the church grow again?

Let us notice first of all that the Bible sets forth two kinds of growth: spiritual growth and numerical growth. Concerning spiritual growth, Peter wrote: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). Then concerning numerical growth, we read in Acts 16:5, "And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily."

Without a doubt, God wants the church, universally and congregationally, to grow, both spiritually and numerically. Both are essential to worldwide evangelism and salvation. It is God's desire that "all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). Since God wants "all men to be saved" and since He adds the saved to the church (Acts 2:47), if men are being

saved then the church is growing. Let us also take note of the fact that growth is not a Bible *suggestion*, it is a *command*! "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

In New Testament times, the church grew. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47). "Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand" (Acts 4:4). "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:14). Never in its history has the church experienced such phenomenal growth as it did in its infancy and under the direct guidance of "the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42). But, as we stated earlier, the church, in the life time and recollection of many of us, was the fastest growing religious body in America. So if we look back and see what made the church grow in the past, we can know what will make it grow again.

**(1) The Church grew when its membership respected the Word as their authority and guide.** "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). The church will grow again when its membership is given to a study of the bible and feeds upon the word of God. Peter said, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grown thereby" (1 Peter 2:2). Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). Jesus placed teaching on both sides of the great commission. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:18-20). Every member of the church must continue to learn about Christ. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me;

(Continued on page 6)

## WHEN WILL THE CHURCH . . .

(Continued from page 5)

for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). Paul told Timothy to "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). Again he said in 1 Timothy 4:13, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." This is as applicable to us as it was Timothy and not until members of the church get back to the word of God as they did in New Testament times will the church grow.

**(2) The Church grew when it had a converted membership.** It will grow again when its members are converted from the ways of the world to a practice of Christianity. Too many in the church today are conforming to the ways of the world. Paul said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1-2). Members of the church are new creatures in Christ and have put away the old things of the world if they were truly converted. Paul said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Again he said, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3-4). If one is not living a new life, he was never really been converted.

Are we as members of the church really sold on the gospel of Christ? Are we dedicated to the service of the Lord and His church? People who are truly converted will not play

down the commandments of Christ nor the importance of the church. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). There are some in the brotherhood who are trying to change the church, the plan of salvation and Christian living to make them conform to a sinful and adulterous world. When we are truly converted we will stand for the whole truth without fear or compromise.

**(3) The Church grew when its members were faithful to attend the services.** It will grow again when the members are faithful in their attendance. It was said of the three thousand who were added to the church on the day of Pentecost: "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:46-47). Can you imagine any of these, who were in *daily* attendance, arguing that "*once a week is enough?*" The church will grow when the members again obey the command: "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together" (Hebrews 10:25).

Absenteeism is one of the most powerful tools that the devil uses to destroy God's people. Without regular attendance and worship, a congregation cannot exist. Absenteeism hinders both the spiritual and numerical growth of the church.

**(4) The Church grew when they did not hesitate to defend the truth.** It will grow again when the members are "set for the defence of the gospel" (Philippians 1:17). We will grow when we heed the admonition to "...earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). The truth has no voice of its own to cry out when men misrepresent it, misapply it and pervert it. God has placed this responsibility upon His people, the church, to defend His cause. A growing and faithful church will gladly defend and uphold the truth of God's Word.

(Continued on page 7)

## WHEN WILL THE CHURCH . . .

(Continued from page 6)

(5) *The Church grew when there was peace, unity and fellowship among its members. "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:46-47). They were "...together...had all things in common...with one accord...and singleness of heart..." As a result of this kind of unity, they were "...having favor with all the people. And*

*the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."* If the world can see this kind of unity among us today, then the church will grow. How could a congregation expect to grow if there is feuding, fussing and fighting among its members? An old secular song of by-gone days said, *"A feudin', a fussin' and a fightin', this is a wrong that needs a rightin'."* We are admonished in Ephesians 4:3, "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The church will grow when its members know and put into practice the things which edify and make for peace. "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Romans 14:19).

When will the church grow? The answer is simple. When you and I make up our minds that we really want it to grow! †

Route 1, Box 501-A; Fulton, MS 38843

## LET US GO BACK TO THE BIBLE . . .

† FOR THE STANDARD IN RELIGION (2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

† FOR THE SCRIPTURAL PLAN OF SALVATION (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 17:30; Romans 10:9-10; Galatians 3:26-27; 1 Peter 3:21).

† TO LEARN OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHURCH (Acts 2:47; Ephesians 1:3; 4:4; 5:23-25; Colossians 1:18; Galatians 3:26-27).

† TO LEARN OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH (Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 3:3-13; Titus 1:5-9).

† TO LEARN HOW TO WORSHIP SCRIPTURALLY (John 4:24; Acts 20:7; 2:42; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

† TO LEARN HOW TO LIVE THE RIGHT KIND OF LIFE (Titus 2:12; Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 5:19-23).

† IN OUR PREACHING (2 Timothy 4:1-5; 1 Peter 4:11; Romans 1:15-17).

† IN OUR HOMES (Matthew 19:3-9; Ephesians 5:22-25; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21).

† IN EVANGELISM (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:46-47; 5:42).

† TO LEARN OF OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD THE BRETHREN (Hebrews 13:1-2; 2 Timothy 4:2; Galatians 6:1-2; James 5:16, 19-20; 1 John 3:17; Romans 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:6, 15).

--Jerry Joseph

# BAALISM IN THE CHURCH TODAY

Jerry Bates

To even suggest that Christians today practice the same things that Israel and the Canaanites did in their worship to Baal would make most people cringe with horror. People would immediately cry out with a resounding NO! Certainly the exact rituals are not practiced today, yet the motives which prompted Israel to worship Baal are prevalent among modern day Christians.

The worship of Baal emphasized the subjective spiritual experience. It was a worship based on passion, thus you had images, music, dances, sex, and sacred prostitution. It was a worship fulfilled through self expression. One writer said that in Baalism "...you did what you felt like doing when you felt like doing it."

The same desire for a "religious experience" is certainly prevalent today. People are refusing to worship God in the simple way that God has ordained because supposedly it is not "exciting" or "meaningful." People are seeking a "worship experience." People refuse to worship with the saints because they "don't get anything out of it." Terms such as these exhibit a basic ignorance of what Biblical worship is, and many times are a protective cover for self-seeking. Religious feelings or thoughts are not necessarily worship. Entertaining activities such as dramas, films, plays, etc. are not proper activities for our worship to God even though they may teach a good lesson. "The Christmas Carol," a story written by Charles Dickens and which has been reproduced for TV several times, teaches a good lesson, but would it be appropriate for the worship service. The Bible never uses worship as an adjective such as "worship experience." Our worship is not subjective nor private. Worship is not what one experiences but what one does. It has been that way since creation (Genesis 4).

Christ tells us the kind of worship which is pleasing to God: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall

worship the Father in **spirit** and in **truth**: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him **must** worship him in **spirit** and in **truth** (John 4:23-24). The worship God seeks is a response to His Word which comes from the heart.

Our worship is to be directed to God (Matthew 4:9-10) and each individual is to be involved. It is not something done for us. Certainly worship is to be meaningful and we would be benefitted from having participated in it. However, leaving God's plan for his worship and adding modern day adaptations will not accomplish the desired result. It may be entertaining; it may be exciting; it may stir the emotions; and it may even teach some good lessons. (The worship of Baal likely accomplished those things). But, will it prompt us to conform our lives to God's will? Will it glorify God? Our benefit comes only when we worship in accordance to God's will from our heart. We often hear it said, "To get something out of it, you must put something into it." That statement is certainly true and emphasizes the individual involvement of each person in all the acts of worship. Worship should be a time to show reverence to God and solemnly reflect on what He has done for us on the cross. When we realize what blessings we have through Christ, we will be moved to worship God. A true desire to worship comes from meditating on God's Word, not choreography or entertainment.

This doesn't mean all change is wrong or that "tradition" is all important. We must realize that just going through the "rituals" is not the worship God wants. The charge of those who advocate change that the "traditional worship service" has no spirit may be right in some cases. I fear some are just going through the motions. At the same time that we caution against the spirit of Baalism, let us examine ourselves and be sure we have the spirit of God in our worship. †



# GOING, GOING, GONE

Allen Webster

Have you ever wondered why people quit the church? Do they hate God? Did they forget that Jesus died for them? Are they unaware of the horrors of hell? Did they decide that they did not really want to go to heaven anyway? maybe they got up one Sunday, and, out of the blue, decided to just give up. Perhaps they decided that they wanted to live the life of a sinner and did not care what others thought.

And maybe not. I am convinced that most people who quit the Lord did not intend to. It just sort of...happened. What factors are involved? Can it be prevented?

We must not miss the sad fact that backsliders are lost (James 5:19-20; Acts 8:22; 2 Peter 2:20-22). The Lord will not fellowship a backslider (1 John 1:7-10; 1 Peter 3:12; Isaiah 59:1-2). They will not be in heaven. What would cause a sane, reasonable person to quit Christ and knowingly chose to go to hell? There is no one answer, but Jeremiah 8 gives us four contributing factors.

(1) **Jeremiah found that backsliders had DUSTY BIBLES (Jeremiah 8:6-7).** These backsliders did not know the judgment of the Lord. They turned to their own course (Judges 17:6). When approached in their backslidden condition, they replied, "What have we done?" A person living by his own rules can do no wrong.

The first step toward apostasy is a closed Bible. If you are not a daily Bible reader, you are a candidate for conversion by Satan. We are aware of the multiple admonitions to be serious Bible students (2 Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 5:12-14; 2 Peter 1:5-11), but have we dismissed them from our minds? Are you content with your spiritual growth? Do not be-always strive to grow (2 Peter 3:18; 1 Peter 2:2).

If the first step to apostasy is not studying the Bible at home, then the second is skipping congregational Bible study times. Those who

are hungry for truth anxiously await times to learn and grow (Matthew 5:6). What do your attendance records say about your chances of becoming a backslider?

(2) **Jeremiah found that backsliders had STIFF NECKS (Jeremiah 8:9).** Backsliders were found in the temple assemblies (7:10)! They came to hear Jeremiah preach, but argued with him under their breath. They rejected God's Word (6:10; 11:21). *Backslide* is used seventeen times in the Bible (including backsliding, backslider). Four Old Testament words are translated "backslide." They are *cuwg*, "to flinch; to retreat" (Proverbs 14:14); *meshuwbah*, "a turning away" (Jeremiah 8:5); *showbab*, "idolatrous, rebellious" (Jeremiah 3:14); and *carar*, "to act like a heifer that turns backwards and sideways, and cannot be made to go forward and draw regularly in the plough or wagon" (Hosea 4:16). This last one fits the people Jeremiah is considering.

This happens today. It is hard to accept truth that contradicts what I believe or the way I live. The Bible says, "Take heed how ye hear" (Mark 4:24). Preachers and elders are responsible for what is preached, but each listener is responsible for examining, accepting and applying each lesson to his/her life.

They wanted peaceful sermons, instead of the truthful sermons (8:11). "Peace, peace" is nice, but we may need to hear, "Prepare for war." "God's love is as big as the ocean" is encouraging, but it might do me more good to hear "God is as mad as a hornet" at my sins. "Jesus died for you" is true, but some needed to hear, "Ye by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:22).

People who want easy sermons can always find "prophets" who will accommodate (Jeremiah 5:30-31; 6:14; 9:3). Today preachers, both in and out of the Lord's

(Continued on page 11)



## Question To Be Answered: Making A Living Or A Life?

Arnold Harp

Every thinking person should pause in his busy life long enough to evaluate his objectives. The question, "Are you making a life or just making a living?" should be answered honestly.

The responsibilities connected with "making a living" so devour some people that they cannot see their pre-eminent responsibility before God--that of "making a life!"

A vast difference exists between the common task of "making a living" and the delicate and supremely vital obligation of molding a human heart and soul.

### SHOWED DIFFERENCE

The difference is Jesus Christ! He demonstrated the difference in His life and in His teachings. He successfully closed the customary gap between saying the doing in his own life. Then and only then was he in a position to condemn the Pharisees for "saying and doing not."

When he counseled, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth...but...in heaven," He was speaking as one who had "not where to lay his head." And His statement, "Man shall not live by bread alone," has added weight when we remember that at birth He was laid in a borrowed manger and at death in a borrowed tomb.

Hear some of the claims of this lowly Nazarene:

"I am come that they might have life,  
and that they might have it more

abundantly" (John 10:10).

"I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6)

Jesus teaches plainly that the building of a true spiritual life acceptable to God must be constructed on the basis of His teachings. He will make us what He wants us to be if we will let Him.

Yet multitudes of people in our own age, as in Jesus' day, center their human energies and resources almost exclusively on "making a living" as expressed in the ordinary pursuits of securing food, clothing and shelter.

Jesus acknowledged these basic needs, but taught his disciples to "seek first the kingdom of God," promising that material needs would be provided.

### SHUN COVETING

When he said in Luke 12:15, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," He was warning against coveting possessions.

Obviously He was not teaching that His followers sat down, fold their hands and wait for manna from Heaven. Rather he was instructing them to be very careful not to become so interested in the temporal affairs of "making a living" that they would have not time nor inclination to consider the kingdom of God in this life or in the world to come.

Jesus knew human nature perfectly. He could see that if people devoted themselves primarily and exclusively to their own interest and own selfish material aims, they would soon become more and more worried and anxious about the temporal things and less concerned about the eternal things of God.

"Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" Jesus asks in the sermon the mount. Such a worldly view characterizes people who do not know God, he explains in Matthew 6:25, 32.

Jesus teaches that it is better to build

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## GOING, GOING, GONE . . .

(Continued from page 9)

church, will tickle itching ears (2 Timothy 4:3-4). Weak preaching causes much backsliding and comforts backsliders who need to repent (Acts 20:28-32; 1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 2:1-3; 4:1-5; Titus 2:15; James 3:1). God sent Jeremiah to preach what was needed, not just what was likely to be heeded.

**(3) Jeremiah found that backsliders had TIGHT FISTS (Jeremiah 8:10-11).** Jeremiah's faced some stingy folks: "...for every one of them from the least to the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely." They had a priority problem (6:13). They had not totally forsaken God, but they really loved gold more than God.

In our materialistically--enamored society, it is difficult for us to keep money and possessions in the proper perspective. The parable of the Sower and soils illustrates this truth (Matthew 13:7, 22). Our faith can gradually be choked to death by the thorns of care, cash, calamity, and carnality (Matthew 6:33; Colossians 3:1-2).

**(4) Jeremiah found that backsliders had PALE FACES (Jeremiah 8:12).** There is no direct correlation between a tan face and a soiled soul, but the backsliders Jeremiah faced,

had lost their ability to be "red in the face." It was bad enough to be steeped in sin, but it was worse to unashamed of it.

When backsliders get to this point, it is hard to wind them back (cf. Hebrews 6:4-6). When Christians first begin to fall away, they are ashamed and do not want to talk about it. They duck their heads and kick at the ground. But if they persist in leaving the church, their consciences can get so hard that they will look an elder in the eye and indicate no intention of returning to the Lord. Be a good "blusher." We must be ashamed of sin (cf. Isaiah 1:6). Sin killed the Savior, and backsliders "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" Hebrews 6:6).

Jeremiah ends his sermon with a persuading question, "Why do ye sit still" (Jeremiah 8:14). Though on the broad way, it was not too late to detour. Did you find yourself in the study? Be honest. Judgment day comes "ready or not." It is better to "fess up and straighten up now, than it is to face the music then." Please do not let Jeremiah's closing words be said of you: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved...Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" (8:20-22). †

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## Making A Living Or A Life? . . .

(Continued from page 10)

humility in a life than to build and furnish a lovely home.

He teaches that it is better to cultivate purify in the heart than it is to expertly manage a beautiful yard.

Jesus teaches that it is better to learn obedience to his will than it is to become absorbed in so many fleeting things of life.

He teaches that it is better to be lovers of

God than loves of pleasure.

Not only is Christ's way the only intelligent view of life, but His way prepares the immortal soul for the limitless ages of eternity.

A man may fail at "making a living" but succeed in "making a life."

the question is up to every individual: "Shall I be content with just making a living or shall I resolve to be more diligent in making a life in harmony with the will of Christ?"

*College & North Church of Christ  
Mountain Home, AR 72653*

# CAN YOU COUNT THE APPLES IN A SEED?

Dennis Gulledge

The late B.C. Goodpasture used to tell of the time when James A. Harding held a gospel meeting in Clark County, Kentucky. The year was 1877. When an elder of the church was asked about it, he said it was "...not much of a meeting. Oh, brother Harding did his usually powerful preaching, the attendance was fair, but the results were negligible. Only little Jimmy Shepherd was baptized."

Some has said that you can count the number of seeds in an apple, but you cannot count the numbers of apples in a seed. When applied to the preaching of the gospel that means that you can count the number of people who respond to gospel preaching to be baptized, but you cannot count the number of good things done in the life of one person who becomes a Christian, as in the case of brother James W. Shepherd.

Brother Shepherd went to the College of the Bible, Kentucky University, and graduated in 1884. On February 29, 1888 he traveled with his family to New Zealand, remaining there two years. From New Zealand he went to Australia, where he remained almost three years, during which time he preached in Sydney, Melbourne, Balarat, New Castle, and Adelaide. Leaving Australia he returned to the United States by way of the Orient. He traveled extensively. Passing through the Suez Canal, he could see Mt. Sinai in the distance, but he did not visit the Bible lands. He did visit Scotland and England, and being a lover of books, he collected many volumes for his private library and materials for books which he would later write. From 1905 to 1912 he served as "Office Editor" for the *Gospel Advocate*. Later he preached for church of Christ in Detroit, Michigan; Washington, D.C.; Richmond, Virginia and Birmingham, Alabama.

His famous *Handbook on Baptism* was published in 1894. He teacher at the College

of the Bible, Professor J.W. McGarvey, referred tot he book as, "The best and most comprehensive work of its kind in existence." In 1910 brother Shepherd edited and compiled *Queries And Answers*, containing questions answered by David Lipscomb in the *Gospel Advocate*. He put together material for another volume entitled, *Salvation From Sin*. Also, at the request of the aged Lipscomb, brother Shepherd took Lipscomb's notes on some of the New Testament epistles and completed them for publication in the *Gospel Advocate* series of New Testament commentaries.

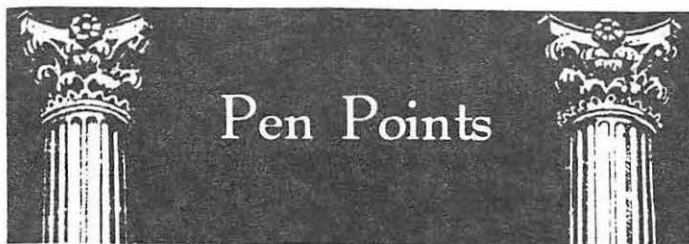
Brother Shepherd passed from this life on Tuesday evening, July 27, 1948. The good that was accomplished in the response of little "Jimmy Shepherd" to a gospel sermon heard long ago, can never fully be measured in human terms. It is when we can "count the seeds of an apple" that we think the greatest amount of good is done. The great amount of good accomplished for the cause of Christ by men and women of average existence are the apples in the seed of truth that we are rarely possessed with the patience to count. Try to count the apples in a seed! †

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## HEATH CHURCH OF CHRIST SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday Morning Bible Class	9:00
Sunday Morning Worship	10:00
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00





## Pen Points

### DOES YOUR BUCKET HAVE A HOLE IN IT?

Nat Evans



A good bucket that has no leaks will hold water. A bucket that has one or more holes in it will eventually lose the water which is put into it. Each of us has a bucket, figuratively speaking, of course, which contains our knowledge of the truth and our good

intentions to put that truth into action in our daily lives. Good resolutions and good intentions need to be carried out in order for us to benefit from them. Does your bucket have any leaks in it?

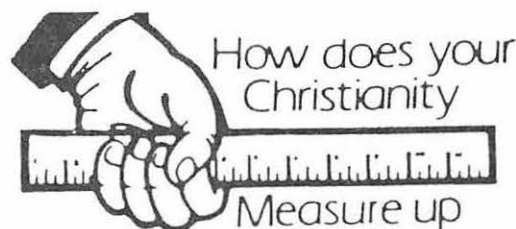
It is possible for one to know what the truth is on some subject and still not put it into practice in his life. It is easier to hear the truth than it is to put it into practice. Some people are inclined toward being lazy and indifferent, or at least to put off till later that which they know should be done NOW. Many know what they should do. Perhaps they really intend to do what is right, but they never seem able to get around to actually doing the things they know. This is true, not only with some peoples who have never obeyed the gospel, but you see procrastination in the lives of many members of the church. They intend to be more regular in church attendance (Hebrews 10:25). They intend to become more involved in the work of the local congregation (I Corinthians 15:58; Philippians 2:12). They plan on becoming better Bible students (2

Timothy 2:15; Acts 17:11). They intend to be more prayerful in their daily lives. But, when asked to do it NOW, they always say, TOMORROW. Somewhere their bucket has a hole in it!

Many people seem to believe that God's blessings come upon those who merely hear the Word. But James refutes that false notion in James 1:21-25. He clearly teaches that people are to be "doers of the word," and not hearers only. Those who operate under the delusion that all that is needed to please God is to hear the word are self-deceived. Lenski translates James 1:22 in the following manner. "Now continue to be Word-doers and not only hearers, cheating your own selves by false reasoning." Jesus taught that the wise man hears and obeys (Matt. 7:21-27).

We are continually hearing sermons which convict us of indifference, neglect, and lack of zealous activity in the Lord's kingdom. We, many times, resolve to do better. But, if we aren't careful, before the week is half gone, our good resolutions have melted away; they have all leaked out and we are like a man who earns wages and puts it into a bag with holes (Haggai 1:6). Say, *DOES YOUR BUCKET HAVE A HOLE IN IT???*

"Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But, be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves. For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his face in a mirror; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straight-way forgetteth what manner of man he was. But, he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth, but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing." James 1:21-25). †





## Prejudice And Its Cure John 1:45-49

M. W. Kiser

### Introduction:



1. Prejudice has been called "the child of ignorance; the alternative to study; and the alternative to thinking."
2. Nathaniel is mentioned twice in the gospels: In John 1 and 21:3 (Bartholomew).

3. We are talking about the hardest obstacle to overcome in teaching people the gospel.

- a. A worldly heart, more concerned about daily bread, might be reasoned with.
- b. A speculative heart, more concerned about controversy, can be struck with an answer.
- c. A prejudiced heart, worst of all, has already reached a conclusion without previous investigation.

### I. The EXISTENCE of Prejudice.

- A. Why do people act the way they do toward truth? A worthy question.
- B. There are several reasons we might give:
  1. *Personal experience.* Nathaniel knew the Galileans were not regular with the annual feasts; separated by Samaria; and traded with the surrounding Gentile nations!
  2. *Caution.* No one should believe a thing lightly (1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1).

3. *Strong convictions.* About what we already believe to be the truth.
4. *Mishandling of the truth.* Philip used the word "Nazareth." Nathaniel knew Moses said Judah; and the prophets said Bethlehem.
5. *Hearsay.* Go on what somebody else has told us.
6. *Bad experience.* Someone has been most untactful in teaching us.
7. *Ignorance.* Isaiah 9:2; Matthew 4:12-16.
- C. Only the truth, not argument, but presentation and demonstration, can open the mind (John 8:32; Acts 17:11--"found"--"come and see").

### II. The EXPRESSION of Prejudice.

- A. There is no way for prejudice to remain hidden; it will always express itself.
- B. Sometimes the manifestation is surprising to us because it comes:
  1. *From a close associate.* Consider the relationship of Philip and Nathaniel.
  2. *From the best of people.* Lord saw him "under the fig tree;" probably in private devotions; and said he was without deceit and a keeper of the law (Psalm 32:2; Micah 4:4; Zechariah 3:10).
  3. *In the bluntest of terms.* he did not hold back his feelings about a small, insignificant, and contemptible place even in his own land.
  4. *Against the purest of intentions.* Philip was a true disciple and a soul winner.
- C. Remember, there is only a short trip between misunderstanding and misrepresentation (John 2:18-22; Matthew 26:59-61).

### III. Our EXPECTATION of Prejudice.

- A. No message is exempt. Therefore we should expect some to so act.

(Continued on page 15)

- B. They treated our Lord with such often (Mark 6:3; John 4:9).
- C. The apostles were not free from such misunderstandings (Acts 17:6; 18:13; 24:14; 28:22).
- D. Therefore, why should we expect it to be any different for us (John 13:16; 15:20; 1 John 3:13).

#### IV. Some EXAMPLES of Prejudice.

- A. *"You people have discarded the Old Testament Scriptures altogether."* COME AND SEE! Romans 15:4; Hebrews 1:1-2; 2 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 3:4-6; Acts 7:38.
- B. *"You people do not believe in the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion."* COME AND SEE! John 6:44-45; Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 4:14-15; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.
- C. *"You people do not believe in the power of prayer."* COME AND SEE! Acts 11:14; 22:10, 16; James 5:16; 1:21.
- D. *"You people do not believe in heart-felt religion."* COME AND SEE! Matthew 13:15; Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 22:37; 2 Samuel 6:16; Acts 11:23; 2 Corinthians 9:7; Acts 2:37; 1 John 3:20-21.
- E. *"You people do not believe in salvation by Grace through Faith."* COME AND SEE! Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 5:8-9; Romans 6:16-18.

#### Conclusion:

1. Men have been known to give up prejudice for a life-long service of consecration to Christ.
2. he who longs for the truth is willing to investigate; and his character will enable him to overcome whatever prejudice he may have.
3. No person should ever allow himself to get into a condition which makes him unwilling to consider the merits of any proposition involving truth, and which vitally affects his eternal welfare. †

for us. We have been too busy chasing dollars. And so, we have lost a generation of young people, who will shortly rule our world, and return the same care to their parents that they received in their formative years. Not funny, is it?

Pray to God that its not too late for us to salvage our families from ruin. Let us begin anew to teach our little ones, by precept and by example the right ways of the true and living God. The opportunity to teach your children comes at an early age, and is quickly gone. We as a nation have let this opportunity slip by for one generation. If we don't return to God, the dark ages of religious ignorance and persecution will be repeated.

"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

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### **A WARNING FROM .....THE PAST.....**

"Fighting for the truth is almost a lost art. Men who are enjoying the benefits of the gospel unmixed with human error, are enjoying these benefits because our fathers fought for the truth. Every inch of ground from that mysterious way of being saved, which was better felt than told, to the plain conditions of pardon as taught in the New Testament, was fought out for us by our fathers.

If someone before us had not fought for the truth, most of us might yet be in the fog of denominational teaching. This is not the time to temporize or make friends with error."

F.B. Srygley (Gospel Advocate, 1928)

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## **A Brief History of the Gospel Gleaner**

The Lord's work is accomplished in a variety of ways and through various means. In 1984, on a trip to Jackson, Tennessee, to tape a couple of programs for "Searching the Scriptures," brother Bill Dillon suggested to Mike Kiser and this writer the seed thoughts of a new publication. In that car ride, the name of the paper, its departments and design were discussed and for the most part decided. Now all that was needed was an eldership and church to oversee the work.

Brethren Wilford Brandon, Rodney Miller, and Paul Randolph who served as elders of the Heath church were approached concerning the possibility of overseeing this new publication. They agreed that the paper would be a good work for the Heath church and hoped that it would be a good influence for the Western Kentucky area. Brother Bill Dillon and this writer served as editors from the beginning.

Perhaps one of the most interesting elements is the first contribution to the GOSPEL GLEANER. When brother Dillon was leaving the Paducah area to begin a new work in LaFayette, Georgia, he gave this writer an old labeler that was seemingly of little use. However, a few weeks later, when visiting a patient at one of the local hospitals, it was noticed that the nurses' stations used the same labeler. At that time, the hospital was adding floors which meant they were

adding nurses' stations which meant that they would need more labelers. To make a long story short, the labeler was sold to the hospital and the money was used to underwrite the first two issues of the GOSPEL GLEANER. The Lord's Hand was at work in providing such an opportunity for evangelism.

In the last ten years of the GOSPEL GLEANER, there have been many contributors and supporters of the paper. The Arlington church in McMinnville, Tennessee has been a staunch supporter from the beginning. The good brethren at LaFayette have also been greatly involved in the paper. The Mabelvale church in Mabelvale, Arkansas has also financially aided this work for the past several years. We are also grateful to the Heath church for her continued support and dedication to the GOSPEL GLEANER and for what they have meant to the Lord's Cause, not only throughout Western Kentucky, but throughout the brotherhood. But above all, we appreciate the loyal readership, that is, you good brethren who have contributed money, written letters, read the paper and passed it on to someone else. This writer learned some time ago, how important the written page is to the brotherhood and especially to the elderly brothers and sisters who read these papers from "cover to cover." May God bless all of you as we serve Him. *--Ronnie Whittemore*