

The Sword AND Staff

"Preach the Word." (II Timothy 4:2)

•

"Feed the Flock." (I Peter 5:2)

THE GOOD AND HONEST HEART

By Dale A. Williamson
1209 Pierce Street
Lexington, Nebr. 68850

IN THIS PORTION of Scripture Christ gives us great life pictures of hearers of the Word of God. They are represented in four different soils, only one of which brings forth fruit. Among other things we learn from the parable of the sower is that the harvest does not always depend on the quality of the seed and the faithfulness of the sower (this alone), but also on the nature of the soil.

As is illustrated by Jesus, many hear the Word of God and do not profit. Why? Several things are mentioned—stones, thorns, cares of this life, etc. But the greatest factor is found in the expression "good and honest heart." When there is a good and honest heart the other factors will not be such a problem. The words "good and honest" were well known and in familiar use among the widely spread Greek speaking people for whom the gospel of Luke was especially written. Such a man (with the good and honest heart) was one whose aim was noble, and who was generously devoted to his aim. The word "honest" has reference to aims or chief ends and describes one whose mind is raised above moral vulgarity, and is bent, not on money making and such low pursuits, but on the attainment of wisdom, holiness, and righteousness.

There have always been and will always be two divisions of men to



whom the word of Christ comes. First, the false-hearted, who call evil good and good evil, who love darkness and hate the light which would make the darkness manifest, John 3:20, Ephesians 5:13; who when that light of the Lord shines around about them, only draw further back into their own darkness; self-excusers and self justifiers, such as were for the most part the scribes and Pharisees. The other division, those though sinners, when the light appears do not refuse to be drawn to it, even though they know it will condemn the darkness, that it will require renewing of their hearts and remodeling of their lives.

If there is one thing I would pray for more than anything else in those I teach and to whom I preach, it would be honesty of heart. This is more important than their knowledge, or their ignorance, or even the fact of their sin. Knowledge can replace ignorance and sins can be forgiven if people have an honest heart.

Luke 8:11-15

There are many Biblical examples of those who had honest hearts.

Nathaniel, one of the first to follow Jesus, had an honest heart. Jesus knowing his heart, spoke of him as "the Israelite, indeed, in whom there is no guile" (John 1:47).

Matthew and Zaccheus, two publicans, demonstrated hearts that were honest when they on different occasions left all to follow Jesus. In the eyes of men they were probably the least likely of prospects for followers of Jesus, but their hearts were honest.

Cornelius, whose conversion is recorded in Acts 10, is another example of an honest heart. His eagerness and readiness to receive the Word of God shows his honesty.

The Ethiopian eunuch, of whom we read in Acts 8, also shows honesty of heart. He too was anxious to learn and was ready to respond to that which he did learn.

Consider three characteristics of the honest heart.

I. THE HONEST HEART SINCERELY INQUIRES OF TRUTH

A person with an honest heart really wants to know the truth. There are some who may inquire of truth but really not wanting to know. Not so with an honest man. He is not satisfied with what he already knows or doesn't know—he wants to know more of God's truth. He is one described by Jesus as being "poor in spirit." The eunuch wanted to know the truth.

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PROVERBS of TODAY

Many times people whose lives are not straight do not like straight preaching.

"You find that big people discuss ideals, average people discuss things, and little people---they just talk about other people."

When one becomes a Christian , he is doing more than getting ready to die---he is getting ready to live, eternally!

"It is the responsibility of the church to feed the lambs, not to entertain the goats."

The mission of the church is to save souls, not money.

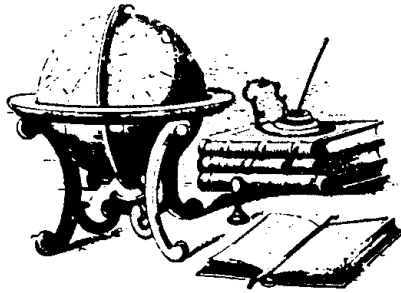
"When wealth is lost nothing is lost; when health is lost something is lost; when character is lost all is lost."

To get "even" with someones you have to get on their level.

"Yard by yard life's hard, but inch by inch it's a cinch."

The church is what it teaches.

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EDITORIAL

COMMENTS...

THE SWORD AND STAFF PUBLICATION

IF YOU THINK the appearance of THE SWORD AND STAFF has improved, we are pleased. It involves several thousand dollars worth. A new printing press and type-setting machine have been acquired. This equipment is partly paid for and partly not. We have a "burden" from the Lord to publish this paper, and there is evidence that much good is being accomplished. Certainly the need is great. It is our conviction that the medium that carries the message should be attractive, in keeping with the dignity of the message. We are humbly working toward that end. We hope to enlarge our printing "ministry."

Our subscriber relationship is unique. You subscribe, but we don't send a notice of renewal when your subscription expires. Because of the small number involved in getting out the paper time is a problem. We look to you personally to renew your subscription when you think it is due. Please render us that favor without being notified by us. If you appreciate the paper, and it has helped you, please back us up in this manner. Subscribe for others. Help toward the subscriptions of others. This paper is not free (there is much expense involved in getting it out). However, we don't want to remove any names from the mailing list, but continue to build up our outreach.

THANK YOU!--J. E. G.

CONVERSION TO CHRIST

Today is an age that demands men but they are so sadly wanting and lacking. You look about you to behold the corruption of the day but you can do nothing about it.

You are a slave bound by the same passions and desires of those about you. Ambition moves your soul to rise above the human shell to walk in paths divine.

Desperately you struggle to taste the heavenly gift only to relapse back into a state of nothingness.

Actually you had not the faith to transform your feeble and weary soul. But the hunger of your degenerate and unregenerate soul cries out again and again.

Then one day it happened---faith became alive; you obeyed the gospel. The light of heaven dawned upon your black heart to cast out all the dark and gloom.

There is the feeling that you have just found life. You have just begun to live---Eternally!

By A. BROTHER

"When we mention FAITH, testimony is implied; when we mention OBEDIENCE, commandment or law is implied."

SYSTEMATIC

Scriptural Studies

"THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY"

(I Corinthians 13)

Introduction:

1. What is "charity" (KJV)?
 - (1) Elsewhere translated "love."
 - (2) *Agapao* (*agape*), the love of devotion, and *phileo*, the love of emotion, are the N. T. words for love
 - (3) *Agapao* (*agape*) is the word found in I Cor. 13.
2. The context of I Corinthians.
 - (1) Notice 12:20-31 and then chapter 14.
 - (2) Instead of being humble and thankful, they were puffed up over who had the best spiritual gifts.
 - (3) Paul points them to the more excellent way.

I. THE FUTILITY OF RELIGION WITHOUT LOVE, 13:1-3.

A. The languages of men (earth) and of angels (heaven) are nothing without love, verse 1.

1. This shows that *tongues* was an intelligent language (Cf. Acts 2:4-12).
2. The gift of tongues was the one in which the Corinthians put the most prestige in their vanity.
3. Without love all the speaking would be worthless, as a "sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

B. Combination of other extraordinary spiritual gifts, verse 2.

1. Prophecy, understanding all mysteries, knowledge, faith--notice I Cor. 12:4-10.
2. All of these extraordinary spiritual gifts came by the laying on of the apostles' hands (Heb. 2:3,4; Acts 8:14-18; 19:6).
3. Though we have all of these gifts combined and have no love we are nothing.

C. Giving is normally an act of love, verse 3.

1. "Bestow all my goods to feed the poor" (*Bestow*, distribute to do the most good).
 - (1) If we see the need and don't help, God's love is not in us (I John 3:17).
 - (2) We must have the proper motive in giving (Matt. 6:1,2).
 - (3) The gift without the giver is bare.
2. The supreme sacrifice of giving oneself.
 - (1) Notice John 3:16 and 15:13.
 - (2) Consider I John 3:16.
3. But without love these noble acts are meaningless.

II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LOVE, 13:4-7.

A. Positive characteristics; what love does, verse 4a.

1. Love suffers long.
2. It is kind.

B. Negative characteristics: what love does not do, verses 4b-6a.

1. Love envies not (is not jealous).
2. It vaunts not itself (not boastful or vainglorious).
3. It is not puffed up (is not inflated with pride and arrogance).
4. It does not behave itself unseemly (is not rude).
5. It seeks not its own (is not selfish).
6. It is not easily provoked (is not irritable).
7. It thinks no evil (keeps no score of wrongs).
8. It rejoices not in iniquity.

C. Negative characteristics: what love does verses 6b-7.

1. Love rejoices in the truth.
2. It bears all things (has no limits to its endurance).
3. It believes all things (no end to its trust).
4. It hopes all things (optimistic).
5. It endures all things (outlasts all things).

III. THE ENDURABILITY OF LOVE, 13:8-13.

A. The two classes of spiritual gifts.

1. The ordinary.
 - (1) Acts 2:38; 5:32; I Cor. 6:19,20.
 - (2) Galatians 5:22,23.
2. The extraordinary.
 - (1) Hebrews 2:3,4; Acts 19:6; II Cor. 12:12.
 - (2) I Corinthians 12:1-11,28-31.
3. *Love* and *prophecy* (I Cor. 14:1) are the most outstanding gifts of each respective class.

B. Extraordinary spiritual gifts were destined to cease to be in the church with the ordinary ones, love being the prominent, to continue.

1. Love would continue, but...
 - (1) The gift of prophecy would fail.
 - (2) Speaking in tongues would cease.
 - (3) Supernatural knowledge would vanish away.
 - (4) These are representative of all extraordinary spiritual gifts.
2. Compare verse 8 and 11.
 - (1) "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."
 - (2) *Spake* corresponds to *tongues*; understood corresponds to *prophecy*, and thought corresponds to *knowledge*.
 - (3) In its infancy these gifts were needful in the church to confirm the truth, etc., but "when I became a man, I put away childish things."
3. Examine verses 9 and 10 carefully.
4. The vain Corinthians were puffed up and putting too much emphasis on passing things; love is what matters.
5. Love beginning now will continue throughout eternity, verse 13.

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Dear Bro. Gibbons:

I was interested in your editorial comments in THE SWORD AND STAFF of September. As you may know, we have recently published the STAR direct mail magazine with this same theme. We appreciate your work and trust that it is progressing in a fine way.

Sincerely,
Alvin Jennings

THE GOOD AND HONEST HEART
(Continued from Page 1)

Listen as we read, "How can I (understand the truth) except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him" (Acts 8:31). And again in verse 34, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? Of himself, or of some other man?" This man (the eunuch), as any honest-hearted person will do, admitted his lack of knowledge and understanding. He refused to close his mind to truth. An honest-hearted person doesn't reject knowledge of truth by saying, "My church teaches thus and thus" or, "This is the way I was brought up and it is good enough for me." He realizes that he could be wrong or that he might not have all the truth.

Further, if a person really wants to know the truth he will involve himself in seeking it. Such a one was "Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God" (Acts 13:7). Such were the Bereans in Acts 17:11. "These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily to see whether those things were so."

A person who is anxious to hear the truth doesn't put his mind out of gear when the truth is preached. He has a disciplined mind. He makes use of every opportunity to learn the truth for he puts proper value on it, as Proverbs 23:23 says, "Buy the truth and sell it not."

II. THE HONEST HEART GIVES EARNEST HEED TO THE THINGS HE HEARS.

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (Hebrews 2:2).

The honest-hearted person listens intently. He is willing to concentrate and ponder on the things he hears. He dwells upon those things and endeavors to understand their application to his life. He searches out truth and he receives it as the Word of God, not the mere word of man.

Are you an honest listener, friend?

III. THE HONEST HEART HUMBLY APPLIES THE TRUTH TO HIS OWN LIFE.

"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:21,22).

This means that an honest heart will not look for loopholes, nor does he try to justify himself in his present condition. He takes seriously that which has been preached to his soul.

He receives with meekness the engrafted word and removes those things which would prevent the word from helping him. He allows the word to correct, instruct and admonish him.

FRIEND, are you honest with the Word of God? Will you then do what

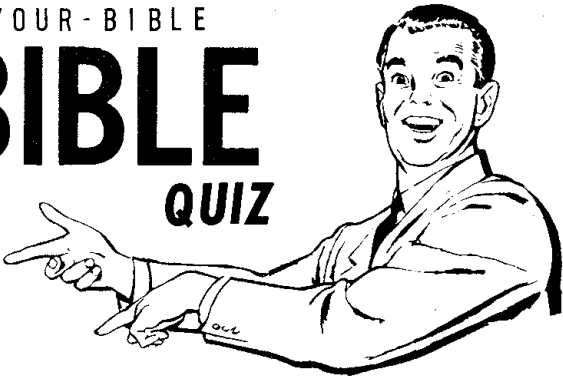
the Word of God says to do? If you are not a Christian will you believe in Christ as the Son of God? (Mark 16:16). Will you repent of sins? Acts 2:38. Will you then be immersed into Christ for the remission of sins? I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3,4. If you are a Christian will you be honest and apply the truth to your own life? It is just as necessary for the Christian to have an honest heart as it is the sinner who wants to be saved.

Don't be like the church member who, as he was leaving the services, shook the preacher's hand and said, "Preacher, that was a good sermon this morning. Why, I could think of at least a dozen people who must have gotten hit. They really needed that message today!"

Just how honest are you anyway with the Word of God?

KNOW-YOUR-BIBLE

**BIBLE
QUIZ**



1. What man in the Bible fell from grace, but never backslide?
2. What were the names of the three sons of Noah?
3. What land was called the mount of the Amorites?
4. What ancient country was located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers?
5. What was the primary river running through Palestine?
6. When Jesus started his ministry, what town apparently did he use as his "headquarters"?
7. What man was selected to take the place of Judas as an apostle?
8. What book could easily be called the "book of conversions" in the New Testament?
9. What were the first two epistles written by the apostle Paul?
10. Give a Scripture reference that very pointedly says a Christian can fall from grace.

(Answers found elsewhere in this issue)

THE WORSHIP OF GOD

By James E. Gibbons



THE WORD *WORSHIP* that we find in the Scriptures has several wide and sweeping meanings. That is because more than one word for worship is used in the original language. In its expanded meaning it is a way of life, the life of man in his right relationship to God; religion itself. This is evident when Paul says in Romans 12:1, "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*." This word *service* is the same word that is rendered "service" in Hebrews 9:1 and 2, where it had reference to the service of the Levitical priest in the tabernacle. Part of this religious service (worship) was offering up animal sacrifices for the people. However, Paul makes it plain in Romans 12 that God is not interested today in a dead animal sacrifice as an act of worship, but in our bodies as living sacrifices. This word *service* in Romans 12 is very much like our use of the expression "church service." It pertains to participation in acts of worship. Another interesting and informative verse is James 1:27, which reads, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." This word for *religion* here is translated "worshipping" in Colossians 2:18. Practicing pure religion is worship.

However, the primary word used for worship in the Old Testament and the primary one in the New Testament has more of a limited meaning. We are informed that *shahah* is

the basic word for worship in the Hebrew and that it signifies to depress, bow down, to prostrate oneself. We have likewise found that the Greek word *proskuneo* is the primary word for worship in the New Testament, being found 59 times in those writings. It likewise means to kneel, to prostrate oneself, to do homage or make obeisance. Both words have emphasis upon the physical act of worship, bowing, but a spiritual condition which precedes, prompts, and accompanies bowing is necessarily implied. This fits right in with the sentiment of the apostle Paul when he said, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3:14). Paul is convinced "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Philip. 2:10). The book of Revelation affords us with the scene of worship many times, and time and again it says that they "fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever" (Rev. 5:14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4).

In view of the basic meaning of the word worship, as well as the general meaning, we are made to ask if there is much worshipping going on today. Perhaps modern man does not know how to worship. He is not oriented toward worship. In this age of advanced technology man appears to be too sophisticated and self-sufficient to actually know what it is to engage in true worship. Those inclined toward religion may perform their religious "hokus pokus" precisely, and their ritualistic formality with finesse, but still have never worshipped. By prophecy Paul spoke

of some "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof..." (II Tim. 3:5). Oh, may we remember that Jesus said: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

I. UNACCEPTABLE WORSHIP.

Contrary to what is commonly thought there is such a thing as unacceptable worship. This is evident throughout the Bible. In the early patriarchal age we are introduced to the two sons of Adam, Cain and Abel. They came to offer sacrifices to God. We know that Abel's offering was accepted while Cain's was rejected (Gen. 4:3-5). The priests Nadab and Abihu, under the Mosaic system, offered strange fire on the altar before the Lord. "And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (Lev. 10:1,2). Then listen to Revelation 14:9 and 10 in the last book of the Bible: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God..." Also read verse 11. Definitely there is such a thing as unacceptable worship.

FIRST, let us notice unacceptable worship as seen in the nature of the worship. The worship can be wrong simply because the worship itself is basically wrong.

(Continued on Next Page)

ANSWERS TO "KNOW-YOUR-BIBLE" BIBLE QUIZ

1. Adam; he fell from grace, but he didn't backslide because "backslide" means to slide back into sin where you have been before; Adam had been created sinless.
2. Genesis 10:1.
3. Canaan (Deut. 1:6,7, 19-21).
4. Babylonia
5. Jordan River.
6. Capernaum.
7. Acts 1:21-26.
8. Acts.
9. I and II Thessalonians.
10. Galatians 5:4.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD...

(Continued from Page 5)

In the ten commandments God declared, "I am the Lord thy God... Thou shalt have no other gods before me...for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God..." (Exodus 20:2-5). With that in mind, consider the temptation of Jesus. Satan promised if Jesus would fall down and worship him that he would give him the kingdoms of this world. But Jesus appropriately answered, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:8-10). God is to be worshipped, not the Devil, nor the idol of materialism. Covetousness is idolatry (Col. 3:5), and the Devil confronted Jesus with this in the temptation. Perhaps modern man is a little too sophisticated to bow down to idols of sticks and stones, but he nonetheless is an idolater. Many people are motivated by materialism and controlled by covetousness in our society. But, remember, God is a jealous God. There can be no other gods before him.

In this day when modern theologians even are reaching out to embrace heathen religions in fellowship, it is well for us to make emphatic that only Jehovah God is to be worshipped. And He must be approached through Christ. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

God is not to be worshipped through the ritual and ceremony of the Old Testament religion. That law has been nailed to the cross (Col. 3:14-16), and we are to approach God in a new and living way (Heb. 10:20-22). Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain (*as the Samaritans*), nor yet in Jerusalem (*as the Jews*) worship the Father...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" (John 4:21,23). This was in anticipation of the New Testament. The Old Testament religion is no

longer acceptable.

Teaching for doctrines the traditions and commandments of men makes worship unacceptable. In fact, it nullifies worship. Jesus, speaking of the scribes and Pharisees, gave this verdict: "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:9). The religious world today needs to take warning.

We are made to wonder if much of worship today is not man-centered, and consequently unacceptable to God. Is it evident in the robed choirs as they proudly sing their stilted anthems? What about the robed clergymen who precisely preside, preach with exact and pleasant articulation, and, yes, *please* (that is their motto). There is no denouncing of sin and calling for repentance. Then it seems much of so-called singing has degenerated to the entertainment level. It matters little whether the one singing a "special" number is a Christian or not, just so the singing is beautiful. Big churches hire professional pianists and organists irrespective of whether they belong to what is supposed to be the Lord's church or not (also discounting worship being an act of free will or not).

Oh, the unspiritual gimmicks, contests and sensationalism we have seen in connection with the church! How repulsive to the spiritual mind! How it must irk the Lord of glory and bring his disdain that the dignity of his gospel is disgraced by such carnal trivia! Needless to say, such nonsense makes worship unacceptable.

SECOND, let us consider unacceptable worship as seen in the worshipper. As we have endeavored to point out, the worship can be unacceptable to God because the worship is basically wrong, but the worship can be wrong simply because the worshipper is wrong. The right pattern of worship becomes wrong when the worshipper is wrong. In fact, supposed obedience to the commands of God under these circumstances becomes a sin! From some quarters we hear much about the mechanics of worship, but little about the spiritual prerequisites of worship.

Consider the case of Samuel and Saul in the Old Testament. Even at this late date, God's pronounced enemies the Amalekites had not been wiped out of the land. God through Samuel commanded king Saul to go and smite these degenerate people, utterly eradicating them from the face of the earth, along with their livestock. Saul supposedly fulfilled this mission, and meeting Samuel said, "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord." But Samuel knowingly replied, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" He had not fully obeyed. He tried to say that he had brought the best of the sheep and oxen back to sacrifice to God (King Agag had also been spared). "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king" (Cf. I Samuel 15).

Proverbs 15:8 relates: "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight."

The prophets take up the same message, only a little stronger. Listen to Isaiah 1:11-15. "...I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I *delight not* in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more *vain oblations*; incense is *an abomination unto me*; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; *it is iniquity*, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts *my soul hateth*; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear..." The next few verses

call on the people to repent. Read Amos 5:21-24; also, Micah 6:6-8. The Lord Jesus in the New Testament Scriptures quoted Hosea 6:6, which says, "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offering." Truly these old prophets sounded forth the truth of God. The worship without the worshipper is bare; worship is wrong when the worshipper is wrong, although the form may be correct.

The Lord Jesus Christ confronted the scribes and Pharisees about this same problem (Matt. 6:1-18). They gave their alms, they prayed, and they fasted—all acceptable acts of worship. But their worship was wrong because they were wrong. They did these things to be seen of men, to to receive the praise of men. Jesus remarked, "Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." Yes, they had their reward right here and now, the applause of men. The implication is that there was none waiting hereafter.

Listen to Paul in I Corinthians 10:21 and 22. "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?" No, you cannot hold on to the Devil with one hand and the Lord with the other, and expect to be a true worshipper of God. That is not how God works.

Also, when we approach the observance of the Lord's supper, the partaker must be actually discerning the Lord's body and blood or else he is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord (I Cor. 11:27-29). It must be a time of deep reflection on the Lord's death and what it means to us.

James wrote, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." (James 1:26). We have before pointed out that in James 1:27 the word *religion* signifies worship. The same Greek word is found in the verse before we have just quoted. It is very much like what this same writer

said in 3:9 and 10. "Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." Beloved, you can't gossip about your neighbors, use profane language, then come to worship God and expect it to be accepted. James says you have deceived your own heart, and that your "religion (worship) is vain."

(Continued Next Month)

THIS LETTER WAS NEVER ANSWERED:

June 13, 1968
1305 Main
Hamburg, Iowa 51640

Dear Mr. A. A. Allen,

I have on occasion, heard your radio program, "Allen Revival Hour." Frankly, I have been both amazed and appalled at your blatant statements. However, even though I do not agree with your realm of thinking I feel it necessary to write you in hopes you can see, what I believe to be the correct understanding on this matter of miracles.

We both know and can agree that a miracle is an act of God superseding a natural law. Jesus performed many miracles and the reason He did so is revealed in John 20:30,31. The apostles performed miracles. They received this extraordinary power in the second chapter of Acts. Acts 2:4 says they were able to speak in tongues—say, why is it when men like yourself go into foreign lands you have to study their language first? The apostles were able to preach by direct inspiration (John 14: 26), why is it that you have to study and prepare your talks before you deliver them? Why should you have to study the Bible at all, if you've experienced the same Holy Ghost baptism as the original apostles did?

Ephesians 4:5 says there is *one* baptism and that is water baptism re-

ferred to in Acts 8:36-39. Besides all this Matthew 3:11 says that Jesus was to administer Holy Ghost baptism and I know that you weren't around to receive it!

John 14:26 and John 16:13 tells us that the apostles were to be led by the Spirit into ALL TRUTH and the words they penned are inspired truth and we now have all the truth we need in the form of the Bible. The purpose of the apostles' miracles was to confirm their credentials, their preaching (Hebrews 2:3,4) and to show the world that they were indeed spokesmen for God. When the apostle John died the New Testament was completed and the age of miracles ceased!

I have truly wondered, Mr. Allen, about the authenticity of your "miracles." Why are they all seemingly "interior miracles;" by that I mean the healing of cancer, T. B., heart disease, mental disorders, stomach ailments, nervousness, inward pain, etc, things that the naked eye cannot see? I dare say you've never put back a severed limb or even an ear (as Jesus did to the severed ear of Malchus) and if you have then why aren't you over in Viet Nam doing our country a great service by restoring missing limbs from the person of the military? Why are your "miracles" never of the "exterior nature" and spontaneous (Matthew 12:10-14) such as the healing of lumps, goiters, growths, crippled and withered limbs and such like? Surely if you could even raise the dead back to life you could do our nation a great deed by bringing back to life people of great renown that could benefit our miserably corrupt society.

I sincerely believe that those who are "healed" by you are either feigning affliction or are emotionally, high-strung individuals. Many times when a healing attempt fails you tell the person he didn't have enough faith but faith is not a prerequisite to healing. The paralytic of Mark 2 was healed without faith on his part; Lazarus was raised from the dead and we know he couldn't of had faith in the matter; Malchus expressed no faith whatsoever and yet Jesus healed his ear.

(Continued Next Page)

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THIS LETTER WAS...

(Continued from Page 7)

The truth of the matter is that you along with many other "faith healers" cannot and are not working miracles by the power of God. Today God works in providential ways for the age of miracles has long since departed. I hope that you can now see

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that when the apostle John died miracles came to a halt, that we are baptized by one baptism, that the Bible is our only source of truth hence ruling out any supernatural act by un-inspired man. I sincerely hope, Mr. Allen, that you will reply to this letter written in your behalf.

Sincerely,

Victor Knowles

SEX CRIMES ARE CLIMBING WITH HEMLINES

TOKYO — As skirts have gone up so has the number of sex crimes in Tokyo, according to a report by the Metropolitan Police Department.

Although only a small percentage of the Japanese women seen on the streets appeared with hemlines above the knee, crimes have doubled since the vogue for shorter skirts arrived here.

The report, entitled "Mini-skirts and Sex Crimes," stated that the 2,627 cases in this category during the first nine months of 1967 were twice the figure recorded in the corresponding period of previous years.

Furthermore, according to the report, this year there has not been the usual decrease in sex crimes as summer drew to a close. Instead, it said, the rate is still going up.

While drawing a parallel between rising hemlines and the rising number of sex crimes, the report declared that it "could not be firmly determined" that miniskirts were the direct cause. It added, however, that an increase in the number of sex crimes had also been reported recently in London, Paris and other cities.

(This news item was released by the New York Times News Service).

This news article is about a year old, but the truth remains, and it would be interesting to know (in view of dressing ? habits) how the trends have gone. A Christian woman will have the discretion and good sense to dress modestly like the Bible teaches (1 Tim. 2:9; Matt. 5:28; 1 Cor. 7:12). Consider these things.

MINISTERS' --MART--

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