

# The Sword AND Staff

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

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

## "And the Lord Added to the Church Daily..."

**-Acts 2:47**

By DAVID KIRK  
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THE FOLLOWING Scriptures show the phenomenal growth of the church of Christ in the first few years of her existence.

"And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). "And the Lord added to the church daily..." (Acts 2:47). "Many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand" (Acts 4:4). "And the multitude of them that believed..." (Acts 4:32). "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:14). "...the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). "And at that time there was a great persecution against the church...and they were all scattered abroad...they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:1, 4). "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also" (Acts 17:6).

Why did the church in this period of her history make such almost unbelievable, and certainly unparalleled, growth?

### I. CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.

The ministry of John the immerser and Jesus greatly prepared the people for the preaching of the gospel. A general expectancy of the coming of the Messiah among the Jews, Gentiles

and Samaritans also helped.

The universal use of the Greek language was a great aid too. While a number of languages and dialects were in use in the various countries of the world, the Greek language apparently was understood by most people. It appears that all official business was carried on in Greek. You can see that the use of one common language was a definite help in getting the gospel to the people.

The famous good roads built by the Romans made access to the various nations and parts of the Roman Empire much easier. This speeded travel in reaching the people scattered throughout the world.

The church also had a friend, not always friendly, in that the Roman Empire largely controlled the world. Having one government made it possible for a Roman citizen to travel under the protection of Roman law throughout the world. This definitely speeded the spread of the good news.

### II. THE SUCCESS OF THE EARLY CHURCH WOULD NOT BE VIEWED BY MANY TODAY AS SO GREAT FOR SEVERAL REASONS.

It was the common people who heard, gladly received, and obeyed the gospel for the most part. Few of

the rulers could be persuaded to accept the "lowly Nazarene" as their Saviour. The "Elite" would try to minimize the influence of the church by saying that mainly the uneducated and down trodden classes of people accepted the teaching of Jesus.

Others would discount the growth of the church because it was all accomplished without bringing into being a world wide closely knit human machine, which they hold necessary, to get such results as described in the early chapters of the book of Acts. Such people suppose that missionary societies (state, national, and world wide) are necessary to the spread of the gospel. Therefore "machinery-minded" people keep on promoting their causes and rejecting Christ's plan for the furtherance of the gospel through local independent churches of Christ working to spread the gospel without the aid (?) of ecclesiastical machinery any greater than the local church.

One world religious planners would defame the work of the early church on the grounds that it used the wrong approach in preaching Christ. They would contend that had the right methods been used and had preachers and leaders been well educated and tactful, they would not have encountered the wrath of so many people and hence would not have been constantly persecuted.

Another mark, in modern circles, against the early church is the fact that most of the preachers in the first

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**THE SWORD AND STAFF**

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**PROVERBS of TODAY**

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We are living in a Society where young women, mothers, and grandmothers vie to present themselves as painted, semi-clothed, alluring sex symbols rather than what is evidently considered to be outdated and old fashioned—namely, innocence, purity and goodness.

“Experience is something to grow through and not merely go through.”

Too many people are too busy making a living to build a life, and in the day of judgment they are going to come up wanting.

“One place where prayer fails is in expecting God to do things for us which He can only do through us.”

If you are a Christian you will increasingly think, feel, speak, and act as Christ did.

“He that will not reason is a bigot; he that cannot reason is a fool; he that does not reason is a slave.”

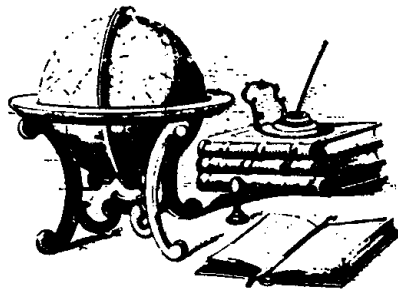
There is no hardness of heart like that of an unsaved religious person who thinks that he is saved.

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**THANK GOD FOR DIRTY DISHES**

Thank God for dirty dishes—  
They have a tale to tell.  
While others go hungry  
We're faring very well.  
With home and health and happiness  
I shouldn't want to fuss,  
For by this stack of evidence  
GOD'S VERY GOOD TO US.

—From the kitchen of Mrs. David Kirk



**EDITORIAL**

**COMMENTS...**

**CONSIDERING THE HEAVENS, THE MOON, AND THE STARS**

*O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who has set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the avenger. WHEN I CONSIDER THY HEAVENS, THE WORK OF THY FINGERS, THE MOON AND THE STARS, WHICH THOU HAST ORDAINED: WHAT IS MAN, THAT THOU ART MINDFUL OF HIM? AND THE SON OF MAN, THAT THOU VISITEST HIM? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field: The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! — PSALMS 8*

THE RECENT FEAT OF MAN in actually landing on the moon and probing the more distant planet Mars—along with the many other accomplishments of modern science—in no way diminishes our faith in God, but, rather, our faith is given greater dimension. Our concept of God is enlarged. The vastness of creation is greater than we had ever imagined. How Great is the Spirit of our God! Man, by the scientific method, has merely been thinking some thoughts of God after Him. The glory of man's accomplishment and discovery is largely diminished, displaced, and replaced by that which has been discovered. By contrast man is shown to be quite insignificant. God is omnipotent!

CONSIDER. We live on a small planet (by contrast) called Earth, which is orbited by a natural satellite called the Moon (about 238,000 miles away). The earth is one of nine planets (Greek: wanderers, Jude 13) which circles the Sun. The Sun is the center of our solar system and is about 92,870,000 miles from Earth. Our Sun is supposed to be an ordinary, medium-sized star, located about two-thirds of the way out from the center of the disc-shaped system of revolving stars called the Milky Way or Galaxy (Greek for milky). It is estimated that this Galaxy represents about 200 billion stars and an expanse of 600 trillion miles. There are other clusters of stars besides the Milky Way, and it is estimated (we are told) that there are 1,000,000,000-000,000,000,000 (a billion trillion) stars in the known Universe. Under desirable conditions and circumstances 6000 of these can be seen with the naked eye.

All of this information, IF IT IS TRUE, goes to further magnify our God—beyond the magnitude of stars (for He made them all!). We bow in awe before this Great Jehovah-Elohim Who called it all into being (Almighty Creator, yes, but Benevolent Almighty Creator)! — And, the One who became flesh, our Saviour, was the One active in creation (John 1:1-3, 14) and is the One who is “upholding all things by the word of his power” (Hebrews 1:1-3). What dimension is added to our faith! HOW GREAT THOU ART! □

**The Subject of the Holy Spirit Made Simple, A Study**

By next month our plans are to have this material in a booklet for class study or tract distribution. Be on the lookout for this.

# 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).

### III. THE ORDINARY GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT COMMON TO ALL CHRISTIANS.

#### A. Is there a gift of the Holy Spirit for all Christians?

1. There is a measure of the Spirit for all Christians (Acts 2:38-40).

- (1) It was for those on the day of Pentecost who would repent and be baptized (Acts 2:37, 38).
- (2) Not only was the promise to them, but it was for their children, to all who were afar off—even for as many as became Christians (Acts 2:39).
- (3) The Holy Spirit is given to those who obey God (Acts 5:32; John 14:23).

2. We receive the Holy Spirit when we become Christians.

- (1) The world cannot receive the Spirit (John 14:17).
- (2) We certainly are not the temple of the Holy Spirit until we are cleansed, then He dwells in us (I Corinthians 6:19).
- (3) Because we are sons God has sent the Spirit into our hearts (Galatians 4:6, 7).
- (4) It is an earnest in anticipation of our final redemption (II Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13, 14).

3. The Holy Spirit actually dwells in the Christian.

- (1) Please examine I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; II Cor. 6:16; and Ephesians 2:20-22.
- (2) We do not necessarily feel the Holy Spirit, but because we have the Holy Spirit we feel—are alive spiritually (we don't feel life in our bodies physically speaking, but because we have life in our bodies we feel).
- (3) If the Spirit does not DWELL IN us, we are none of his (Romans 8:9).

#### B. What is the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion?

1. The Holy Spirit would reprove (convince) the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment

to come (John 16:8-11).

- (1) The Word is the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12, 13).
  - (2) The Spirit and the bride say come (Rev. 22:17).
  - (3) Faith comes by hearing the words of the Spirit, the Word of God (Romans 10:17; II Tim. 3:15-17).
2. We purify our souls and are born again by obeying the truth through the Spirit (I Peter 1:22, 23; John 3:5).
  - (1) Through the agency or working of one Spirit we are led to be baptized into one body (I Corinthians 12:13).
  - (2) We are born again as children of God, and God sends His Spirit into our hearts as an indwelling agent (Galatians 3:26, 27; 4:6; Acts 2:38; Titus 3:5).
  - (3) We are washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of Christ and by the Spirit of God (I Corinthians 6:11).

#### C. What is the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian?

1. The Holy Spirit bears fruit in our lives.

- (1) The predominant fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, the Spirit itself being the gift of God's love (Romans 5:5; I Peter 1:22; I John 3:14; I Cor. 13).
- (2) The fruit of the Holy Spirit listed (Galatians 5:22, 23—in contrast with the works of the flesh, Gal. 5:19-21).
- (3) NOTE: "For the fruit of the Spirit is in ALL goodness and (all) righteousness and (all) truth"—the "all" was intended to apply to all (Eph. 5:9).

- (4) This is one of the ways the Spirit glorifies Christ, producing all the Christ-like traits of character (John 16:14; I Cor. 6:19, 20; II Corinthians 3:18).

2. The Holy Spirit helps us in our living.

- (1) We have access by one Spirit unto the Father (Ephesians 2:18).
- (2) The Holy Spirit helps the sincere and surrendered Christian in his prayers so the providence of God can be in his life (Jude 20; Romans 8:26-28; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 1:19).
- (3) The Holy Spirit is the great spiritual strength of the real Christian (Ephesians 3:16; Romans 15:13; 14:17).
- (4) God has given us the spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (II Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15).

3. The Holy Spirit assures us of our salvation.

- (1) The Holy Spirit bears witness (testimony) with our spirit (not to our spirit) that we are the children of God (Rom. 8:16; I John 5:8; I John 2:3).
- (2) Without the Spirit of Christ we are none of his (Romans 8:9).
- (3) Because of the presence of the Spirit within us we shall experience a glorious resurrection (Romans 8:11).

#### D. Can Christians control, influence, or limit the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives?

1. Basic considerations.

- (1) By repentance and baptism the Spirit originally entered the life of the Christian (Acts 2:38).
- (2) The Holy Spirit is given to all who obey God (in becoming a Christian and in remaining one)—Acts 5:32.

(Continued on page 6)

# "And the Lord..."

(Continued from Page 1)

century church were, by worldly ideas, men with unrecognized educational standards—ignorant fishermen, despised tax collectors, and lower income bracket folks. And of course such self appointed critics find it distasteful that the preachers of Christ's church in the beginning were "jail birds," publicly rejected in many places.

Worldly minded religious leaders today may even eulogize the work of the apostles and the sacrifices they made, but they are quick to criticize all who seek to follow the teachings of Christ and his apostles, and who are seeking to carry out their plans of making known the good news of Christ to a lost and dying world.

### III. THE TREMENDOUS GROWTH OF THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST CENTURY WAS MADE IN THE FACE OF FANATICAL AND UN-MERCIFUL PERSECUTION AT THE HANDS OF BOTH THE JEWS AND THE ROMANS.

Fear of persecution and opposition are weapons used effectively by the devil in holding back the work of Christ today. Multitudes of professed Christians are afraid to be numbered among the followers of Christ because of what might be said about them. They are afraid to encounter the wrath of the enemies of the gospel. The early church multiplied throughout the world in the face of the most withering and discouraging types of opposition and persecution.

### IV. REASONS WHY THE EARLY CHURCH MADE SUCH PHENOMENAL GROWTH.

1. The Christians were not ashamed nor afraid to preach the gospel of Christ even in the face of certain punishment and even death.

When Peter and John were arrested and brought before the high priests for preaching Jesus, they preached to them "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). When forbidden by these men to preach Christ, they replied: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19,20). After being released they continued to preach Christ publicly.

When all the apostles were brought before the council and forbidden to

preach, they replied: "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). And to this council they preached that they and the Holy Spirit were witnesses to the crucified and risen Christ. After receiving a beating on orders of the council, they left "Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:41,42).

Stephen preached in the very face of death, and died triumphantly "in the Lord" as the first martyr for Jesus. The people were so convicted by Stephen's preaching that they "cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him..." (Acts 7:57,58). But

what was the reaction of Stephen on this occasion? He kneeled down "and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60).

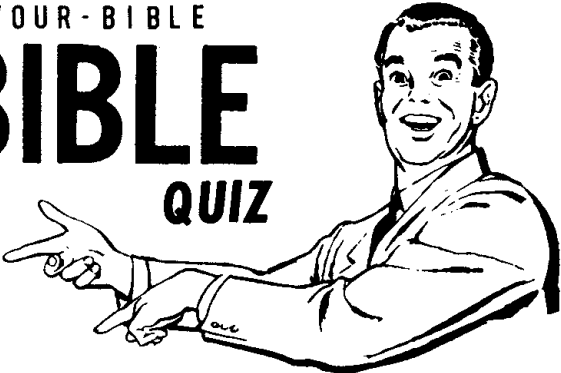
But not only were the apostles and preachers like Stephen willing to suffer for Christ, and keep on preaching until death stopped their mouths, the whole church had the same mind. Christians were forced by persecution to flee from Jerusalem. (The apostles stayed there). "They went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4) Though driven from their homes for preaching Christ, they preached the name of Jesus wherever they were forced to flee. Only death could stop their mouths.

The apostle Paul probably suffered more than any other human being has been called upon to suffer for Christ. Several years of his life were spent

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### KNOW-YOUR-BIBLE

# BIBLE QUIZ



1. What son was born to Adam and Eve whose name meant "appointed"?
2. How many people were saved from the Flood on the ark, and who were they?
3. Where was Sarah (Abraham's wife) buried (as well as Abraham, Issac, and Jacob—and their wives)?
4. The week of the passover was observed what month and what days of the month according to the Jewish calander?
5. What was one of the reasons (besides the detour to give the Law) why God didn't have the Israelites take the shortest route into the promised land in their exodus from Egypt?
6. Which one of the O. T. prophets is especially spoken of as a "watchman"?
7. What bearing did Jesus say the practice of the doctrines and traditions of men had on worship?
8. Jesus and His disciples were in the region of what great mountain when Peter made the good confession?
9. Where was Paul when he wrote I Corinthians?
10. What was the name of Timothy's mother and grandmother?

(Answers found elsewhere in this issue)

ANNOUNCING —  
(SOMETHING NEW...Actual size of the cover and pages:)

EVERY  
Sunday?



| JANUARY |    |    |    |    |    |    | FEBRUARY |    |    |    |    |    |    | MARCH |    |    |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|----|----|
| S       | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S        | M  | T  | W  | T  | F  | S  | S     | M  | T  |
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| 12      | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 9        | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16    | 17 | 18 |
| 19      | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 16       | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23    | 24 | 25 |
| 26      | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    | 23       | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |    | 30    | 31 |    |

| NOVEMBER |    |    |    |    |    |    | DECEMBER |    |    |    |    |    |    |
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| 9        | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 14       | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 16       | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 21       | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 23       | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 28       | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |
| 30       | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |          |    |    |    |    |    |    |

By JAMES E. GIBBONS

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them...” —Acts 20:7a

HERE we have an example and pattern authority for the weekly observance of the Lord’s supper. If it were left entirely up to the account of Jesus instituting the Lord’s supper (Matthew 26:26-29), we would be at a loss as to knowing the frequency we should partake of the supper. However, Jesus promised the apostles that not only would the Holy Spirit bring all things to their remembrance (John 14:16), but He would guide them into all other unrevealed religious truth (John 16:13). Now in Acts 20:7 the church at Troy operating under the very sight of an inspired apostle came together on the first day of the week “to break bread.” It is incidental that the apostle Paul

was there and preached—the purpose of their coming together was to have the Lord’s supper. Every week has a first day, and it is implied that this was their customary practice. Under the Old Testament the Jews were commanded to “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.” They didn’t ask: Which sabbath (seventh) day? Every week had a seventh day and they understood this to mean they should keep every sabbath unto God. The same is true as we read in Acts 20:7 of the Lord’s supper on the first day of the week.

We are not left to this Scripture only for evidence of weekly communion; it is evident in I Corinthians. The church at Corinth was a problem church rent assunder by partyism, immorality, and the abuse of divine worship. They had reduced the Lord’s supper to a

drunken feast. Notice: “When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his supper: and one is hungry and another is drunken” (I Cor. 11:20,21). The Amplified New Testament’s translation of verse 20 is a little plainer. “So when you gather for your meetings, it is not the Supper instituted by the Lord that you eat.” In other words, they were supposedly observing the Lord’s supper, but had reduced it to a common meal and a drunken feast. What we wish to emphasize is that they were doing this “WHEN” they came together; in other words, every time they were regularly assembled. They were keeping the Lord’s supper, although in a greatly degenerated fashion, every time the church met. When was this regular meeting time? If we can establish this we can know the frequency of the Lord’s supper observance. I Corinthians 16:2 gives the answer—“Upon the first day of the week.”

It is also of interest to note, and not without significance, that the Lord’s supper was observed on the day the church was established—the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). On what day of the week was this Jewish holy day celebrated? Leviticus 23:15,16. Seven sabbaths followed the Passover, and the next day after the seventh sabbath was Pentecost (50th). Thus, it was celebrated on the first day of the week. The church had its beginning on this day, and the church first observed the Lord’s supper on this day. Having reference to their worship on this day, the record reads, “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42).

Furthermore, it is a fact from outside history that the early church observed the Lord’s supper every Lord’s day, and competent scholarship (even denominational scholarship) is agreed to this. The following will illustrate the latter. These are comments made by denominational scholars (in their well-known commentaries) on Acts 20:7, explaining why the church at Troy came together on the first day of the week.

ALBERT BARNES (Presbyterian): “Evidently to celebrate the Lord’s supper. . . It is probable that the apostles and early Christians celebrated the Lord’s supper on every Lord’s day.”

ADAM CLARKE (Methodist): “To break the Eucharist, as the Syriac has

(Continued Next Page)

**EVERY SUNDAY?**

(Continued from Page 5)

it: intimating by this that they were accustomed to receive the Holy Sacrament on each Lord's day."

KIND READER, in the light of this array of information, we are made to ask why modern "churches" are not having the Lord's supper every Lord's day. Yes, *why not?* Obviously this is a neglected scriptural teaching which has been replaced by tradition. But, as we are seeking unreservedly to return to the divine pattern to be simply the Lord's "New Testament" church, we will have this supper each Lord's day as the very center of our worship. Faithful Christians will be there to remember devoutly the supreme sacrifice made for their salvation. . . to worship in the way God would have them worship. *Will you?*

**SPECIAL NOTE:** This article on the frequency of Lord's supper observance is a new tract we have prepared. Counting the illustrated cover and the back, there are six pages to it. It is printed in an attractive blue ink. We believe it can be put to good use for the cause of truth. Cost: 3¢ each or \$3.00 per 100. Order a supply today.

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**"AND THE LORD ADDED TO..."**

(Continued from Page 4)

in prison for the Saviour. But even while a prisoner he preached Christ at every opportunity. A number of his letters were written while in jail. While imprisoned in Rome he won members of Caesar's household to Christ.

Whether before priests or peasants, Pharisees or publicans, prisoners or prison keepers, Sadducees or slaves, kings or queens, rich or poor, young or old, in the temple or the market place, before the educated or the ignorant, in the synagogue or idol's temple, in homes or along highways and byways. "in season and out of season," Paul and multitudes of other Christians were not ashamed nor afraid to preach Christ as Saviour, Lord and King of kings.

They preached when loved and when hated. They believed that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and they acted out their convictions. Seeing souls on the very brink of hell, they did not hesitate to "snatch them out of the fire, hating even the garments spotted by the flesh" (Jude 23).

The church refused to allow persecution to detour her from her God-given responsibility. She feared God rather than men. She loved God more than

the favor of men. She preached in the face of men like Saul of Tarsus when he was "yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1).

This same Saul when converted was equally zealous to further the cause of Christ and equally willing to suffer for Him. He lists some of the things which he willingly endured for Jesus in II Cor. 11:23-33. Let us read this passage of Scripture and then repent in tears when we are unwilling to suffer for the Master.

What was Paul's attitude as he suffered these things? "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him..." (Phil. 3:7-9). "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

If the church today had only a small measure of the devotion of the early disciples then it would become common to hear of the Lord adding to the church daily. But so long as we

are content to allow our fervency for the Lord to be only a feeble flicker of light, we will do well to hear of the Lord adding to the church annually. May God help us to realize that serving the Lord is supposed to be the consuming passion of our lives. May we be ashamed of ourselves to wishfully hope and think that we can reach heaven on "flowery beds of ease," while saints in ages past gained heaven by passing through bloody seas—their own blood!

2. The growth of the early church can also be attributed to the fact that the lives of the Christians, like the message they preached, was pure.

The book of Acts and the letters written by Paul, James, Peter, John and Jude indicate that even in the church of the first century not all who accepted Christ remained faithful to Him. Yet for the most part the saints were ever growing and seeking to become more and more like the Master. And it is clear that discipline was practiced in the churches to maintain purity.

God administered the first case of discipline when he brought sudden death to Ananias and Sapphira for lying about the sell of their property, for pretending to give all when they

**SYSTEMATIC SCRIPTURAL STUDIES . . .**

(Continued from Page 3)

- (3) Christ (the Holy Spirit) dwells in our hearts according to our faith (Ephesians 3:16, 17).
- 2. We must sow to the Spirit.
  - (1) Sow to the Spirit (opposite of sowing to the flesh) to reap eternal life (Galatians 6:8, 9).
  - (2) By letting the Word of Christ dwell in us richly (Col. 3:16; Ephesians 5:18, 19—This is a command to be progressively filled with the Spirit).
- 3. We must walk in the Spirit.
  - (1) By doing this we will find victory over sin (Galatians 5:16).
  - (2) There is no condemnation to those who walk after the Spirit (Romans 8:1, 4).
- 4. Christians may destroy the influence of the Spirit by sin.
  - (1) This is grieving and quenching the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:22-24, 30; I Thessalonians 5:19).
  - (2) We resist the Holy Spirit by not heeding His teaching (Acts 7:51; James 1:19-21).
  - (3) Sin unrepented of, will drive the Holy Spirit out, no longer to indwell (Revelation 3:14-20).
  - (4) We must abide in Christ before we can bear fruit (John 15:4-8).

were only giving a part.

But not all discipline was left up to the Lord to carry out at his good pleasure. From the writings of Paul it is evident that he practiced it wherever he established congregations. He even went so far as to rebuke the apostle Peter to the face when he refused to eat with the Gentiles at Antioch.

Purity of doctrine coupled with purity of life make an unbeatable combination in winning souls to Christ. This will stop the mouths of those who are quick to say "I'm just as good as the church members."

Purity of doctrine and life eliminate, or at least bring to a minimum, occasions of stumbling. Each exalts the other. Pure doctrine is made attractive by pure lives, and pure lives attract people to the pure doctrine.

3. Unity was a most important factor in the unexcelled growth of the church. This unity prevailed on the initial day of the church's beginning. On that day the men responsible for the first gospel sermons ever preached which brought the church into existence, "were all with one accord in one place" (Acts 2:1). The first disciples to become a part of the church, "continued daily with one accord" (Acts 2:46).

Even when problems arose in the church, the congregation was willing to accept the leadership of the apostles. When their decision was announced, "the saying pleased the multitude" (Acts 6:5). This spirit of unity prevailed in the church and it even broke down the barriers separating the Jews and Gentiles. It brought them together in a common assembly to worship the one Lord, accept the one faith, and work together in the preaching of the gospel throughout the world. With but few exceptions the church was "color blind" and rejoiced whether the gospel was being preached to Gentiles or Jews. When the church in Jerusalem heard of the successful labors of Paul among the Gentiles, "They glorified God in him."

This hopelessly divided religious world would do well to take a close look at the unity of the early church. It needs also to read and reread the prayer of Jesus in John 17:20-23 for unity. After reading Jesus' prayer, then it would be well to read Paul's plea for unity in Ephesians 4:4-6, which sets forth the sevenfold bonds of unity seen in Christ's church in her early years of existence. Millions will perish in hell that could be saved if only all who profess to love Christ would do his will and work together

according to the plan of God in bringing the lost and dying to the Saviour for cleansing in His own precious blood.

4. Vision of the needs of the gospel by the "guttermost" in the uttermost parts of the world caused the light to shine out and bring salvation to those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. The vision of the church in her infancy played a big part in her rapid growth.

This vision not only motivated the apostles and evangelist to labor zealously for God, but likewise the whole church was filled with vision and zeal for the Lord. "They therefore (the church) that were scattered abroad, went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

The churches sent out men, the cream of the crop, to take the gospel where it had never been preached. It was the vision of the church at Antioch that caused them to send Paul and Barnabas to Asia Minor and later to send Paul and Silas to labor not only in Asia Minor but also in Europe. Churches like Philippi supported evangelists abroad.

Homes of Christians became centers of evangelism and the meeting places of the churches. Even religious leaders of great zeal, but who knew not the way of the Lord fully, were instructed in the way of the Lord more perfectly by a faithful husband and wife. See Acts 18:24-26.

Opportunities to preach the gospel were accepted when presented and opportunities for preaching the gospel were made. Doors were opened and these doors were entered with the message of Christ.

Great sacrifices were made that the gospel be not hindered by lack of financial support. Two examples are mentioned by Paul. Three people, Epaphroditus, Aquilla and Priscilla, suffered much for Paul. Epaphroditus was sick nigh unto death to supply Paul's needs. See Philippians 2:25-30. Aquilla and Priscilla risked their necks for Paul. "Behold how they loved one another" and how they also loved the lost.

The faithful disciples envisioned heaven, and could not think of going there alone. They saw the horrors of hell and could not be content to see men and women go there without first being plead with and warned.

Personal comforts, conveniences, loved ones, friends, brethren—love for these things was secondary to their desire to reach the lost and snatch the few they were able to from the fire.

They went forth weeping bearing precious seed and doubtless came together rejoicing bringing their sheaves with them.

O that the church today would pray earnestly and fervently for a true vision of the needs of men! That she would unite her forces under the banner of the cross! That she would forget her petty quarreling and bickering and be filled with zeal and love and enthusiasm for the Lord!

It is heart breaking when there is suspicion, jealousy, gossip and misrepresentation being carried on by those who profess to love the Lord and the brethren. When we have ought against a brother or sister, would it not be better to go to him or her and reason with them out of the Scriptures, rather than talk to others about them. Gossip is a sin in all church members including preachers. May we all check on our lives lest we fall under condemnation, as Romans 2:1 states, "Thou that judgest doest the same things."

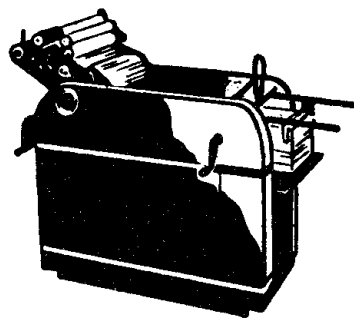
Zeal for Christ has waned among many in the past few years. No small number of Christians have backslidden and some preachers are among this number. But our talking about them will not reach them. Perhaps more time spent praying for them and dealing with them would bring some of them back to Christ, if we do it in "meekness, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

Let us work and pray that the day may soon come when at least the majority of Christians will lose their fear and shame of soul winning. May we soon so concentrate on knowing the will of God and living a holy life that both our message and lives will stand the test of purity before the Lord. May we soon be perfectly joined together in one mind and one spirit, uniting our efforts for Christ. And finally, may everything of lesser importance be made secondary in our lives. And may we as never before see the "fields white unto harvest" and the laborers few. May we say with Isaiah "Here am I, Lord, send me."

May we develop such passion for souls that we will go forth bringing in the sheaves until it can once again be said of the church: "And the Lord added to the church daily." □

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- 1. Genesis 4:25; 2. 1 Peter 3:20; Genesis 7:7, 13; 3. Genesis 23:19; 25: 8,9; 49:29-33; 50:13; 4. Exodus 12:1, 2, 13, 19; 5. Exodus 13:17; 6. Ezekiel 3:17; 7. Matthew 15:3, 7-9; 8. Mt. Herman; 9. 1 Cor. 16:8; 10. II Timothy 1:5.

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**DR. RODNEY W. JOHNSON**, Scientist with NASA and considered to be America's foremost authority on lunar bases, SAID:

My contacts indicate that a surprising number of scientists, engineers, and technicians associated with the space program have a deep and vital faith. More, proportionately, than in many other fields and professions, I'd say. Another surprise: most who have a faith in God hold this strongly, as if their association with the space program had acted to reinforce their belief. I think it has mine, as a matter of fact. Men are looking for a new verification of their faith, and I expect the space program to provide just this sort of thing sooner or later. In other words, I'm expecting a fresh new manifestation of God in some way. This could take the form of the confirmation of a significant Bible truth.

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