

The Sword AND Staff

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

•

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

STAND TALL AND STRAIGHT . . . and GO!



WHEN GOD DESIRES to shake, shock, or shape any age in order to save sinners, He always chooses a man—not a system, not a plan, not an organization—but a man! Strange it is that this old truth should be so startling today.

Hyper-organized, super-systematized, psychoanalyzed religion today has shut its eyes to this truth and furnished dark glasses to all followers. They have "cardfiled" us to the size of pygmies. They have "cut us on the bias" until we cannot fit God's plan. They have "puckered our lips" to the same trite phraseology of mass thinking, and divided our brains till we all "think as one man." They have depleted our initiative for God.

When God foresaw floodwaters, He chose a man—Noah! Out of the carelessness of Chaldea, God chose a man—Abram! Out of the bondage of Egypt, God chose a man—Moses! When will we learn that history's pages are filled with accounts of God's glorious accomplishments through a chosen man—Joshua, Samuel, Gideon, Samson, Saul, Barak, Elisha, Daniel, Peter, Paul and scores of others. Read Hebrews eleven.

No crowd ever produced a Carmel victory; a Red Sea crossing; a Goliath conquest. God chose *men*—not machines.

Young men, did our wonderful Lord Jesus choose the Pharisees (the influential religious leaders of that day), or did He find Peter by the seaside? Did Jesus Christ engage the might of Rome (to curry political favor for His "cause"), or did our Lord walk among humble men? See Him there in those Galilean hills, completely unperturbed by prestige and political power.

Would that I could get every young man to see that he is the channel God wants. We are surfeited with little men whose little hearts are shriveled with such drivel as "Money talks," "We must play along with the crowds," "Contacts are important," "Know the right people," "Join the biggest team," and "Be forever agreeable to the important leaders."

Can you see God's plan? "God... hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" (Acts 22:14,15). That statement does not concur with com-

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mon opinion these days.

God wants *you*! God has chosen *you*! For what? To know His will, see His face, hear His voice and witness to all men! But other men will not allow this procedure. Satan will not allow that plan. On every hand you will be discouraged in that course. Preachers will advise against it. "Church leaders" will suggest that you not be so pioneering. Intimate friends will tenderly seek to put you on the more popular track.

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise...the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence" (I Corinthians 1:27-29). Yes, God has chosen you to "*know his will...see his face...hear his voice...witness unto all men.*"

His will is expressed in His word. Read it. Its challenge will curdle the thin blood of human effort. It goes beyond the prating of "building a better world." It smacks of conquest, battle, courage, power, and real victory. God's will charts a pathway for chosen men. It will not be satisfied with the caucuses of committees...it demands chosen men. The men of faith listed in Hebrews eleven were not party leaders, but men chosen of God for His will in a single purpose.

(Continued on Page 5)

THE SWORD AND STAFF

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PROVERBS of TODAY

If ignorance is bliss then many people are having a gay old time as far as their knowledge of the Bible is concerned.

"Still as of old men by themselves are priced; for thirty pieces Judas sold himself, not Christ."

It is not God's plan that unscriptural organizations (Missionary societies, Evangelizing boards, Men's fellowship groups, etc.) bring a scriptural organization (the church) into being—BUT local churches must begat other local churches.

"Often the things that matter most lie at the mercy of things that seem to matter least."

Religion should not be preached in a cheap, irreligious way.

"In teaching the Scripture the use of the text without consideration of its context is pretext."

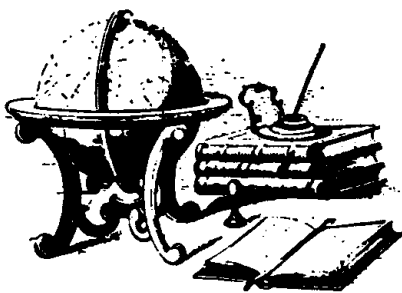
It is impossible to be in a state of forgiveness with God—and in a state of unforgiveness with anyone.

"It is in spending oneself that one becomes truly rich."

Problem people are simply people with problems.

"The purpose of Christianity is not only to take you to heaven, but to bring a little heaven to you."

The Lord has given you a brain and the Bible, and He expects you to use both.



EDITORIAL

COMMENTS...

MORE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

- 2. What does a congregation do who has no qualified men to fill the responsibilities of elders and deacons? Who is responsible for seeing to the needs of the congregation?**

If we have no qualified men for the offices in a given local situation, honestly admit it and proceed from there. Don't lay aside or step over God's standards. What we then do, having no elders or deacons, is a matter of expediency in the light of Bible principles. If a N.T. evangelist is associated with the local church, he is the only one left with any "official" authority. Since God has made it plain that the men are to take the lead in the public life of the church (I Tim. 2:11-15), it would seem scripturally expedient that they conduct the "business" of the church in close relationship with the faithful evangelist. Special consideration should be given to the views of the older men (in age and in the faith) in view of what the N.T. says along this line (I Peter 5:5; I Tim. 3:6). The men should keep in mind that they are not "officers" and this is not a permanent arrangement. These considerations seem to be in keeping with the Scriptures.

- 3. Should a woman teach a mixed adult class? Should a woman be "treasurer" of a church?**

The Bible says woman is not to be a public, religious teacher over man for two reasons: (1) The order of creation, and (2) Sin came into the world first through woman (I Tim. 2:12-14; I Cor. 14:34; Genesis 3:16). The Bible is not a book of contradictions, and we have never found any verses that set this teaching aside. No, a woman should not teach a mixed adult class (men and women together) in church. However, the older women are commanded to teach the younger women (Titus 2:3, 4), and women may unquestionably teach the children.

Yes, we can visualize that under certain circumstances it would be all right for a woman to be "treasurer."

- 4. What about an organized Bible School? Should there be a treasury separate from the church? What about a superintendent?**

The Sunday School as a separate and independent organization from the church (yet allied) is a common practice. The "superintendent" of the Sunday School has the primary responsibility to oversee the teaching program. We believe this arrangement to be out of harmony with the N.T. The church organization, as found in the N.T., is the way God intended for the corporate church to function. The elder is God's key man in the local church. Paul admonished the Ephesian elders: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to ALL THE FLOCK, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you OVERSEERS, to FEED THE CHURCH OF GOD, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). The word "overseer" is elsewhere rendered "bishop" in the N.T. The word "bishop" literally means superintendent—and some modern translations word it that way. The elders are God's superintendents to see that God's teaching program is personally carried out. They cannot do their job by proxy. (God's plan has

(Continued on page 6)

SYSTEMATIC

Scriptural Studies

THE SUBJECT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT MADE SIMPLE, A STUDY

(Continued from Last Month)

Introductory Summary:

The measures of the Holy Spirit manifested in reference to the age of the New Testament.

- The SUPERORDINARY measure as seen in Christ (Jn. 3:34; Colossians 2:9).
- The EXTRAORDINARY measure as evident in the apostles and those on whom they laid their hands (Hebrews 2:1-4; also household of Cornelius).
- The ORDINARY measure, which is for every Christian (Acts 2:38, 39).
- All measures of the Holy Spirit given to man are alike called the "gift of the Holy Spirit" (Baptism of the Spirit—Acts 10:45; 11:15, 17; Laying on of apostolic hands—Acts 8:18-20; Measure common to all Christians—Acts 2:38).

II. THE EXTRAORDINARY GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT RECEIVED BY THE LAYING ON OF THE APOSTLES' HANDS.

A. According to the N. T., who were the only ones to impart this gift of the Holy Spirit in keeping with the will of God?

1. Those who heard Christ bore witness with gifts of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 2:1-4).
 - (1) Those who "heard" Christ has reference to the apostles (Hebrews 2:3; Acts 1:21, 22, 26; I Cor. 15:7-9).
 - (2) Distributions (footnote in K. J. V.) or gifts of the Holy Spirit were made by the apostles, according to God's will.
2. Philip, one of the seven, although he could perform miracles, could not distribute this extraordinary gift of the Holy Spirit to others, and two apostles came and did this (Acts 8:14-21).
3. The apostle Paul was instrumental in giving this special gift to some misinformed disciples after they had been baptized (Acts 19:1-7).
4. Earlier in the book of Acts the apostles laid their hands on the seven, and it is evident that they had this measure for spiritual gifts followed (Acts 6:5, 6, 8; 8:5-13).
5. Hence, it is clear in the N. T. that only the apostles gave this measure or gift of the Spirit by the laying on of their hands, according to God's will.

B. What did this gift of the Holy Spirit enable them to do?

1. Stephen and Philip, possessing this measure, did signs, wonders and miracles (Acts 6:6, 8; 8:5-13).
2. The twelve on whom the apostle Paul laid his hands spoke in other tongues and prophesied (Acts 19:6).
3. The Corinthian Christians had, no doubt, received

this measure by the laying on of the apostle Paul's hands (Hebrews 2:3, 4; II Cor. 12:11, 12).

- (1) The Holy Spirit in this measure would bestow different miraculous gifts upon different people as He so desired (I Cor. 12:1-11; Heb. 2:4).
- (2) Notice the nine different gifts that were among the Christians at Corinth (I Cor. 12:8-10).
4. The miraculous deeds foretold in the great commission according to Mark could well refer to that which came as a result of the laying on of the apostles' hands (Mark 16:15-18).
 - (1) Some say this has reference only to the apostles, and that may be the case: Christ upbraided the apostles for their unbelief, gave the commission, then said these signs would follow them that believed (Mark 16:14, 15, 17, 19, 20).
 - (2) However, it likewise would harmonize with the N. T. if we said these signs would follow those who believed in the immediate preaching of the apostles (Mark 16:14-18).
 - (3) These signs would follow, and they did, because the apostles laid their hands on them, and on any other converts they desired.
 - (4) NOTE: It said these signs would "follow" them—we see just the opposite today, people today are seeking after and following supposed signs; Jesus said that a wicked and an adulterous generation seeks after a sign (Matthew 16:4).
5. Special note on the gift of speaking in tongues.
 - (1) Because of confusion in our day it is well that we examine what is meant by speaking in tongues in the N. T.
 - (2) The word "tongues" in the Bible is commonly used to signify language (Acts 22:2).
 - (3) The speaking in tongues on the day of Pentecost was the gift of preaching in other languages of man theretofore unlearned (Acts 2:4-11).
 - (4) This first reference to the phenomenon of speaking in tongues defines and identifies its nature, thereafter logically to be understood as the definitive antecedent when we see the gift re-occur.
 - (5) The "tongues" in I Corinthians 14 refers to human language because, among other things, in verse 21 he quotes from ISAIAH 28:11, 12, originally referring to the foreign language of those who would carry the Jews into Captivity.
 - (6) Paul speaks of what was said being "easy to understand" (I Cor. 14:9), and of the "unlearned"—implying that which was capable of being learned.
 - (7) As an evangelist traveling in many foreign countries Paul spoke in tongues more than all of them at Corinth (I Cor. 14:18, 19).
 - (8) The word "unknown" in I Cor. 14 (K. J. V.) is not in the original N. T. language—notice the italics indicating this.
 - (9) When it speaks of "new tongues" they were new in the sense that they were new to the one speaking them (Mark 16:17).
 - (10) Not everyone in the early church had the gift of speaking in tongues (I Cor. 12:4, 10, 30)—NOTE: This is significant because certain religionists today claims one has not received

(Continued Next Page)

"Forgive Us for Our Littleness"

LITTLE by *little* some people drift away from the Lord a *little*. On Sunday morning they sleep a *little* late, then they come straggling into church a *little* late. They listen to the teacher a *little*, and may argue a *little*. In the assembly they may sing a *little*, commune a *little*, then give a *little*. When the preacher preaches, they listen a *little* and get a *little* peeved for the faithful preaching stepped on their toes a *little* too much. After being dismissed they gossip a *little* and then go home and forget the *little* they allowed to enter their minds. They attend the evening services very *little* and day by day act a *little* too much like they cared very *little* for the GREATEST, GRANDEST, HOLIEST, AND MOST PRECIOUS THING IN

ALL THE WORLD--THE CHURCH
FOR WHICH JESUS GAVE HIS VERY
LIFE'S BLOOD!

· Beloved, will you think on this
more than a *little*?

--Adapted--

ANSWERS TO "KNOW-YOUR-BIBLE" BIBLE QUIZ

1. Assyria, Micah 5:6; 2. Genesis 20:36,37; 3. Psalms 14 and 53;
4. Micah 4:1-3; 5. Daniel 1:7; 2:26; 4:8; 5:12; 6. Luke, Acts 1:1-2
7. Luke 1:1-4; 7. Son of consolation or exhortation, Acts 4:36;
8. Acts 13:14-41; 9. Galatians 4:13-15; 10. Titus 1:12.

"One who ignores the church is like a man who builds a house without windows and then blames God because he has to live in the dark."

It is God's plan through the foolishness of preaching (not foolish preaching nor foolishness in preaching) to save them that believe.

WHAT IF...



"What do you mean, go preach in your parish? This is my parish."

"When we feel the least like praying, we need to pray the most."

Anyone can get along with the devil if he never mentions the Lord.

SYSTEMATIC SCRIPTURAL STUDIES...

(Continued from Page 3)

the Spirit until he talks in tongues, and it is expected as a universal experience.

- (11) NOTE: The speaking and praying in tongues in the N. T. could not be some senseless gibberish--Jesus said not to pray in vain repetition as the heathen did (Matthew 6:7; Isaiah 8:19,20).
- (12) Hence, the only thing we can establish from the N. T. on tongues is that it was a divinely imparted gift of speaking in languages of men theretofore unlearned by the speaker.

C. Is this measure of the Holy Spirit for God's children today?

1. This measure with its various manifestations came only by the laying on of apostles' hands (Acts 8:14-21; etc.), and there are no apostles of Christ in the church today.
- (1) These apostles were the personally selected "official" eye witnesses of Jesus used in establishing the church and confirming the N. T. (Acts 1:8,21,22,26; 2:14,32; 3:15; 4:33; 5:29,32; 10:39-41; I Cor. 15:7-9; 9:1)--NOTE: Others were called apostles in the general sense of one sent, as Barnabas (Acts 14:4,14; Paul was an apostle in the general sense and in the specific sense), but Barnabas is distinguished from the specific apostles of Christ (Acts 9:27).
- (2) Hebrews 2:3 and 4 clearly imply that only the apostles made this special distribution of the Holy Spirit, according to God's will.
- (3) Therefore, when the last apostle died, this gift could no longer be given (since only they gave it), and when they on whom the apostles had placed their hands died (these people could not pass it on), miracles in such a "wholesale"

fashion ceased (we are not discounting God answering prayer today, however).

2. Indications that the spiritual gifts resulting from this measure would cease (I Cor. 12:1-10,28-31; 13:1,2,8-13).
- (1) Prophecies, tongues, and special knowledge, representative of the spiritual gifts, are pictured as one day failing, ceasing, and vanishing away (I Cor. 13:8).
- (2) "For we know in part, and we prophecy in part"--God's revelation of truth in the early church was progressively given, sometimes orally and sometimes written, but for a time parts were lacking (I Cor. 13:9).
- (3) When the *perfect* ("complete, entire, as opposed to what is partial and limited"--*Analytical Greek Lexicon*) would come, the "in part" situation would be done away (I Cor. 13:10)--there would be no further need of the gift of prophecy, knowledge, etc., when the canon of the perfect law of liberty was closed (John 16:13; James 1:25).
- (4) The early church with its partial knowledge, without the Scriptures completed, is compared to a child (I Cor. 13:11).
- (5) Then they saw into the mirror of God's N. T. truth somewhat darkly, but that situation would soon be remedied (James 1:23-25; II Cor. 3:17,18; Hebrews 4:12,13).
- (6) Faith, hope, and love were the principal and enduring things in Christianity, but love was the greatest and most enduring (I Cor. 13:13).
- (7) The Corinthians were "puffed up" over the prospects of who might get the best spiritual gifts, whereas these were merely passing things and not the essence of Christianity as brought out in 13:13.

(Continued next month and to be prepared in a booklet)

OPINIONS

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Your opinion is just as good as mine, and a little better as far as you are concerned. Every man has a right to his opinion unless God has spoken. Naturally no one thinks his opinion is better than God's. We now see two groups of beliefs: God's statements, and our views.

If someone comes preaching something we haven't heard before we must place it in one of three categories. If it's a false teaching, then the teacher must be corrected or rejected. If it's a commandment of God, then we had better get busy obeying it. If it doesn't fall into either of these groups, then you have as much right to say and believe it as I have. Up to this point we probably all agree.

But next we behold the strange sight of preachers and elders vociferously maintaining that certain matters are matters of opinion and then refusing to let others speak their opinions! This is equivalent to saying that we have freedom of speech in America, but be sure to go abroad to do your talking.

Tobacco smoking, they say, is a "matter of opinion." But when that man comes along that finds a principle against the practice in the Word of God, he is denied the right to tell his find and is accused of "preaching his opinion." As a consequence, the opinion of the few in charge is BOUND on the multitude. They are refused the right to hear and decide for themselves. Now who is BINDING their opinions?

This censorship practice has some serious results. One is that the opinions of the few become (by default) the opinions of the many. I have moved in circles where the leading problems that young people ask questions about were never discussed in church. Evidently the leadership refused to preach on those subjects or to allow

others to do so.

Another result is that it becomes difficult for the church to grow in holiness when the leadership binds their "opinions" on the rest. Many leaders are afraid to have sins preached against because they or some prominent member are guilty and the preaching would bring pressure to bear. Elders fear to have modesty mentioned because their wives bring pressure to bear. Preachers rue preaching that emphasizes the husband as the head (not the dictator) of the home because they have a wife that is the "neck that wiggles the head." How often the preachers' wives disdain preaching on sin because they want to brag about big "numbers" when meeting with other preachers' wives. Fear-governed leaders prefer to bind their opinions and refuse entrance to any preaching that might raise the standard of holiness above the present level.

Even in the New Testament times some of these opinion minded leaders we have been discussing must have exercised iron-fisted control because we read in III John, vs. 9, that Diotrephes refused the APOSTLE JOHN HIMSELF!

Leader, if you have been opposing preaching that separates men from sin, realize that YOU are binding your opinions on the church and the problems you have are of your own making. Some churches are having souls won, consistent attendance, 90% in prayer meeting, heavy giving, debt-free building programs and peaceful church life. This is the result of preaching against sin. Maybe all of those things you hold as matters of opinion are covered by principles of God's Word you have overlooked! □

God is no respecter of persons—so why should a preacher be?

STAND TALL AND STRAIGHT... (Continued from Page 1)

God has a plan for your life. I believe in that Grace of God which prepares us before we find our hearts willing to do His will; the glorious foreknowledge of God that shapes the man to the task before the man knows that task. God has prepared you for a specific job! Know His will! Do not let men push you off on a side road merely because they can guarantee you a pittance at the start. Shun the pittance and accept God's power. One of the saddest commentaries on our Christian program today is that often—too often—a few dollars, doled out by a "great society," become the determining factor in "where a man should serve God." Many Bible students I have met in recent years have given this answer to my question concerning life's plan: "Well, I guess I'll just get a little church somewhere, if the school or 'the brethren' will recommend me. I guess a fellow can't expect much at first."

That describes a young man who expects little, begs for less and ignores God's will. Wake up, man; God has chosen you. You are not beholden to men. You are not limited to the left-overs of somebody's half-baked effort. Lift your eyes to the fields, and swing your blade where the harvest is uncut. There is a world—a whole world—involved in His will, and when God gets the man, the man gets the provision. I have tested this in my life and it works. In the days when no one would recommend me to preach, thank God I was abandoned to His will. He chose by His grace!

(Continued on page 6)



STAND TALL AND STRAIGHT...
(Continued from Page 5)

Know His will and you will hear His voice. His voice demands obedience. His voice requests separation. His voice claims your allegiance. His voice instills faith. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven." Be sure that the voice which commands your footsteps is out of heaven—not of the earth.

His voice demands instant action. His voice pronounces the direction. His voice describes the exact procedure in the exact place of service. His voice predicts success by His power.

Men, if you have heard the voice of our Lord, you will become witnesses. The chosen man is not a monastic recluse but a burning torch. God's fire was never meant to be smothered by church walls; He will set the world aflame with His Gospel. Each local church group is not to be a *self-sufficient and self-satisfied entity*, but *only an altar from which leaps the far-reaching fire of God*.

The New Testament action was concentrated in the command to "go." The New Testament procedure was multiplication and addition... "breaking bread from house to house" and "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." They did not build perpendicularly (up), but horizontally (out). The Church was not purposed to be a circumference of people looking *in*, but rather a little center of people here and there looking *outward*!

God's voice moved Abram out; led Moses out; called Paul out. God is everlastingly commanding men to move on and out "to the regions beyond." Action prevents stagnation. Young men, do not be satisfied with four walls, sixty saints, and security — *when you can have a whole country for conquest to His glory!*

His voice sings into your soul with the nostalgic loveliness of an intimate Friend; wings into your heart with the compassionate grace of God; and yet it rings into your ear with the authoritative power of a general's command. Men, we cannot escape it. We must not evade it. We must become His witnesses unto all men! *Ambassadors! Representatives! Advancement! What an honor—and responsibility!* The masses are seldom receptive to God's will—but *you can be!* One man with a single purpose utterly yielded, unfettered *IS!* □

EDITORIAL COMMENTS . . .
(Continued from Page 2)

been replaced today by Sunday School superintendents, directors and ministers of religious education—who sometimes are even women!)

Yes, under God's plan we will still have our classes, and even someone besides the elders may preside over the assembly at times, but it is simply the church—not a separate organization. The elders are the superintendents, and all other teachers serve under them. The elders must be actively interested and engaged in supervising and teaching. This is God's plan.

We do not believe that a treasury separate from the church is scripturally justified or needed.

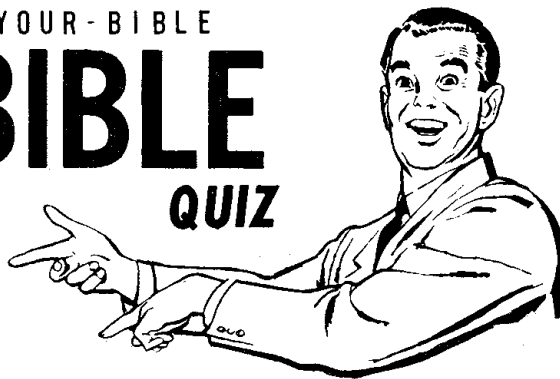
5. Do you have any information or have any idea when all of these organized meetings began to take shape in the church?

From what we can find out, Sunday Schools were started in 1780 in England by Robert Raikes for underprivileged and wayward children. Other things were taught as well as some Bible. Later adults began to attend the Schools. Finally later this International Sunday School Movement became allied with the "church," although separate and operating somewhat independently.

The early days of men leaving denominationalism (the first part of the last century) saw them also oppose man-made religious organ-

KNOW-YOUR-BIBLE

BIBLE
QUIZ



1. What country was known as the "land of Nimrod"?
2. Moab, the father of the Moabite nation, was the son of what man?
3. What two Psalms are identical and start by saying, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God"?
4. What other section of Scripture is almost identical to Isaiah 2:2-4?
5. Belteshazzar was a special name given to what Jew of the Babylonian Captivity?
6. Who wrote the book of Acts?
7. What does the name *Barnabas* mean?
8. The first recorded "sermon" by Paul in the book of Acts was preached where?
9. What was Paul's physical condition when he first preached the gospel in Galatia?
10. How were the natives of Crete described by one of their own prophets (as quoted by Paul to Titus)?

(Answers found elsewhere in this issue)

izations. But later, we understand, men like D. S. Burnet and others began to introduce organizations and societies into this N. T. fellowship (other than the church setup). Then, in his declining years Alexander Campbell seemingly reversed his former position by going along with a national Christian Missionary Society (forerunner to the UCMS and the Disciple apostasy).

These are a few clues as to the origin of some of the made-by-man religious organizations.

6. Who are “missionaries” and what is a missionary’s duty?

This was dealt with at length in the April and May issues of this paper.

7. What about churches holding bake sales, food sales at auctions, selling projects, etc.?

Throughout the N. T. we find instructions for Christians to give systematically and proportionately. Giving is a part of weekly worship. Never do we find the church involved in “selling” to “raise” money. The giving of ten percent religiously was a principle in existence before the O. T. Law was ever inaugurated. (Genesis 14:20; 28:22). When the O. T. was given, it required tithes of the people. Christ made the supreme sacrifice. Christianity motivates liberality, and our giving should not fall below the ten percent level. When supposed Christians give like they ought to, money problems in the church are nonexistent. However, the name of religion is cheapened when the supposed church must go to the world for financial assistance. God has a more spiritual method.

8. What is the meaning of Christian “love,” “sacrifice,” and “humility”?

Perhaps we cannot answer this question satisfactorily for we do not know the context from which it arises, but we will try.

LOVE: There are two words for love in the N. T. Greek—(1) *phileo*: “the love of the feelings, warm instinctive affection” (the love of emotion); (2) *agapao*: “the love of reason, esteem” (the love of devotion). *PHILEO* is the lower form of love identified as human, whereas *AGAPAO* is that love of divine nature. It is easy to see how both could fit into “Christian love.” It is not enough to like Jesus—we must love him with loyal devotion. Therefore our Lord says that if we love him we will keep his commandments (John 14:15). Love is even defined as keeping the commandments of God (I John 5:1-3; II John 6).

SACRIFICE: A Christian must “deny himself” (deprive himself and declare a disbelief in himself) in following Jesus (Luke 9:23)—he believes in Jesus. His body is to be given a “living sacrifice” (Romans 12:1, 2). Then Jesus said, “So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do” (Luke 17:10).

HUMILITY: Perhaps this could be defined as a lowly regard for self which is manifested outwardly in relationship to others. We are not pretentious or self-righteous. Others are treated with respect.

We might add that humility does not muzzle us in preaching the Truth with boldness. To be meek is not to be weak-kneed. Our humility before God in being merely human prompts us to represent His Word most carefully before man. Our lowly esteem is not for the Truth but for self.

A Christian will go nowhere he can’t take Jesus Christ; he will say nothing he would not want Him to hear; he will do nothing he would not want Him to know about.—Selected

WORD TRIPLER Studies

(I Timothy 1:2; II Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; II John 3)

Studying the Scriptures, one will run across several eye-catching words running in succession. We have found enough of these that they have gotten our attention and aroused our interest into making short studies of them. This will be the first in a series.

“Grace, mercy and peace” are mentioned in that order several times in the New Testament (note above). These words form a wonderful triplet, meaning much to the Christian. *Grace* has been defined as unmerited favor. We don’t deserve favor, but God has granted favor and forgiveness. We weren’t righteous, but God has counted us to be righteous through Christ (II Cor. 5:21). In the word *mercy* we can see the other side of the coin. *Mercy* is present where punishment is deserved and impending, but withheld. Here is the picture. We were under the sentence of sin, but by *mercy* it has been withheld. We didn’t deserve a thing, but God by his *grace* has granted unmerited favor. Oh, what a wonderful salvation as we have trusted and obeyed! Then the third word in this triplet becomes a reality—*peace*! Heart *peace*. The dread, guilt, and hardship of sin has been removed. We, because of *grace* and *mercy*, are at *peace* with God, ourselves, and our fellowman. This is a present and a continuing situation. What a wonderful and meaningful triplet of words! □

DEATH LURKS WITHIN

*I stopped beside a whiskey store
And saw the bottle glistening, bright;
I saw the customers come out
With packages – then into night.*

*’Twas not mere liquid that they had,
’Twas broken homes, disaster, sin,
And each bright bottle had its course:
Death and destruction lurked within.*

— O. Ray Burgess

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