

The AND Staff

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

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

THE WORSHIP OF GOD

(Part Two, Continued from Last Month)

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IN OUR introduction we sought to define worship. We saw that in its generic sense it has reference to the practice of religion itself. However, the most common word used for worship in the Scriptures signifies to kneel, bow and do obeisance.

The first main thought we discussed was unacceptable worship. There is such a thing as unacceptable worship. It can be unacceptable for two reasons: (1) The worship can be wrong because the worship itself is basically wrong; (2) The worship can be wrong because the worshipper is wrong (not right with God).

II. ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP.

First, considering this from the position of the worshipper, the worshipper must be acceptable and have been accepted of the Lord before his worship is acceptable. Thereupon, worship is a natural, logical and spontaneous experience when we are right with God. We see this in those converted on Pentecost. They gladly received the word and were baptized. They were filled with great fear and joy. They were with one accord, with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God (Cf. Acts 2:41,42,46,47). The immediate reaction of the Ethiopian in his conversion was that "he went on his way rejoicing," praising God (Acts 8:39).

"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2:18). Not only do we have access by the one Spirit unto



God, but it is the Spirit within us producing the stimulus and accelerating the desire to worship. Listen: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6). "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess (debauchery); but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:18,19). By the endwelling of the Holy Spirit we call out to God in prayer. By being filled with the Spirit we are moved to praise God. The endwelling of the Spirit produces the song, and it is a "spiritual" song—not a worldly song that one might sing under the influence of strong drink (Could it be that the dead singing of some churches, and lack of enjoyment in singing, can be attributed to the fact that they do not have the Spirit of God. If we have been accepted by the Lord, our worship is acceptable, and we will have a song in our hearts).

Every Christian is to participate in the worship. No one can repent and be baptized for you (Acts 2:38). No one can live the Christian life for you (II Cor. 5:10). No one can observe the Lord's supper for you, for all are to partake (Matthew 26:27; Acts 2:41,42; 20:7; I Cor. 10:16,17). And no one can sing for you (Col. 3:16). It is an experience and privilege reserved for you alone to engage in. The Protestant Reformation, originally, was a singing movement. Apparently in the Catholic Church the only singing that was allowed was by special choirs. As they broke with Rome, they learned the joy of every man praising God. Then, no one can do the praying you ought to be doing. In short, no one can worship for you; no one can practice your religion for you.

Now, let us notice, acceptable worship, as well as being a spiritual experience, takes a form. In the first place we enter Christianity by obeying a form of doctrine from the heart (Romans 6:17). As before has been pointed out, the definition of the basic word for worship (*proskuneo*) suggests the form of bowing. Romans 12:1 and 2, containing a secondary word for worship ("service"), relates worship to Christian living and suggests a form by instructing them to be "transformed." The fact that Christians are to meet for public assembly suggests form to a certain extent. They are still in the body; in that body they assemble. Worship takes a certain form, but not formality. We engage in certain exercises of wor-

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PROVERBS of TODAY

A Bible preacher will preach the Bible.

"Failure always catches up with those who sit down to wait for success."

Beware when you find others more concerned about your soul than you are.

"First century Christians went out into the world to tell the story of Jesus; twentieth century Christians go to church to have the story of Jesus told to them."

To be meek one does not have to be weak.

"It is easy to lose interest in the church when we have so little invested in it."

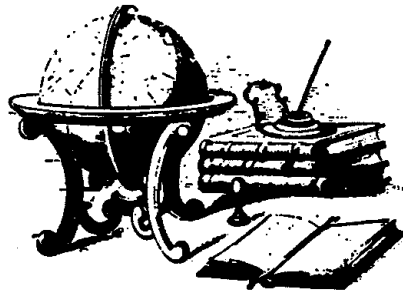
Many people have a form of godliness, but they don't have God.

"Don't wait for something to turn up--get a spade and dig for it!"

When the preacher "hits" sin, some people stop sinning and others stop attending.

"If you are not kind, you are the wrong kind."

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EDITORIAL

COMMENTS...

IT'S IN THE AIR...BUT IS IT RIGHT?

YEARS AGO each religious group had its own well defined faith and its own program and policies, and each group stayed to itself, not always proclaiming that it was the only one right but nevertheless satisfied that it was right and in no way desirous of mixing up with other religious groups from which it differed on various cardinal points.

Today as we look out into the religious world, an altogether picture presents itself to our view. Now, instead of remaining apart, there is every effort being made to run together into one mass, Instead of affirming what is believed, belief is played down--not to a minor role but to no role at all, it seems. At specially planned times, preachers of one group appear in the pulpits of other groups. In a few instances, one preacher is actually preaching to two different religious groups in the same small town. Religious mergers involving some of the major religious bodies have taken place within the past few years (and one even in the past few months). And at this very time, ten religious groups are hoping to be able to merge into one large religious body. And even the many-centuries-old Roman Catholic group, which for many years claimed an exclusiveness and boasted that it never changed, has joined up with the spirit of get-together. A few years ago the Pope received the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the pull-away Church of England. This made news because of its newness. At the present Ecumenical Council of the Roman Catholic Church, "separated brethren" (as they were called by the Pope) from various Protestant bodies were invited to sit in as "spectators." A complete overhauling of former Catholic doctrine and practice has been going on at the Council before a world of unbelieving eyes all of which is designed to make Catholicism more like the religious world about it and to make get-togetherness more possible. The Aug. 1968 READER'S DIGEST article on "The Revolution in the Roman Catholic Church" says that besides unity overtures toward the Protestants that "offers to make common cause with Jews are also meeting notable success. Sparked by Vatican II's robust repudiation of anti-Semitism and its forthright exoneration of collective Jewish guilt in Christ's death, the U. S. Bishop's Conference last year established a special commission now busily initiating dialogues between the two faiths. Similar overtures are being made to Muslims in countries heavily Islamic. And dialogues are even being sought with atheists and communists."

"Dialogue" boils down to one thing usually: we both "belong"; let's get together. And to think of having "dialogue" with atheists and communists shows just how far in disbelief religion has now proceeded. Such a statement should be both eye-opening and shocking if a reader has not been keeping up with unprecedented changes.

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SYSTEMATIC

Scriptural Studies

DEATH AND THE LIFE HEREAFTER

Introduction:

1. Death and the life hereafter have always occupied the mind of man, perhaps ancient man being more sensitive about this than modern man.
2. Job's question was very fitting (Job 14:14).
3. We need to be concerned (Hebrews 9:27).

I. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE BEING OF MAN?

A. Man's Composition (Genesis 2:7).

1. Body.
2. Soul.
 - (1) The soul is life.
 - (2) The soul is the connecting link between the body and the spirit.
 - (3) Sometimes the word "soul" is used to describe the eternal part of man called the "spirit"--but not always.
3. Spirit.
 - (1) This is the part that thinks, chooses, loves.
 - (2) It is the essence of man--the part which will live forever.
 - (3) Man is not a body with a soul (spirit), but a soul (spirit) with a body (I have a body; hence the I is distinguished from the body).

B. What takes place in death? (Genesis 2:17).

1. Death is basically a separation.
 - (1) Spiritual death--separation of a soul from God.
 - (2) Physical death--separation of the soul (and spirit) from the body.
2. Death is a curse (Genesis 3:19; Romans 6:23).
3. In death the spirit (sometimes called the soul) does not die--it merely vacates the body.

II. CAN THE SPIRIT LIVE IN A CONSCIOUS STATE OUTSIDE OF THE BODY? (without the body).

A. Old Testament Characters.

1. After death, Moses and Elijah in the transfiguration were conscious (Matthew 17:1-5).
2. Christ spoke of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the present tense as being alive and conscious (Mark 12:26,27).

B. New Testament Evidence.

1. Consider II Corinthians 12:1-4.
2. Christ was conscious during his entombment (I Peter 3:18,19).
 - (1) He preached (not word for preached the gospel) to the spirits in prison.
 - (2) In order to preach he had to be conscious.

- (3) In order for the spirits to hear they had to be conscious too.

III. DOES THE SPIRIT GO TO ITS FINAL PLACE OF ABODE IMMEDIATELY AT DEATH?

A. The Bible pictures a Day of Resurrection and Judgment to come at the end of the World.

1. The words of Jesus (John 5:28,29; Matthew 25:31-46).
2. Daniel 12:2-4.
3. It is the body which is asleep in death for the soul is conscious--the last way we see the dead is in a posture and appearance of sleep (but only the body).
4. Hence, in the light of the Scriptures, the spirit does not go directly to its eternal reward at death.

B. Hades, the present situation.

1. There is righteous Hades and wicked Hades.
 - (1) Reference to wicked Hades (Luke 16:23).
 - (2) Reference to righteous Hades (Acts 2:27,31; Luke 23:42,43).
 - (3) The parable of Jesus (clothed with earthly language) was not a picture of the eternal state following the Judgment in the last day, but the situation as it was then (Luke 16:19,27-31).
 - (4) The wicked side of Hades may be referred to in Jude 6 (called "Tartarus" in the Greek).
2. Eternal destinies are already sealed in Hades: The Gulf.

C. The eternal Heaven and Hell.

1. This will not start before the second coming of Christ (John 14:1-3).
2. At that time our bodies will be resurrected and we shall go to forever be with the Lord (I Thess. 4:13-18).
3. Consider John 5:28 and 29 again.
4. Read Revelation 20:11-15.
5. Why the Judgment if everyone knows while he is in Hades whether he is saved or not?
 - (1) So no one can say that he has not received just treatment or judgment (everyone will have his day in court).
 - (2) The degrees of reward and punishment will be determined, but nonetheless eternal both ways. (Luke 12:46-48; Matthew 25:41,46).

IV. THE HEREAFTER---A DIFFERENT, MORE WONDERFUL, AND HIGHER REALM OF LIVING.

A. It is hard to describe the Hereafter.

1. Language has arisen from man's experience, and since we have been confined to physical things largely in this present world, we actually do not have words to convey Heaven.
2. What Paul said (II Cor. 12:4).
3. In the book of Revelation the world's most precious stones and metals are used in an effort to depict and symbolize Heaven (Rev. 21:10-27).

B. The Resurrection and Relationships Hereafter.

1. Our bodies will be resurrected in a new glorified

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THE WORSHIP OF GOD . . .
(Continued from Page 1)

ship to vent the deep religious feeling and adoration that is in our hearts.

Christians are commanded not to forsake the public gathering of the church (Hebrews 10:25). This reference in Hebrews does not specify the frequency of this gathering. When did the early church meet for worship? In the early days of its beginning the church met daily (Acts 2:46, 47). There were other times when they had special prayer meetings (Acts 4: 31; 12:12). The church at Antioch seems to have assembled daily for a whole year (Acts 11:26). We have indications that the early Christians met on the first day of the week to worship (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16: 2). Therefore we conclude they met at least once a week, and when the circumstances were more desirable, they met more frequently. We cannot dogmatically say that the writer in Hebrews 10:25 had just the Lord's day meeting in mind. Whenever the church meets, regardless when it is, faithful Christians will not be "forsaking the assembling" of themselves together (if at all possible).

Acts 2:42 is a good example of the public worship of the church on the first day of the week (Pentecost fell on the first day of the week). That verse reads: "And they continued stedfastly in the *apostles' doctrine* and *fellowship*, and in *breaking of bread*, and in *prayers*." Perhaps it would be well for us to examine each of these things individually. They faithfully did all of this.

Apostles' doctrine: This no doubt refers to teaching and to the content of the teaching. This would involve preaching the Word, teaching the Word, studying the Word, and following the Word. In the general sense we could even reach out and include singing under this (Col. 3:16). How men need a deep respect for the Word of God! To say that you hold a person in the highest regard, then belittle his word is a lie. To say that one respects God (worships God), then pays no attention to what God says is ridiculous.

Fellowship: This denotes a participation, a sharing; a giving. It is commonly understood to refer to their giving in Acts 2. The same word is rendered "contribution" in Romans

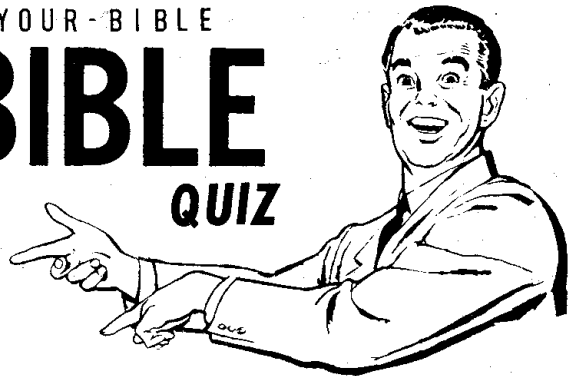
15:26. To the Philippians Paul speaks of their "fellowship in the gospel," having reference to their financial assistance (Philippians 1:3-5). In Philippians 4:18 he calls it "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God" (language descriptive of worship). Giving is an act of worship, and it is to be done every week "as God hath prospered" us (I Cor. 16:2). No one else can worship for you. It must be a spiritual act, for the gift without the giver is bare indeed. (Surely those who must resort to bake sales, auctions and bazaars to "raise" money for the "church" have missed the whole concept of worship. Perhaps a little conversion is

in order, then the money will come).

Breaking of Bread: This expression indicates the Lord's supper. The same expression is found in Acts 20:7, and it says that "upon the first day of the week...the disciples came together to break bread..." Observance of the Lord's supper was a weekly experience with the early church. It was the very center of their worship, and it perhaps affords the place where we can get the closest to Christ this side of eternity. Listen to Paul: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of

KNOW-YOUR-BIBLE

BIBLE
QUIZ



1. What do the following words literally mean?
 - (1) Jesus:
 - (2) disciple:
 - (3) apostle:
 - (4) pray:
 - (5) holy:
2. The land of Edom (where Essau's descendants lived) was called Mount what?
3. Along what river was the land of Egypt located?
4. What did the priests Nadab and Abihu do that was wrong?
5. What prophet did God have to walk about naked and barefoot for three years, symbolizing the Egyptians and Ethiopians being taken in such a manner captive?
6. What man was told to set his house in order for he would die, but God gave him 15 more years of life when he prayed in tears?
7. What Q. T. prophet had an unfaithful wife?
8. In what city (or town) was Jesus born?
9. Give a Scripture reference that shows the early church observed the Lord's supper on the first day of the week.
10. In the book of Revelation the eternal dwelling place of the saints seems to be called what?

(Answers found elsewhere in this issue)

Christ?" (I Cor. 10:16). It must be a spiritual act, personally involving the heart of the worshipper, as well as physical (I Cor. 11:27-29). It is not a magical rite absolving sins. The accompanying spiritual condition is an absolute necessity.

Prayers: The church was born in a prayer meeting and has always thrived in an atmosphere of prayer. Prayers formed a very definite and major part of the worship of the first century church, and since the primary word for worship means to bow, that certainly depicts prayer above all else. It seems that in the early church one would lead in prayer, with the hearts of all backing him, but all would join in the AMEN (I Cor. 14:15,16). When we forget to pray and forget how to pray, publicly or privately, we might as well close the doors of the church building and go home for God already has. God should be personal and real, and it is fitting to pray anywhere, in any kind of circumstance, and for anything (I Tim. 2:1-8; Philipians 4:6).

If the public assembly of the church is the only time we worship God, however, it is very likely that even that is not worship. The church is called such in an assembled sense, but we are still the church when we go our respective ways. The public worship of the church is very important, but perhaps we have failed to emphasize the larger and more important (if we may say that) day to day experience of private worship. The great bulk of instructions concerning teaching, singing and praying have to do with one's private life. Do we read our Bibles and pray everyday? Is God real and personal to us? Our day to day habits and actions will determine this. Do we have individual and family worship? Can our children see that we are constantly in communion with God? We all need this and our children need it as a living spiritual force in their lives. No doubt one of the reasons why we have children foresaking the church when they grow up is because the daily worship of God has not been a reality in the homes from which they come. If God is not dear enough and real enough to prompt private worship, public worship is without significance.

BELOVED, in conclusion we might ask: Have we really learned how to

worship? The correct form and empty formality are not enough. Do we know God? Do we actually love Him? Does the sentiment of the Psalmist describe us? "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Ps. 42:1,2). "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalms 122:1). You don't have to beg a real Christian to come to church, nor does he try to excuse himself. He knows from private experience what a thrill and joy it is to worship God, and the public assembly simply gives him another wonderful and enlarged opportunity where with like-minded brethren he can worship God "in spirit and in truth." Every service will "automatically" find him there for he wouldn't think of missing. Praise the Lord! Amen! □

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"IF WE ONLY HAD SOME MORE APPLES"

When Adam and Eve ate the "forbidden fruit" of knowledge, they learned they were naked, and they clothed themselves. Some say they ate an apple, but the Bible does not indicate that this was a fruit even similar to any that is known of us. Whatever it was, we could use a supply for some men and women, young men and women today!

From the days of Lady Godiva and her nude trip through London to a recent blasphemous marriage ceremony in California by a man called "Satan" with a *nude* draping his altar, women's fashions have been subject to criticism.

Since every woman wants to look attractive, women become victims of an industry that seeks to change the type of attire available to increase its profit. That which is attractive on a "dummy" in a store may not be flattering to a Christian.

Christian women (and young ladies) must also take into consideration their obligation to dress modestly as "is becoming to women who profess Godliness," (I Tim. 2:10). Peter speaks of women's "adorning" as being the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" (I Pet. 3:3,4) and Titus 2 commands the older women to instruct the younger women to be "so-

ber" and "discreet" and "chaste" (not chased). The word "sober" means of moderate habits, calm, even tempered, grave. It teaches that young women ought not to follow *extremes* of the day, whether they be in the use of alcohol, tobacco, or in dress.

The bathing suit competitions have reduced woman-kind to the level of an animal, paraded before an audience of buyers like cattle, with statistics of weight, height, size and personal features displayed as in a slave-market. The "topless" craze has proved even in our high courts that women can appear in public places clothed just as they want to be...everything goes...OFF.

The present-day "miniskirt" fad reminds me of the little prostitutes who led parades through ancient Babylon, Corinth, and Rome seeking business for their pagan temples. Any man or boy convicted of criminal assault is subject to execution. But, is he any more guilty of sin than the thoughtless or carelessly dressed woman or young lady who provokes him?

Jesus said, "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). Mothers of Israel, can't look cheap, or cause someone else to sin, or detract from the natural beauty that you have been given of God, by appearing in public places (including a house of worship) in dresses that are too short, too thin, too tight or too low cut at the neckline. Paul calls it "blasphemy" (Titus 2:4,5). Don't put the church in a bad light, cast a reproach on your husband or father as the head of your house, but look attractive and display holiness in your life. □

—From THE TRUTH

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

ALONE AT NIGHT

*In the darkness of night,
Alone one finds himself
With feelings liberated
To face what he then feels
Exaggerated!*

*In the darkness of night,
Ones dreads are deepened;
Ones hopes are heightened;
Ones sorrows steepened,
And faith enlightened!*

BY A. BROTHER

MINISTERS' --MART--

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What Does the Bible Teach about Christmas?

As one studies the Bible it is immediately apparent that the word "Christmas" is not found in its holy pages. Nor can one determine when Christ was born. It is universally admitted by Bible scholars that no one knows when He was born. It is unlikely that the shepherds would have had their flocks in the open field at night (Luke 2:8) in December. So His birth might have been in July, or some other time.

We are happy that men remember Christ in some way at any time. HOWEVER, we honor Christ more truly if we remember Him in the way that He directed. And He said, when instituting the Lord's supper, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Yet many will fail to remember Christ His appointed way each Lord's day (Acts 20:7), but how they celebrate Christmas, and other religious seasons of human invention.

Some Christians in Galatia began to celebrate unauthorized religious seasons and were rebuked by Paul (Gal. 4:9-11). We are told to abide in the teachings of Christ, to teach men

to observe all things Christ has commanded (Matt. 28:20). Where did he say to observe Christmas?

Where did Christmas originate? It is purely a human invention, a tradition of men, tracing its origin, not to God's Word, but to the Roman Catholic Church; hence, note "CHRISTMASS."

Let us love one another; let us give gifts; let us be thankful that Christ was born; let us praise the the Lord—not just SEASONALLY, but steadfastly, "always abounding in the work of the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58). Christmas means no more to the true Christian than any other time of the year. After the world has had its little religious (?) fling, faithful Chris-

tians will still be found in the public assembly of the church every time it meets.

ANSWERS TO "KNOW-YOUR-BIBLE" BIBLE QUIZ

1. (1) Saviour; (2) learner; (3) one sent out; (4) to ask; (5) to be separate.
2. Mount Seir (Genesis 36:8,9).
3. Nile River.
4. They offered strange fire on the altar (Leviticus 10:1,2).
5. Isaiah 20:2-4.
6. King Hezekiah (II Kings 20:1-7).
7. Hosea 1:2; 3:1.
8. Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1).
9. Acts 20:7.
10. The new Jerusalem (Rev. 21).

SYSTEMATIC SCRIPTURAL STUDIES . . . (Continued from Page 3)

sense (I Cor. 15:35-58).

- (1) Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 15:50).
- (2) We will have a body like that of Jesus (I John 3:2).
- (3) "As we have borne the image of the earthy (Adam), we shall also bear the image of the heavenly (Christ)" (I Cor. 15:49).
- (4) In our resurrected bodies we will experience no more pain and death (Rev. 21:4).
2. Family relationships.
 - (1) We will be like the angels, neither married, nor given in marriage (Matthew 22:23-30).
 - (2) Marriage accommodated our physical bodies, and this present world, and to produce offspring; heaven will accommodate the spiritual.
 - (3) If we went to heaven as husband and wife and as family groups, it would create endless problems (Matthew 22:23-30; I Cor. 7:39).
 - (4) It seems evident that we will know one another, and be dear one to another in Heaven, but it will be on a different, more wonderful, and higher plain than we have experienced ever before.
 - (5) We will be in heaven as the family of God (the Father), Jesus being our elder brother, and all of us brothers and sisters in Christ (whose sins have been washed in the blood of the Lamb).

C. What will we do in Heaven? (We do not have all the answers, but here are some hints from the symbolic language of the book of Revelation).

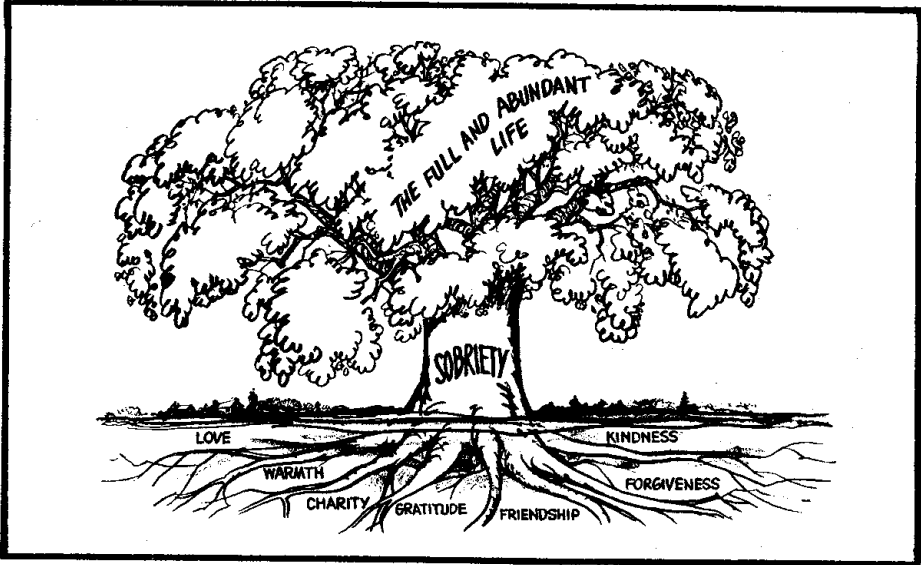
1. Worship (Revelation 5:9-14; etc.).
2. Work (Revelation 7:15-17).
3. Rest (Revelation 14:13).

EDITORIAL COMMENTS (Continued from page 2)...

And looking to ourselves religiously, whatever affects the world and the religious world in a large way usually becomes a minor problem here and there among us. In keeping with the spirit of the times, there are those who have been advocating the all-out fellowship of all immersed persons regardless of what preceded their immersion or what has followed it. We can sympathize with the need for doing something to heal needless divisions over unimportant matters, but immersion alone does not make a person a Christian nor is immersion alone a platform for Bible unity. All in the church at Ephesus had been immersed, but if they did not repent and return to their first love, Jesus was going to remove their candlestick (Rev. 2:4,5). All in the church at Pergamos had been immersed, but Jesus called them to repentance concerning the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, and if they didn't repent, He would come and fight against them with the sword of his mouth (Rev. 2:14-16). To accept forever as a brother one who has been immersed regardless of what he believes now or how he conducts himself with reference to the commandments of the Lord is to make too much of immersion alone.

Even though we have preached Christian unity for years and have desired to see it come, we cannot find ourselves encouraged over the present trends. If religious groups were getting together upon a Bible basis of the faith taught therein, were all coming to the unity of the knowledge of the Son of God as set forth by His inspired apostles and prophets and as proclaimed by present-day evangelists and pastors, it would make all Heaven rejoice, but with religious groups getting together with ease simply because they believe less and less all the time, and because they more and more eliminate the supreme headship of Christ over the church and the absolute authority of His Word, it is not Christian unity at all that we are beholding. It is not the unity for which Jesus prayed. It is not the unity that God recognizes. But again we must face the fact that it is the devil master-minding a religious scheme that will serve his own end in the long run, and whatever he is for, we are called to be against.

And so we continue to preach the same gospel with the same faith and continue to work for the same goal that Christ had in mind when He gave the Great Commission. Why not? —Donald G. Hunt



No Superstitious Regard

WE HAVE NO superstitious regard for times and seasons. Certainly we do not believe in the present ecclesiastical arrangement called Christmas. First, because we do not believe in any mass at all, but abhor it, whether it be sung in Latin or in English; secondly, because we find no Scriptural warrant whatever for observing any day as the birthday of the Saviour; and consequently, its observance is a superstition, because not of divine authority. Superstition has fixed most positively the day of our Saviour's birth, although there is no possibility of discovering when it occurred. It was not till the middle of the third century that any part of the Church celebrated the birth of our Lord; and it was not till long after the western Church had set the example, that the eastern adopted it. Because the day is not known. Probably the fact is that the "holy" days were arranged to fit in with the heathen festivals. We venture to assert that if there be any day in the year of which we may be pretty sure that it was not the day on which our Saviour was born it is the 25th of December. Regarding not the day, let us give God thanks for the gift of His dear Son.

How absurd to think we could do it in the spirit of the world, with a Jack Frost clown, a deceptive worldly Santa Claus, and a mixed program of sacred truth with fun, deception and fiction. If it be possible to honor Christ in the giving of gifts, I cannot see how while the gift, giver, and recipient are all in the spirit of the world. The Catholics and high Church Episcopalians may have their Christmas one day in 365 but we have a Christ gift the entire year.

—C. H. Spurgeon, Dec. 24, 1871

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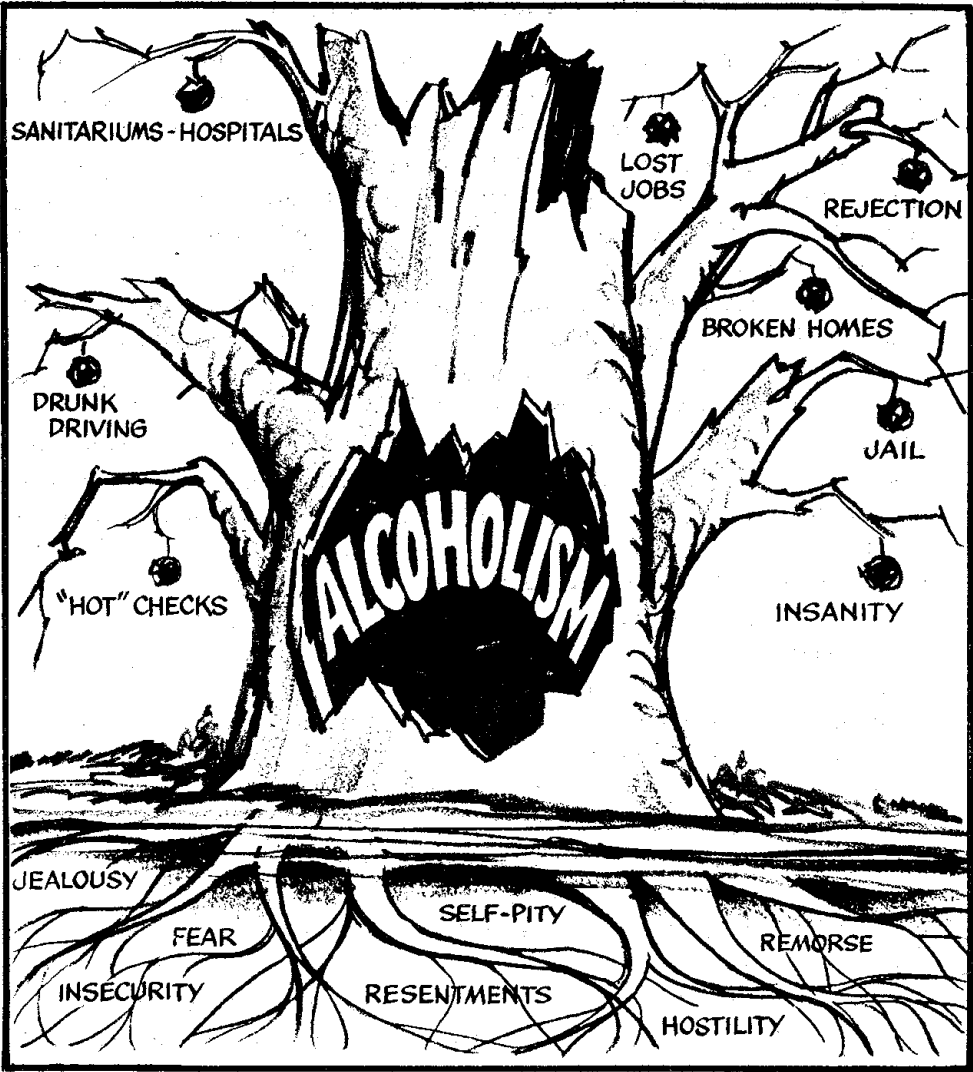
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CHURCH ATTENDANCE
(What My Absence Did)

The above cartoon is from the GRAPEVINE. Turn to page 7 to see the other side of the picture.

- It made some question the reality of Christianity.
- It made some think that I was a pretender.
- It made many regard my spiritual welfare and that of others as a matter of small concern.
- It weakened the effect of the church service.
- It made it more difficult for the preacher to preach.
- It discouraged the brethren, and therefore robbed them of a blessing.
- It caused others to stay away from church.
- It made it harder for me to meet the temptations of the Devil.
- It gave the Devil more power over lost souls.
- It encouraged the habit of non-church going.

—Selected—

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