

The Sword AND Staff

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

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

THE HOUSE OF GOD IS SPIRITUAL,

By RICHARD SNELL
519 Denmark Drive
Cincinnati, Ohio 45244

WE HAVE FALLEN into the habit of referring to the building in which the church meets as "the house of God." In an unscriptural sense it is, for it is a house, and it is dedicated to God. However, if we are to speak as the Bible speaks, we must get out of this habit. Without realizing that we were doing it, we have been transferring a high and holy spiritual phrase to something entirely different. By speaking as we have in making this misapplication, we have robbed ourselves and our hearers of a beautiful, spiritual concept of the Lord's church. The inspired writers of the letters comprising the New Testament employed several figures of speech to help us understand the nature of the church. For example, the church is called the "bride" of Christ, the "family" of God, the "flock" of Christ, the "body" of Christ (with him as the "head"), and as the "house of God." Each of these figures of speech is developed in the New Testament to illumine beautifully our understanding of the church. To transfer any of these analogous terms to something else in religion is to rob the Holy Spirit of His applied terms and is to distort our understanding of the church.

Under the figure of the house of God, the reader is led to compare the



spiritual structure, worship, and priesthood of the church with the material counterpart of these features in the successive material houses of God in pre-Christian dispensations. When the writers of the New Testament, then, spoke of the house of God after the church of Christ began, they referred not to a material building, but to the spiritual house, "the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. 8:2). Follow the thinking of the Spirit:

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:19-22).

"And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and

Not Material

the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. 3:5,6).

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:14,15)

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 2:5).

In pre-gospel ages, God's house was a material structure. The tabernacle was called the house of God (Judges 20:18; Mark 2:25,26); Solomon's temple was called the house of God (II Chron. 5:14); its replacement, Zerubbabel's temple, was called the house of God (Neh. 6:10); and then in Jesus' day, the third temple, Herod's, was called the house of God (Matt. 21:12,13). These, of course, were material structures.

But the prophet Nathan was commissioned by God to tell king David that David's "son" would build God a house for God's name. I Chron. 17:11-15; II Sam. 7:12-29. This prophecy had two fulfillments. The first fulfillment occurred when David's immediate son Solomon built the temple. The and far greater fulfillment occurred when David's greater Son, Jesus Christ, built the spiritual house, the

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Proverbs of Today

You can have a new beginning in life—today is the beginning of the rest of your life; how will it end?

“Footprints are never left on the ‘sands of time’ by those who stand still.”

If you want to find fault with your fellowman, you have picked a very easy job, because no one is faultless.

“Girls (and women), if you are not offering your body for sale on the altar of lust, why don't you take it off the display counter?”

It is the job of all of the church to take all of the gospel to all of the world.

“Aiming to do good is fine if you pull the trigger.”

If a man comes teaching a false doctrine, he is to be corrected—if he can't be corrected, he is to be rejected.

“Remember that you cannot hold a man down without staying down with him.”

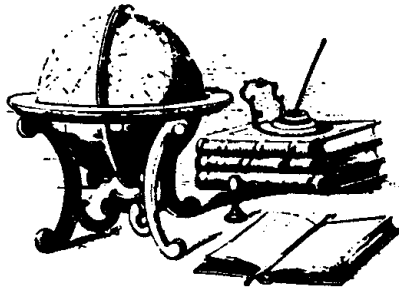
Our country is full of people making good livings but leading poor lives.

“Success requires no apologies; failures permits no alibis.”

If you don't master life, then life will master you.

“Often the best way to correct your children is to correct the example you are setting for them.”

Experience is a great teacher, but oftentimes the fees are high.



EDITORIAL

COMMENTS...

A NEW Booklet: “THE LETTER THAT WAS NEVER ANSWERED”

IN THE DECEMBER, 1969, issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF we ran a study of Acts 2:38. Simply stated, the article concluded that “FOR” meant what it said when it reads that we are baptized “FOR the remission of sins.”

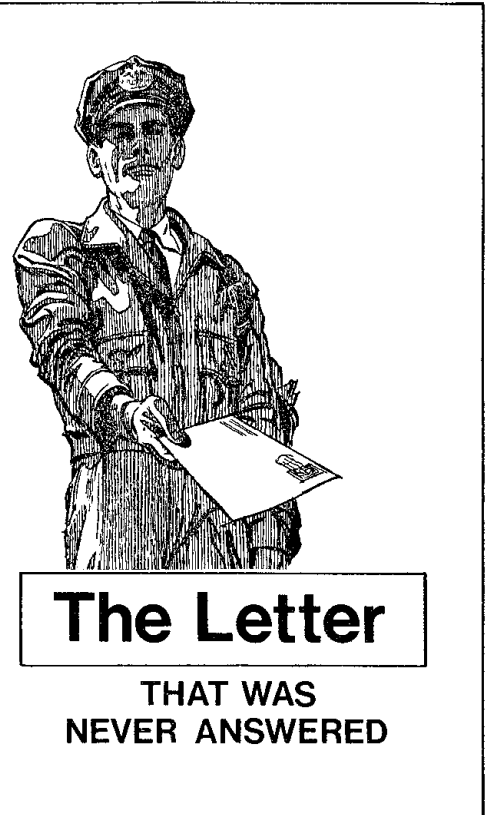
A sample copy of that issue fell into the hands of a local Baptist minister. He very strongly denied that baptism was for the remission of sins and gave some reasons “why” he denied it in his very pointed letter. The editor of this paper carefully and courteously answered his letter, pointing out the fallacy of his thinking. Both letters were printed in January, 1970, issue of this paper. We received a tremendous and favorable response from our reading audience. The correspondence was even reprinted in a paper in South Africa. It has now been over two years, and our letter has never been answered.

We have printed this material in booklet form and are calling it, “The Letter That Was Never Answered.” We believe this material should have wide distribution in helping people see the truth of Acts 2:38 and the fallacy of sectarianism. To help it have a wider distribution, we are making it available for only 5¢ a copy (in any numbers). We believe that you can use this tract-booklet. Order a good supply from THE SWORD AND STAFF.

FREE PLAQUE: “A NEW DAY”

Under the caption of “A NEW DAY,” these words appeared on the front page of the last issue of this paper: *“This is the beginning of a new day. God has given me this day to use as I will. I can waste it or use it for some good purpose. But what I do with this day is important because I have exchanged a day of my life for it. When tomorrow comes, today will be gone forever. I hope I will not regret the price I paid for it.”*

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SEVEN SONS

A MAN HAD seven sons who were always quarreling. Some bad men looked forward to the death of their father and planned to cheat them out of their property by creating a quarrel.

One day the good old man called his sons around him. He laid before them seven sticks, which were bound together. He said, "I will pay one hundred dollars to the one who can break this bundle."

Each one strained every nerve to break the bundle. After a long, but vain, trial, they all said that it could not be done.

"And yet, my boys," said the father, "nothing is easier to do." He then untied the bundle and broke the sticks, one by one, with perfect ease.

"Ah!" said his sons, "It is easy enough to do it so; anybody would do it in that way."

Their father replied, "As it is with these sticks, so it is with you, my sons: So long as you hold fast together and aid each other, you will prosper, and none can injure you. But if the bond of union be broken, it will happen to you just as it has to these sticks; which lie broken on the ground."

—From McGuffey's Third Reader

A Lesson from History

GIBBON'S famous work, *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, has been quoted time and time again to warn America of impending doom. His condensed five reasons why Rome fell are known by all. Not so well known, however, are his listing of the five causes of the rise and growth of Christianity. Gibbons listed them as:

1. The inflexible zeal of the Christians inherited from

the Jews.

2. The doctrine of a future life.
3. The miraculous powers of the primitive church.
4. The austere morals of the first Christians.
5. The development of church government.

If the twentieth century church desires to grow like the first century church, then let us learn from history.

—V. Knowies

ANSWERS TO "KNOW-YOUR-BIBLE" BIBLE QUIZ

1. Genesis 11:27-32;
2. Joshua 7;
3. I Kings 13:1-10;
4. II Chronicles 26:16-21;
5. Isaiah 6;
6. Jonah 1:1-3;
7. Proverbs 14:29;
8. John 4:7-26;
9. Acts 6:1-4;
10. Romans 2:17-24.

McGARVEY on PASTOR

THE TERM PASTOR furnishes a striking example of the power with which sectarian usage forces itself upon us. . . We now have all the facts before us necessary to a proper estimate of the term pastor. To apply it to a preacher who is not a regularly appointed elder of the church is a misnomer; as much as to call the Lord's day Sabbath, or to call sprinkling baptism. It is a violation of the law that we must speak as the oracles of God; it is letting go of the form of sound words which we have heard from the apostles. . . Again: to style a preacher "the pastor" is still more unscriptural, for it robs the eldership entirely of this title, and makes it appear that there is but one pastor to the congregation, whereas the apostolic churches all had a plurality of them. If we use the term at all we must apply it to the eldership and may speak of "the pastors of a church," and of "a pastor," but never of "the Pastor," unless, indeed, a church is so ill organized as to have but one elder.

—J. W. McGARVEY—

Order These:

- ☐ *The Subject of the Holy Spirit Made Simple*—25¢ each; 5 for \$1.00.
- ☐ *The Bible and Archaeology*—25¢ each.
- ☐ *Objections to the Necessity of Baptism Answered*—8¢ each; 100 for \$6.00.
- ☐ *The Letter That Was Never Answered*—5¢ each.
- ☐ *Are Visions, Dreams, and Religious Experiences Proof of Salvation?*—6¢ each.
- ☐ *Every Sunday? (Concerns weekly observance of the Lord's Supper)*—3¢ each; 100 for \$2.50.
- ☐ *His Church is Marching On (Song on gummed paper for hymnbooks)*—5¢ each.

FREE MATERIALS:

- ☐ *A New Day (a plaque)*
- ☐ *Lessons in Happiness From the Garden of Eden*
- ☐ *In Style With the World, But Out of Style With God*
- ☐ *I Saw Him Standing There (Or, The Old Gospel Preacher)*

THE HOUSE OF GOD IS...

(Continued from Page 1)

church (Matt. 16:18; Heb. 8:2; Eph. 2:19-22).

The tabernacle and the temples prior to the church of God were material structures, designed to typify the spiritual house. Chapters 8, 9 and 10 of Hebrews are among the Scriptures which reveal that the spiritual house, the *ekklesia*, that is, assembly or church, of Christ, was established among men in fulfillment of the spiritual signification seen in the old material structures.

In 787 B. C. the prophet Amos predicted the establishment of the church and the inclusion of the Gentiles in it. He wrote, "In that day will I raise up the TABERNACLE OF DAVID that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will *build* it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name (upon whom my name is called.—Hebrew, in the footnote), saith the Lord that doeth this." Amos 9:11,12. James, the Lord's brother and an elder in the Jerusalem church, quoted this in Acts 15:13-19 and declared it fulfilled. The CHURCH, or assembly, of God is the HOUSE of God.

Therefore, the Christian does not enter the house of God when he goes to church on Sunday; he entered the house of God when he was born again. He became a part of it then. He is a "living stone," quarried by grace from the fastness of sin and structured by the Master Builder into God's living and holy temple. I Pet. 2:5; Eph. 2:20-22. By the same token, the Christian does not leave the house of God when he goes home from the meeting place; for one can leave the house of God only by departing from the faith and losing one's soul.

A sinner, until he becomes obedient to the faith, is never in the house of God even though he may be ensconced in a pew in some lovely "sanctuary." An invitation to the lost to come into the Lord's house is, in this gospel age, an invitation to be saved.

When the saints assemble, they don't meet in the house of God; *they are* the house of God, assembled with unity in a material hall to praise His name. Let us keep this truth in mind when we talk to one another, and when we pray. □

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS . . .

(Continued from Page 2)

These words serve as a fine motivator. We have printed them on a stiff and dignified brownish paper as a plaque, which is suitable for framing. You may order this FREE in any numbers. (On free material, please enclose some help on the postage. Thank you).

SPURGEON AND THE BOOKWORM

C. H. Spurgeon on one occasion went into Scotland and stopped at a wayside inn. There he picked up an old worm-eaten Bible.

He held it up between himself and the sun, and there was just one place that he could see the light clear through. One worm had begun at Genesis, and eaten right through to Revelation.

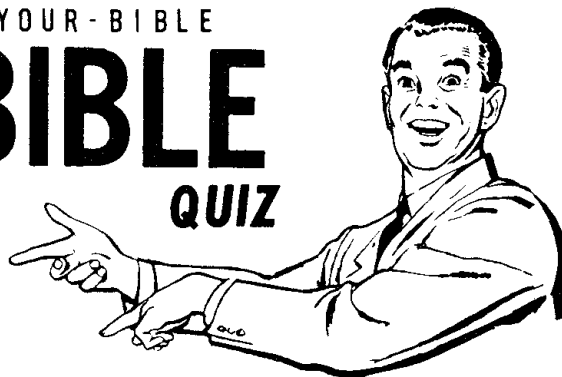
Mr. Spurgeon said, "Lord, make me a bookworm like that!"

Oh, that we all could just eat into the Bible a little section at a time! But if you study it word by word, you will be enriched. Word studies of the Bible are like picking up pearls and diamonds.

—Mooreland Bulletin

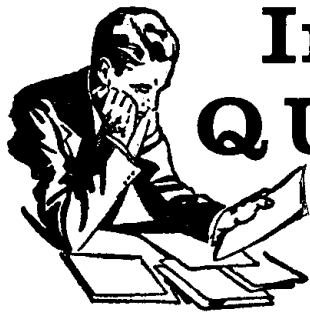
KNOW-YOUR-BIBLE

BIBLE QUIZ



1. What was the name of Abraham's father, and where did he die?
2. What was the sin of Achan?
3. What happened to king Jeroboam's hand as he tried to apprehend the man of God who came to warn him about his idolatry?
4. Why was king Uzziah of Judah punished with leprosy?
5. What man was called to his prophetic work the year king Uzziah died?
6. Where did Jonah attempt to flee instead of going to Nineveh where God had told him to go preach?
7. "He that is slow to wrath is of great _____; but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly."
8. To whom did Jesus say: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"?
9. Why were seven men selected to serve tables in the early Jerusalem church?
10. How did the name of God come to be used as a curse word?

(Answers found elsewhere in this issue)



Inquirer's QUESTIONS Answered

• By James E. Gibbons

FOLLOWING IS FOUND a letter and questions received sometime ago from a Mount Airy, North Carolina, reader. Evidently the reader is one schooled in the use of catechisms and creeds, because his questions seem to be of that nature. We get the impression that the reader does not want answers for himself, but it is a catechism for us. As can be seen from the way he tries to lead our thinking, he takes the extreme Calvinistic position of individual predestination to salvation, the inability of man to accept Christ (no free will), and once in grace always in grace (he has personally conveyed these thoughts too). We humbly submit our reply, aware of the pitfalls of reactionary and dogmatic sectarianism. We trust our comments will not only be of interest, but of help, to the one who wrote the letter as well as to our general reading audience.

THE LETTER AND QUESTIONS

"God has not left the plan of salvation up to man. Praise his holy name, he didn't. I have read some of your articles. Now I ask you to quiz yourself on some of the questions I have listed and given you God's Word as your text. You will either hate these truths or love them. There is no happy medium. I would ask you to remember that God's Word is not about man. It is about God.

1. Are there any new names written in the Lamb's book of life? Rev. 17:8.
2. Whom does Christ pray for? John 17:1-26.
3. Is God's election real? Romans 9:11.
4. Was Paul a chosen vessel before he was baptized? Acts 9:15.
5. How much do you know about God?

A. His wisdom, knowledge, judgments, mind, etc.? Romans 11:33-36.

B. His counsel, pleasure, declaration? Isaiah 46:10.

C. His thoughts, ways, word, pleasures? Isaiah 55:8-11.

6. Is Grace by election of God? Romans 11:5-6.

7. Was the apostle Paul and the church at Ephesus really chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world? Ephesians 1:3-11.

8. Who can come to Christ? John 6:44.

9. Did Christ make a definite atonement or an indefinite atonement? John 10:1-18.

10. Why preach the Gospel? Romans 1:16-17.

11. How does one get into Christ? Romans 8:28-31.

12. Is unbelief the only sin that shall send a person into eternal damnation? Galatians 5:19-21.

13. No, man is not a robot, but what man has resisted his will? Romans 9:19.

14. II Timothy 3:16-17."

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Immediately in the offset of our friend's letter he takes the reactionary "either or" attitude. He says the Bible is not about man, it is about God. We would say that neither position is true. It is about God *and* man—it is about God's dealings with man, and man's relationship to God. It has been our observation that Calvinists, since they have taken the extreme position on one side, expect those who do not agree with them to be just as extreme in the other direction. Since they have jumped aboard and ridden the swinging pendulum as far as it will go in one direction, they expect everyone else to have done the same in the other. There is no middle ground for them.

I. Are there any new names written in the Lamb's book of life? Rev. 17:8.

Revelation 17:8 reads: "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they

that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."

First, let us issue a word of caution in reference to the book of Revelation, then we will proceed with our comments. The book of Revelation is a book of signs and symbolism (Rev. 1:1), and we should exercise restraint and refrain from dogmatism in our study of it. Revelation 17:8 (the verse under consideration in the question) is clothed in symbolic language, obviously, as it speaks of "the beast." Obscure passages should not be used as "proof texts."

Our questioner evidently is directing our thinking to these words: "whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." He has individual predestination in mind, but what does the writer of Revelation have in mind?

In examining this verse, we conclude that God has had a book of life from the foundation of the world. People's names were written in this book (at the said time in prophecy) which had been in existence since the foundation of the world. It does not necessarily say that their names were written in the book before the world ever began, but that the book was in existence before the world began.

Revelation 13:8 is a parallel verse to this one. It reads: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

We ask, "Was Christ slain before the world began?" The answer obviously is no. This took place on the cross of Calvary in relatively recent times. However, inasmuch as God knows all things, he foreknew man's sin and foreordained his Son to be the remedy for man's sin (I Peter 1:18-20). We further ask, "Were men's names written in the book of life before the world began?" No more than Christ being actually slain before the world started. And, they were not specifically foreordained as Christ, but potentially, as God had the book of life wherein the names of Christ's redeemed would be added.

In Acts 2, when the church was established, men cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Was the answer, "You can do nothing"? No! Listen to Acts 2:38. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the re-

(Continued on Next Page)

INQUIRER'S QUESTIONS ANSWERED

(Continued from Page 5)

mission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Then the apostle Peter preached some more, after which he admonished the people, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40). They could not save themselves by good works and thus take away their own sins (Eph. 2:9; Titus 3:5). No, but they could repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins, accepting the merits of the blood of Christ. Peter told them to save themselves in this manner. And 3,000 did just that! (Acts 2:41).

And it is said that they were added to the church (Acts 2:47)—their names were added to the Lamb's book of life. The King James translation of Acts 2:47 is regrettable, which reads, "...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." The unhappy wording here would tend to lend itself to Calvinistic thinking. Other translations render this "WHO WERE BEING SAVED," which is correct. The Greek participle expresses the idea of something that was then happening.

Not only may names be added, but contrary to Calvinistic thinking, names can be removed from the book of life. Even in the Old Testament, Moses, interceding in behalf of those who had worshipped the golden calf, said, "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and is not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, "WHOSOEVER hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book" (Exodus 32:32, 33). Revelation 3:5 implies that if we do not overcome the world, our names will be blotted out of the book of life. Revelation 22:19 relates, "And if ANY man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life..."

And what does it mean to have one's name taken out of the book of life? Depicting the Day of Judgment, Revelation 20:15 reads, "And WHO-SOEVER was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Beloved, by the grace of God let us be found faithful to God!

2. Whom does Christ pray for? John 17:1-26.

We fail to see any connection between the point our questioner is trying to establish and the 17th chapter of John. This is a special prayer mainly for the disciples (and apostles-

to-be) by Jesus. Because Jesus did not pray for the world here is no indication that he does not wish for the world to be saved (John 3:16). Paul prayed for sinners in Romans chapter 10.

3. Is God's election real? Romans 9:11.

Here again our catechist fails to get across his pre-decided point. What is this Scripture supposed to prove? This Scripture concerns God choosing Jacob to be the head over a chosen race rather than his brother Esau. It has nothing to do with being chosen to eternal salvation before he was born. When he says in Romans 9:13, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," it does not necessarily mean hate as we normally think of it. "Hate" is a Hebraism used many times by the Jews, meaning to love less. Jesus taught that if any man came to him and did not "hate" his father, mother, etc., he could not be his disciple (Luke 14:26). Jesus taught against hating anyone (Matthew 5:43-47). What he really meant was that we could not love father, mother, etc., more than him (Matthew 10:37). "Hate" is a Jewish expression meaning to love less.

What Paul ultimately is trying to get across in Romans 9 (and much of Romans) is that God's calling of man to salvation is not determined by man's pre-existing goodness. Before Jesus came, God seemed to be dealing only with the Jews, and the Gentiles were "nobodies." They had fallen very low indeed. Now by God's grace the Gentiles clearly are in God's plan (not because they deserved it, but because of grace). Paul illustrates, in this chapter, how that God does what he wants to do. He is God. He chose Jacob over Esau for the Jewish line of national descent. He used obstinate Pharaoh to bring about His glory. What He does is a matter of his own will. But as far as predestination to salvation is concerned, it is not taught in this chapter.

4. Was Paul a chosen vessel before he was baptized? Acts 9:15.

Certainly Paul was a chosen vessel before he was baptized, but it was not a matter of irrevocable predestination. He was a chosen vessel to be an apostle. Naturally he would have to become a Christian first. But Paul's free will was not over-ridden. Later he declared before king Agrippa, "O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19). In other words he had

option; he could exercise choice. He could have turned down the call to apostleship, but he did not. After seeing the vision, he was without sight three days in Damascus praying (Acts 9:9-11). Ananias finally came to him, telling him God's will for his life, and saying, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). Paul obeyed (Acts 9:18), and he obeyed thereafter as an apostle. Even his call to apostleship did not guarantee "once is grace always in grace." He later wrote, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27).

5. How much do you know about God? (check beginning of this article for references).

What this question is supposed to prove, we know not. What God wants us to know about Himself and His will for man is found in the Bible. As Moses said long ago (and we apply it in a New Testament sense), "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29). II Timothy 3:16 and 17 tell us about the purpose of the Word of God as it relates to man.

6. Is Grace by election of God? Romans 11:5, 6.

It would be more in keeping with the Scriptures to say that the election of God is by grace, rather than say grace is by the election of God (as far as man is concerned). The question is asked about God casting away His people, the Israelites, in Romans 11:1. God had not arbitrarily cast them away, as Calvinism of necessity would imply. Romans 11:20-22 reads, "Well; because of unbelief they (the Israelites or Jews) were broken off, and thou (Gentile Christians) standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: for IF God spared not the natural branches (the Israelites or Jews), take heed lest he also spare not thee (Gentile Christians). Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell severity; but toward thee goodness, IF THOU CONTINUE IN HIS GOODNESS: OTHERWISE THOU ALSO SHALT BE CUT OFF." (Beloved, it is not an arbitrary predestination, but a conditional relationship to God! In all kindness, if one cannot see it from this Scripture, sectarianism must have really blinded one's eyes).

The election of God is by grace. That is the theme of so much of the epistle to the Romans. To start with, in the last part of the first chapter of Romans, Paul shows that the Gentiles had grievously sinned and fallen short of the standards of God. The Jews might be boastful and censorious because they had God's law, but they were likewise guilty before God (chapter 2). Paul in Romans 3:9 says, "...we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." Then he writes, "There is none righteous, no, not one... For all (Jew and Gentile) have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (verses 10 and 23). Thus, Paul further declares in Romans 11:32, "For God hath concluded them all (Jew and Gentile) in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." The election of God is by grace (grace meaning unmerited favor). Neither Jew or Gentile deserved salvation. Now God, not because of mankind's goodness, but out of His own choice, and by grace, is making salvation available to all who will believe (Romans 3:22).

The election of God is by grace. But man must accept this grace, enter into this grace, and stay in this grace. Man has something to do in the election of God by grace. Salvation is conditional, regardless what anybody may say. Peter wrote to Christians (and, please take these words at their face value), "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to MAKE YOUR CALLING AND ELECTION SURE: for IF ye DO these things, ye shall never fall" (II Peter 1:10). The Galatians had failed to do this, going back under the Law of Moses, and Paul said, "...ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4). However, Christians should find the victory, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the THRONE OF GRACE, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need" (Hebrews 4:15, 16).

7. Was the apostle Paul and the church at Ephesus really chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world? Ephesians 1:3-11.

We now notice verses 4, 5, and 11 as examples of this Scripture. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus to himself, accord-

ing to the good pleasure of his will... In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

These verses do not affirm that God chose some individuals (as individuals) to everlasting life, and rejected others, before the world started. But, rather, it is taught here that God before the foundation of the world determined to have a people for himself known as the church. Paul uses the plural here: "we," "us." And he says "we" are chosen "IN HIM." IN HIM has reference to the person of Christ and the church of Christ, which figuratively is his body. We know that Christ was specifically foreordained before the foundation of the world to be our Saviour (I Peter 1:19, 20). We were chosen in Christ (the person of Christ) inasmuch as "whosoever will" can be saved in him (John 3:16). And we were chosen in Christ because this expression has to do with the church, which has been in God's plan of redemption from the beginning.

All of this was according to the good pleasure of God's will; it was according to the purpose of His will, His grace, and not our righteousness, which made this calling possible. And what is God's will about the salvation of mankind? In reference to God, Paul writes: "WHO WILL have ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, and come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for ALL, to be testified in due time" (I Timothy 2:4-6). On the same subject the apostle Peter wrote: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise (of his second coming), as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to us-ward, NOT WILLING that ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9). IT IS GOD'S WILL THAT ALL MEN BE SAVED!!! I Timothy 4:10 speaks of "the living God, who is the Saviour of ALL MEN, specially of those that believe." It is God's will that all men be saved, but since man is a responsible being, he, too, must make a choice. God is the Saviour of those that believe.

8. Who can come to Christ? John 6:44.

Jesus said in John 6:44, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him..." And, thus, Calvinists use this Scripture trying to prove that in some mysterious way God moves to let His predestined elect know they are

the predestined elect.

But how are men drawn, and how do they come to the Father? The next verse (John 6:45) tells us. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Then Jesus said in John 12:32, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." That is why Paul said to the Corinthians, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:2). I Corinthians 1:18 reads, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." We preach because "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17; Heb. 11:6). Hence, the Great Commission was given to preach to EVERY creature, and then it says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

9. Did Christ make a definite atonement or an indefinite atonement? John 10:1-18.

We fail to see how this Scripture would support the Calvinist position. Read the last paragraph in the answer to the 7th question.

10. Why preach the Gospel? Romans 1:16, 17.

We suppose our questioner feels on the defensive. People ask: Why the Great Commission, why preach the gospel if individual predestination is true? (And these are very reasonable questions). Our answer to the 8th question will throw some light on this too.

11. How does one get into Christ? Romans 8:28-31.

We fail to see how Romans 8:28-31 relates to how one gets into Christ. However, we do see the possibility of this Scripture being misunderstood. Verse 28 speaks of those who are "the called according to his purpose." As before stated, I Timothy 2:3-6 and II Peter 3:9 tell us God's will or purpose pertaining to man's salvation. As far as man's call to salvation is concerned, it is by the gospel (II Thess. 2:14). Now, returning to Romans 8, let us read verses 28 and 29: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and

(Continued on next page)

ENQUIRER'S QUESTIONS...
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whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Kind reader, does it actually say that God predestinated individuals to salvation here? Read these verses thoughtfully. What he says is that God foreknew the saved, but what is predestinated is that the saved would be "conformed to the image of his son"—be Christ-like and resurrected with him. God, being omniscient, could look down through the ages before it ever happened and know who the Christians would be. Knowing in advance is not the same thing as decreeing in advance; it is not the same thing as predestination. God did not pre-determine these people to salvation in advance. He did foreknow that they would accept Christ. Thereupon he did predestinate that they should be "conformed to the image of his Son" (and every Christian). In other words, Christians are to be like Christ, and they will be resurrected like him.

The original question here was: "How does one get into Christ?" The answer is rather simple, as the gospel is for "whosoever will." Studying the accounts of the Great Commission (Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24) and the book of Acts (history of the early church, and book of conversions), we conclude that faith, repentance, confession of faith, and baptism for the remission of sins are involved in turning to Christ. Then we read Galatians 3:27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." That is how one gets into Christ.

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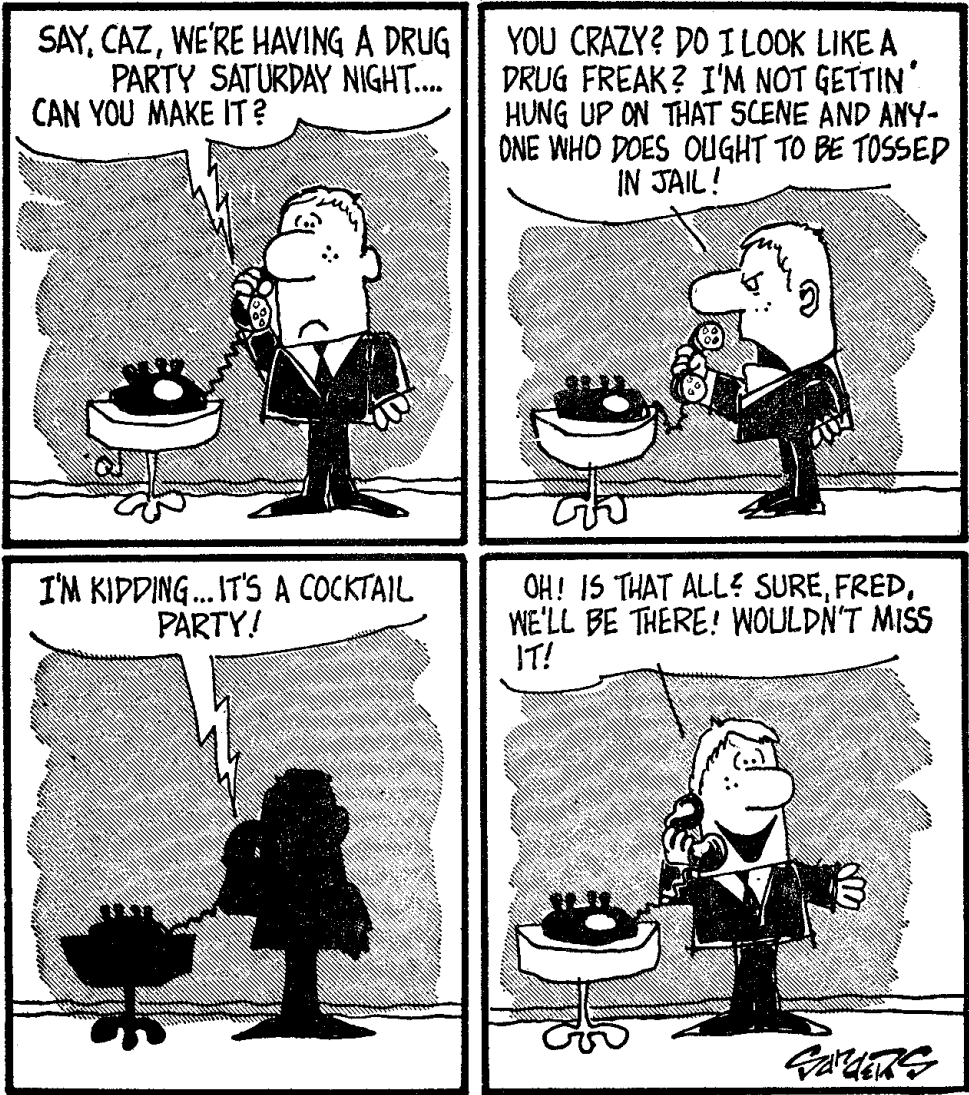
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12. Is unbelief the only sin that shall send a person into eternal damnation? Galatians 5:19-21.
- Obviously not—the wages of sin is death. We fail to see a tie-in with Calvinism here.
13. No, man is not a robot, but what man has resisted his will? Romans 9:19.
- We had implied that man would be like a robot, or a little "tin soldier," if everything was a matter of predestination and once in grace always in grace. Surely man cannot change the will of God if it is a certain way in a matter. We are merely the creature, not the Creator. However, we know what God's will is concerning the salvation of mankind. Remember I Timothy 2:4? "WHO WILL have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Remember I Peter 3:9? "The Lord is...long-suffering to us-ward, NOT WILLING that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." God's will and man's will must meet.

14. II Timothy 3:16-17.
- Amen! Let us read it and heed it along with II Timothy 2:15—"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."



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