

The Sword AND Staff

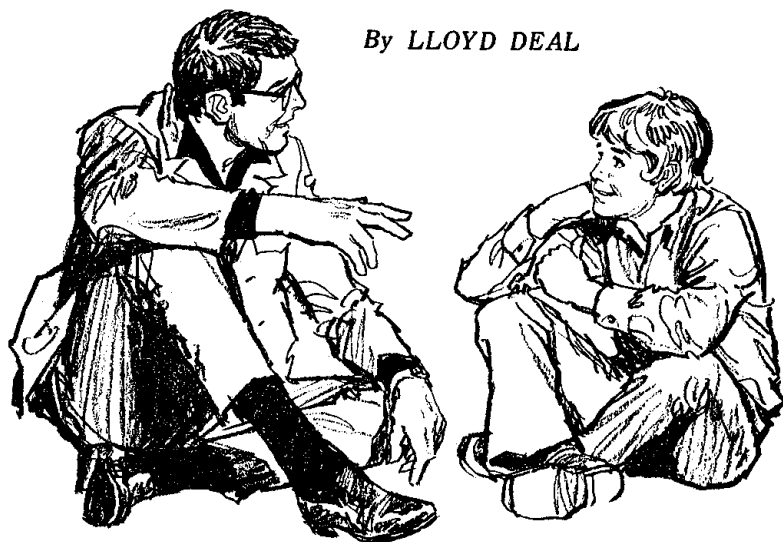
"Preach the Word." (II Timothy 4:2)

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

Attitudes Of A Soul-Winner

By LLOYD DEAL



"THERE were added that day about 3,000 souls." "Many believed and the number of men came to about 5,000." "Men who have turned the world upside down." "The gospel has been preached to every creature under the heavens." Acts 2:41; 4:4; 17:6; Colossians 1:23.

WOW! That must have been exciting! How could they do it back then without our rapid transportation and mass communications? Why can't we see results like that today?

We can! If we will learn to think like New Testament Christians thought, we'll begin to see results like they saw. It's all a matter of our ATTITUDES.

ATTITUDE TOWARD THE GOSPEL

Early Christians believed the gospel was the only hope of salvation. Acts 11:14.

If we entertain one tiny thought that a person can somehow be saved in ignorance or by moral sincerity,

we will never become soul-winners. When we decide that God would not have allowed Christ to die if there were any other way, we will try to tell everyone about the Savior—even when we think they are not interested.

Besides, the gospel is good news; everyone likes to share good news. Our message is not that every man is a sinner and condemned to hell; our message is that through Christ the condemned sinner doesn't have to go there. No wonder Paul was eager to preach the gospel, even to the terrible city of Rome. Romans 1:15.

Paul went on to say that the gospel is powerful. Romans 1:16. In fact, our word "dynamite" comes from the word he used. Too many fear that the gospel is too weak to convert the rich or the poor, the religious or the infidel, the good or the bad. No wonder few try. Early Christians didn't know any better and converted procounsilis and beggars, men like

Cornelius and some like Simon the sorcerer.

Do you suppose some of us might even be ashamed of the gospel? would we feel embarrassed if someone identified us as those people who think there's only one way to go to Heaven? First century disciples were not ashamed even when it cost them their jobs, their homes, and often their lives.

Just what is your attitude toward the gospel?

ATTITUDE TOWARD PEOPLE

Another important part of the early Christians' philosophy of soul-winning was his attitude toward people. He believed that every person was lost, "since all have sinned." Romans 3:23. When a normal human believes another is lost in the wilderness he will do something to try to help even if he has no previous experience. So it is with one who realizes that his fellow-man is lost spiritually.

Although they saw every sinner as lost, they were convinced that each was worth saving. Christ had died for the sins of the whole world. I John 2:2. Alcoholics, adulterers, sex perverts, thieves—it didn't matter: They offered the gospel to each and many became disciples. I Corinthians 6:9-11.

When modern Christians decide that immoral people can be cleansed and sit beside us in worship, more sin-sick souls will be healed.

Such thinking creates optimism. Jesus talked to the Samaritans and the divorcee at the well and saw "fields white for harvest." John 4:35.

Many people are interested; Christ said, "The harvest is plentiful." It is only the laborers who are few. Mat-

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THE SWORD AND STAFF

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Proverbs of Today

When the Holy Spirit controls us, we will practice self-control.

"The darker the night the brighter our light should shine."

If you have repented of a sin it should not offend you to have someone preach against it.

"Brethren don't want to be on the firing line for Jesus Christ because they might get shot at by someone."

We need to know where we stand and to stand where we know.

"When success turns a person's head, he is facing failure."

The only ISM needed in the church is evangelism.

"Don't waste time looking back; your eyes are in the front of your head."

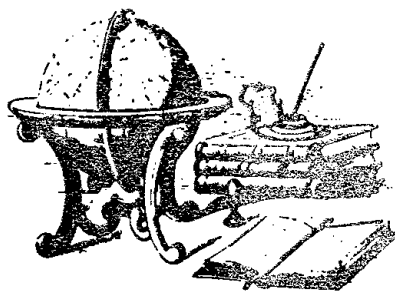
Because the Son of God took the form of man and lived among men, we can take the form of the divine and live with God.

"The kind of religion that makes a man look sick can't be expected to cure the world."

Christ DIED to save souls: is it asking too much of us to LIVE to save souls?

"The happy person is one who can look up and not down, can look forward and not back, can look out and not in, and will lend a helping hand."

People need to say what they mean, or mean what they say.



EDITORIAL

COMMENTS...

AN INDEPENDENT ENTITY IN SOCIETY, ONE KINGDOM

THIS WRITER is most thankful to live in this country (U.S.A.), and he sincerely appreciates all the blessings, privileges, and opportunities being an American citizen affords. Especially do we appreciate the freedom of expressing ourselves religiously without being hindered. All of this means a lot to us, and we have little patience with those who would down-grade this country.

However, it is alarming, and especially disturbs this writer, when some people seem to equate Christianity with patriotism or political conservatism. We believe they have altogether "missed the boat." You would think that God wore red, white, and blue trousers, and that He was the head of the John Birch Society. You would think, that as in the days of old with earthly Israel, the United States was God's kingdom and not the church of Christ.

We need to realize that the church is an independent entity in any society, commanding and demanding a higher allegiance than to civil government. In fact Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). Speaking of the church, Peter called it a "holy nation" (I Peter 2:9). Christians are citizens of the "kingdom of heaven" (Colossians 1:13; Ephesians 2:19). Christians in every country on earth really are citizens of one single government and the kingdom of Christ. Yes, they temporarily are in residence on earth, and while here they make the best kind of citizens as far as "law and order" is concerned (Romans 13:1-7)—that is the essence of their heavenly citizenship. But their primary allegiance is to a higher order of things. If earthly governmental laws and decrees conflict with what is required of them as citizens in the heavenly kingdom, then with Peter they will boldly say, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:28, 29).

Being an independent entity in society, we should not be swept off our feet at what is happening on earth—the fate of the nation, politics, the styles, the trends, etc. Too, our higher allegiance and heavenly citizenship prohibits us from being taken up in feeling of hostility among nations or engaging in earthly war fare. We are already enlisted and involved full time in a life and death struggle of eternal consequence in the spirit world (II Corinthians 10:4, 5; Ephesians 6:12). Then, how could people who are citizens of one eternal kingdom, at the present scattered in countries throughout the world, take up arms to kill one another? The very law of the kingdom of heaven is love.

BELOVED, we are most thankful to live in a country such as ours during our earthly sojourn. Christians should make the best citizens in keeping with the laws of their higher citizenship. But the church should never be used as a sounding board for patriotism. The "pulpit" is no place for political views of any kind to be aired. The church should never be draped in the country's flag. To do so

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The High Calling of God



• By KENNETH L. STREVER; Enid, Oklahoma 73701

PLEASE READ Philippians 3:7-14. In verses five and six of this chapter the apostle reviews the things that had once meant so much to him and had brought him gain; to the point of profiting in the Jews religion above many of his equals, because of his superior zeal (Galatians 1:13, 14). Now he has renounced worldly gain for the superior gain of Jesus Christ: that he could be found possessing not self-righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ; so he could attain to the resurrection of the dead. Paul realized and admitted that his struggle on earth was not yet finished; he had not yet attained perfection; he had not yet reaped eternal life; but with diligence he kept his mind off of the earthly glories of the past and centered his thoughts and endeavors on the goal of the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

We wish it could be said that every Christian is earnestly struggling to rise to this high calling; but some aren't. Some apparently don't know for certain if they wish to go forward or backward: thus they remind us of the Israelites as they trembled at the border of the promised land, wanting the promise but doubting the promise: unwilling to pay the price of trust. Jesus paid a tremendous price—His own blood, to purify for Himself a church free from spot, or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5:25-27). Truly, we have not attained! We have made our claim of being the New Testament church, but we have not always made good our claim.

"Forgetting those things which are behind"

I. THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD WOULD LIFT US ABOVE THE WORLD: ABOVE A LOVE FOR THE WORLD.

Who would care to deny that materialism is a problem in the church, when in nearly every locality the church struggles under the burden of inadequate finances; yet individuals in the church have many of the unnecessary luxuries of life. For the most part, we have separated the Christian from the theater and the alcohol, and the tobacco, and the lustful pleasures; but God's Word *still* says, "Love not the world, neither the things in the world" (I John 2:15). It still says, "—set your affections on things above, not on things on this earth" (Colossians 3:1,2). The high calling of God will lift us above a love for the world's hem lines: above a love for its jazz, and above a love for its humor. If the shady, sick humor prevalent on T.V. isn't obnoxious to you, friend, you have spiritual problems. The same must be said of its violence and nud-

ity and triangle love affairs. These things are not matters of opinion, they are sin!

The high calling of God will lift us above conformity with the world's unholy standards. Indefiniteness and a desire to rationalize have made it *so very hard* for some to decide what constitutes proper and improper areas of conformity. As in the days of the judges, every man does what is right in his own eyes. They did so because they had no king: have you dethroned King Jesus? What a paradox is this that those who are to be light to the world are nothing but a reflection of the world? What a paradox is this that those who are to be a seasoning influence on the world have lost their influence and are being influenced!

"Press toward the mark for the prize"

II. THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD WOULD LIFT US TO SPIRITUAL EXCELLENCE IN CHRIST.

It will lift us above the spirit of indefiniteness and rationalization that has characterized the "restoration" groups for so long and is even now at work in our midst. If people are to have strong convictions, they must have strong preaching; because whether we wish to admit it or not, people are rarely stronger than their leadership, but normally weaker. If successive generations get weaker, is it not because their instructors have weakened? What has replaced the ringing convictions of the preachers who were leaders in the church two decades ago? IN many cases, indefiniteness and rationalizing!

In the period of over twenty years that this writer has been in the church there has been very little improvement in the eldership situation across the country. Men have not been challenged to qualify for this good work. In some instances the "evangelist" has been a one-man overseer-pastor, afraid to relinquish any of his precious authority. In some cases evangelists have been so indefinite, so prone to rationalize about the qualifications of the elders, that local men have had no scriptural goal. Even though the scriptural qualifications plainly state that the elder's children are to be faithful to the Lord and submissive to parental rule, men have served who had unchristian children and rebellious children. This, because someone found it easier to rationalize than to uphold scriptural qualifications.

Young men are letting their hair get longer and longer because they desire to conform to the fads of the world and parents and spiritual leaders can't decide how long is too long. Young ladies are letting their skirts get shorter and shorter because they too desire to conform to the world's fashions and their parents and spiritual leaders can't decide how short is too short. So it is that while leaders, who are too timid to take a stand, limp between two opinions; the devil is fervently pursuing a course designed to destroy the nation, the home and the church.

Some who once preached against the movies because of the unholy nature of the things shown, have grown afraid to oppose the practice of watching the same thing on T.V. A great amount of rationalizing takes place about what is "opinion" and what is a "test of fellowship."

When Elijah met the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, he asked the Israelites, "How long will you limp between two opinions?" (I Kings 18:21). They couldn't seem to decide if they wanted to worship God or Baal: or perhaps either as it might seem convenient. They liked the plea-

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THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD

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tures of sin that went with Baal worship, but they also liked the safety from the enemies and the material provisions that God alone could supply. How like people today who want to have their worldly pleasures and friendships while in this life, but who also want the glories of heaven when life is over.

Elijah challenged them to spiritual excellence: he challenged them to make up their minds, "If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." They knew! They knew Baal was a false god; but it was popular, the "in thing" to worship Baal. Wasn't everyone doing it? All the celebrities worshipped Baal. Why, it seemed that just Elijah and perhaps a few other radicals still worshipped God.

This writer is convinced that many who are wanting to fraternize with the "faith only" evangelicals know that this is a false religion, but there are impressive numbers; impressive happenings and prestige connected with these groups and especially their leaders.

Elijah was not the last preacher to feel the loneliness, frustration and discouragement of being in a small, minority religious group!—Why, how can you get anything done when you have to work "all alone" and everyone else is feverishly employing the well-financed, flamboyant, glittering, appealing methods of the denominations? Does it seem to you that this is the way things are going? We certainly don't deny that some have gone this route, but thank God there are still those who have not "bowed the knee to Baal."

You will remember from the original text that Paul expressed a personal determination: "Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do... I press toward the mark..." etc. Paul had known those who were satisfied with an inferior standard of righteousness; he had known those who followed the crowd, or money, or pleasure (Philippians 3:18,19). It was true that some belittled Paul (II Corinthians 10:10); some questioned his right to preach (II Corinthians 11:11 and context) and some undermined his efforts: but Paul's faith wasn't founded on men, but Christ. Therefore he determined to rise above the petty, self-seeking, mercenary, crowd-attracting pretenders who had a form of godliness, but denied the power thereof (II Timothy 3:1-7). He determined to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life. To him this was supreme! He concluded that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Romans 8:18).

May we submit in closing, that when the Lord terminates the affairs of this world, all of the glory and prestige and wealth and fame and adulation and honor and popularity and power that men have gained by unscriptural methods will be turned into completely worthless ASHESS!!!

Certainly *then*, men will realize, too late, how far short they have come from the High Calling of God. □

KNOWING THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

THE STORY is told of an orator that came to town. A big auditorium was packed to hear him. There was applause and cheering as he gave poems and readings and recitations. People were overwhelmed by it all. Down in the front there was a feeble hand that went up and a voice

said, "Mister, could I make a request?" The orator said, "I suppose so, what is it, sir?" "Would you give the twenty-third Psalm?" A hush fell over the audience and then the orator, looking at the man a little more closely, recognized the man as an old preacher. He said, "I will, sir, if after I've given it you'll give it." The old preacher agreed. Then the orator gave the twenty-third Psalm, every word so properly enunciated, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." It was beautiful. When he finished the audience roared with applause. It was truly expressive. As the old white-headed preacher came to the platform, a silence fell over the audience. He started, with his cracking voice to give from memory the twenty-third Psalm. It went something like this: "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside the still waters" and on until he finished. When he finished there was no applause. In fact, the people were wiping the tears from their eyes. The orator stood up and said, "People, let me tell you something and don't you ever forget it. He gave the twenty-third Psalm and I gave it. When he gave it you wiped the tears from your eyes. When I gave it you roared with applause. Let me tell you the difference. I know the twenty-third Psalm; He knows the Shepherd of the twenty-third Psalm."—Selected.

BIBLE TEST

Questions Over the Epistle of II Peter

1. It seems that II Peter is written to the same people as I Peter. (1) True; (2) False.
2. What verses can be said to be the "key" to II Peter, summarizing what it is about?
3. "_____ and _____ be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord."
4. What are the seven things Peter says we are to add to our faith?
5. If we lack these things, Peter says we are what?
6. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election _____ : for _____ you do these things, ye shall never _____."
7. Peter wanted to stir them up spiritually because shortly he must do what?
8. Why is no prophecy of the Scriptures of any private interpretation?
9. The Old Testament people had what among them, who also would come among Christians?
10. What three illustrations of God's judgment in the past does Peter give?
11. Would you say the false teachers Peter described were false in life as well as doctrine?
12. What is worse than never becoming a Christian?
13. The scoffers who would come in the last days would scoff about what?
14. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is _____ to us-ward, NOT WILLING that any should _____, but that all should come to _____."
15. Peter calls the writings of what other well-known first-century preacher "Scripture"?
16. What in this man's writings did the unlearned and unstable especially wrest to their own destruction?

(Answers found elsewhere in this issue)

TOO Busy!



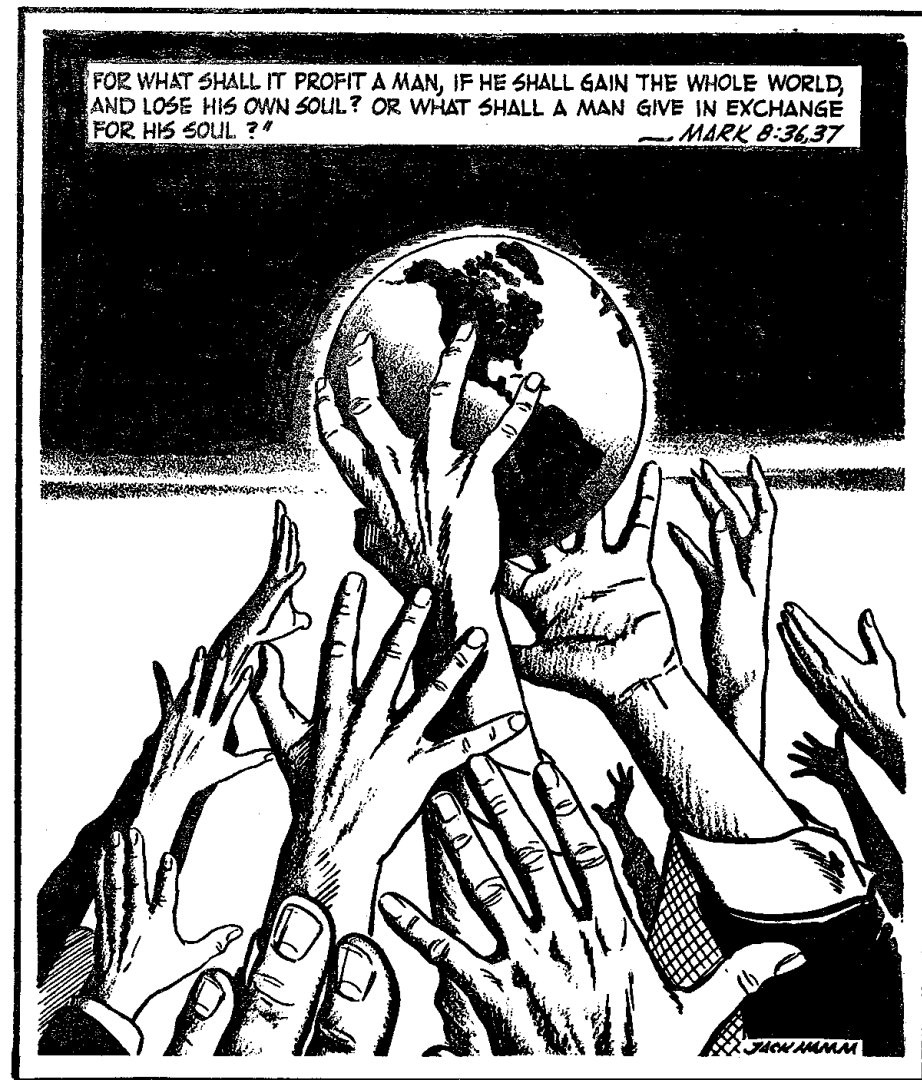
• By KENNETH L. STREVER

HOW OFTEN these words are uttered in the course of an average day! Truly, we are living in busy days. It seems that everyone is running at full throttle; that the hands on the clock are turning faster and faster; that the pages on the calendar are disappearing at an alarming rate. But we know this is merely an illusion. There are still twenty four hours in the day as there has always been.

What then is making life seem to move at such a pell-mell pace? Is there an answer to the problem? Is this condition perhaps our own faults? What are the reasons?

Is it the job? Older people remind us that they used to work from sunup to sundown on their farms; but today the farmer may be seen with lights on his tractor working after dark: but, as a rule, this would indicate that unfavorable weather has thrown him behind in his work or he is trying to farm too many acres without help. In most cases of factory workers the trend has been toward a shorter work week. How could this demand more of the workers time?

Is it inflation? The spiraling rise in taxation and the pressures of inflation have forced some to seek added sources of income to maintain the same standard of living: but is this alone the reason men are so busy? Has there not also been a consistent and persistent effort on the part of many to raise their standard of living?—to buy nicer homes; bigger cars; extra cars; added luxuries they never had before, such as boats, campers and snowmobiles, just to name a few. Along with this it becomes apparent that there are many forms of pleasure available now that were un-



FOR WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN, IF HE SHALL GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD, AND LOSE HIS OWN SOUL? OR WHAT SHALL A MAN GIVE IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS SOUL? — MARK 8:36,37

heard of in the past generations. These, too, make a bid for our time.

Now, we have to desire to insist that people forgo this obsession with the luxuries or pleasures of life and live lives of religious devotion. But in all honesty there is one very important question that must be considered as we hurry through life:

WHERE DOES GOD FIT IN THIS PICTURE?

Is He to be considered only *after* we have satisfied our every desire; pursued our every pleasure; provided our every need? Would it be enough to give half-hearted acknowledgment to His existence without giving due consideration to the responsibilities His existence would bind on us? Can we refuse God an important place in our lives without endangering our own happiness, well-being and peace of mind?

In the book of Ecclesiastes we read of King Solomon as he investigated the things that were keeping people busy in his day. He concluded that the pursuit of these earthly things was vanity.

Death will terminate our *physical* existence the same as it terminates the existence of an animal; and therefore it will also terminate our pursuit of physical desires, appetites and pleasures: but there is another side of man that is lacking in the animal. Man has a spirit that returns to God at death; a spirit that will be brought to judgment. Because of this fact Solomon wrote: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man; for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing whether it be good or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14).

The purpose of man on this earth, then, is not the pursuit of possessions or pleasure, but worship of and obedience to God.

In view of this, are we not forced to conclude that we are by-passing a very important matter when we become so involved in the affairs of this world that we become *too busy for God*? □

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ATTITUDE OF A SOUL-WINNER

(Continued from Page 1)

thew 9:37.

Which are you, a grain inspector or a reaper?

ATTITUDE TOWARD SELF

The view one has of himself obviously influences greatly what he accomplishes in life. Early Christians were humble for they realized that they were sinners too, sinners saved by grace with no merit of their own. Ephesians 2:8. They did not feel that they were "already perfect" (Philippians 3:12), and approached others free from any holier-than-thou attitude.

Disciples saw themselves only as "servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each." I Corinthians 3:5. In Romans 8:28-30, Paul teaches that the Lord foreknows those that will love Him and uses His willing saints to call them with the gospel. Cornelius, the Ethiopian and the Corinthians (Acts 10:8; 18:10) are illustrations of this thrilling truth. As His messengers, we can trust in Him to work things out for the best for those who want the truth. Since we cannot foreknow who the prospects are, it is simply our job to call everyone and God's responsibility to see that we talk to the right ones along the line.

If the Lord has enough confidence in us to assign us the task of carrying the only message of salvation to men, then we ought to have confidence also. First century believers trusted the Lord's promise to be with them "always" (Matthew 28:20), and felt confident they could "do all things through Christ." II Corinthians 3:4, 5; Philippians 4:13.

ATTITUDE TOWARD SUCCESS

"Christ did not send me to see how many I could baptize, but to proclaim the gospel." I Corinthians 1:17, Phillips. Paul could not list exactly who or how many he converted at Corinth, but he was a success—he preached the message. A Christian's job is to plant or water; it is God who makes it grow. I Corinthians 3:6, 7.

Oh, if we could only understand the parable of the soils!

Converts are made by the interaction of the "seed" and the "soil" (Luke 8:5-15). Jesus sent us to sow the seed, not evaluate the soil. If a bumper harvest is produced, to God goes the glory. If some wither and die, it is sad but not reason for the sower to give up planting. Remember, the difference in the soil makes the

difference in the harvest.

When we do what the Lord gave us to do we are a success. He will judge the results and provide the increase.

SUMMARY

The proper Christian attitude toward evangelism may be summed up in the story of two shoe salesmen. Unknown to one another, each had flown to the same African city to help their company decide whether the people would be prospects for their products. After observing the thousands of barefoot natives, one wrote home, "Situation hopeless. no one wears shoes." The other wired the excited report, "Possibilities unlimited; everyone needs our shoes!"

Do we believe we have the gospel product for which all men have need? Are we optimistic that the Lord will help us if we do what He commissioned? Then, let these New Testament attitudes produce a New Testament approach. Believing the gospel is man's only hope and that sinners do want to hear it, let us optimistically speak to them in a straightforward manner concerning their Savior who shed His blood for them. We will begin to see results like New Testament



Christians had. We may even be able to say with Paul:

"So, naturally, we proclaim Christ! We warn everyone we meet, and we teach everyone we can, all that we know about Him, so that, if possible, we may bring every man up to his full maturity in Christ Jesus. This is what I am working at all the time, with all the strength that God gives me." Colossians 1:28, 29, Phillips.

Are you ready to trust the Lord and give Him a chance to use you to teach someone?

—Securing the Faith

Christians should expect great things because they have a great God—THE GREAT AND ONLY GOD of heaven and earth.

Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people—have you made your reservations yet? (I Peter 1:4).

"Gossip is the art of saying nothing in a way that leaves nothing unsaid."

CAN A PERSON BE AN UNDENOMINATIONAL CHRISTIAN?

THE CHRISTIANS in the New Testament were neither Catholic, Protestant, nor Jewish in religion—they were simply Christians, disciples of Jesus Christ. Members of the body of Christ in the early New Testament days never referred to themselves as Protestant or Catholic. They were not members of denominations, but were simply members of Christ. Their congregations were not called Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Berean Fundamental, Episcopalian, Open Bible, "Jehovah's Witnesses," Pentecostal, Adventist, Unitarian, Trinitarian, etc., etc. No church was ever named after Mary or Joseph or Peter or Paul or John or Mark or Luther, but after their Divine Founder, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18). The Christians in that good day were united in Christ alone and were content to wear His holy name. The Holy Spirit referred to assemblies of Christians as churches of Christ (Romans 16:16) and churches of God (II Thess. 1:4) and churches of the saints (I Cor. 14:33). These are not titles, but descriptive phrases inspired of God and acceptable for Christians' use today. The disciples of that first Christian century were neither Catholic nor Protestant—they were Christians only and only Christians.

IF THEY WERE SUCH THEN, WE CAN BE SUCH TODAY. You can be a Christian, a member of the body of Christ, without ever joining any denomination. It is our plea that all who sincerely trust in Christ for salvation cast off sectarian names and affiliations, and become and remain simply Christians. You can enter the kingdom of God now and be free of denominationalism. You can be active in the church of Christ and never be a member of a denomination, either Catholic or Protestant. You can be just a Christian. We plead with all to do this. Obey the gospel and let the Lord add you to His church (Acts 2:36-47; 8:26-40).

—By RICHARD SNELL
Lexington, Nebraska

Bible Names for Bible Things



By DARYL LANE, 711 N. Maple, Eaton, Ohio 45320

• *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (I Peter 4:11).*

• *"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).*

• *"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (II Timothy 1:13).*

THERE ARE many slogans of the "Restoration Movement." Some are good, some are bad, and some are just not of any value. But this one, "Bible Names for Bible Things," is a good one because you can see the truth of it by reading again the Scriptures given.

God has given us a Book that is complete and perfect. All things that pertain unto life and godliness can be found in this Blessed Book. We are thoroughly furnished, and thank the Good Lord we don't have to dream up our way. God is not like the little boy that was playing the game of name the animal. The teacher told the children to describe the animal, and the others would guess the name. So little Johnny asked, "What has six legs, three wings, one eye and four horns?" No one could guess, so the teacher said to Johnny, "What is it?" and smiling in great victory, he replied, "I don't know the name, you are to name it." We don't have to make up names for Bible things. We need to listen and to obey Him who has spoken from Heaven, and He has all authority.

I. BIBLE TERMS FOR THE CHURCH.

Contrary to the practice of the religious world today, God has spoken upon this subject.

• We can read in the Bible that it is called "the church," Acts 8:3 and many other places.

• We can read in the Bible that it is called the "church of God," I Corinthians 1:2.

• The Bible records the "church of the first born" in Hebrews 12:23.

• We find the term the "body of Christ" used in the Bible in I Corinthians 12:27.

• The "churches of the saints" can be found in the Bible also, I Corinthians 14:33.

• In Romans 16:16 we find the "churches of Christ" salute you.

• Jesus said in Matthew 16:18 that He would build HIS church.

This is what can be found in the Bible. Understood correctly, they all give important teaching concerning the church. They tell of its universal scope, the Planner, the Honor and the Activity; also its Ownership and characteristics of its members.

What has man done? Has he been satisfied with Bible expressions? Those who are supposed to take the Bible and give Bible names for Bible things have not always practiced what has been preached.

Here is a quotation from J. V. Updike in a sermon entitled, "The City of God." "We take the position this morning that when you talk about being a member of the 'Christian Church' you don't understand what you are talking about. I want it distinctly understood that we take the position that Bible things should be called by Bible names; and when you call the church of Jesus Christ the 'Christian Church,' you are not calling it by the Bible name at all, and it is not that name that God has given it. We might just as well be straight upon it as to be wrong. We can be right as well as wrong, and can take the position that is straight and true and that we can stand by."

This is a writing from an "old time" preacher of the gospel, and it would do us well to listen and to preach and to build accordingly. Why condone something that can't be found in the Bible? Why promote that which comes from man? Why argue for the name that isn't in the Book? Are there not enough names to suit you? Do you not know the religious world is confused enough without our adding to it?

II. BIBLE NAMES FOR THE DIFFERENT WORKERS IN THE CHURCH.

Let us read Ephesians 4:11, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." The apostles and prophets are a part of the foundation of the church, and the evangelists and pastors are a part of the church today.

The evangelist has a great and important work in the church. He is to be far more than the man who comes and preaches and then leaves to preach elsewhere. "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (II Timothy 4:5). "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (I Timothy 1:3). "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2). "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee" (Titus 1:5).

You can see from these Scriptures and others that the work of an evangelist is to preach the gospel in places

(Continued on Next Page)

BIBLE NAMES FOR BIBLE THINGS

(Continued from Last Page)

where it has been preached and in places that has had no preaching; to teach others to do the same, and to set in order the church. You don't find these men being called missionaries even though they preached on the islands far away from home. They are not called Bible College professors though they teach others to teach also. They are not given any high-sounding titles that would give them honor and glory. They were supposed to do the work of an evangelist, and that is what we are to do also. Let others have their titles and false religion, but let us be servants of the King.

Concerning the pastor, what a mess has been made of this office and work. In the Bible we find elders, pastors and bishops are all one and the same office. In Acts 20:17 Paul calls for the elders of the church, and in verse 28 he speaks to these men and calls them overseers (bishops) and tells them to feed the church of God. In Titus 1:5-7 elder and bishop are used speaking of the same man.

We could go on with these different names for different workers in the church, but let us ask, "Are we following the pattern? Or, have we borrowed from Babylon?" Let's all go by the Book!

III. BIBLE NAMES FOR SIN.

The Bible comes right out with many lists of sin. It labels sin just that and says it is wrong and evil. There is no half way about it. It pulls no punches and makes it plain that it is sin and wrong.

Listen and look at the lists for yourself. "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful; who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Romans 1:28-32). Other lists are found in I Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5:19-21 and I Timothy 1:9-10.

What has man done about it when one preaches against these things? "Oh, brother, that is your think so's," or "That is opinion," or else, "You know you have to be understanding." "That is to be understood in the light of the circumstances." "We can't blame the poor little children (They might be old enough to be through high school and partly through college). Their background was horrible. They had such evil parents."

Man may call it weakness, disease, and many other things, but God's Word calls it transgression and iniquity. Let's be Bible people and call sin by its right name.

In this age of uncertainty we need to speak plainly God's Word. We need to use the Sword of the Spirit. We need to do away with the feeble excuses that are worn out and again we need a **THUS SAITH THE LORD**. Let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly with all wisdom.

I have a boy that told me one day he couldn't shut the door when I told him to shut it. I asked him what the reason was that he couldn't shut the door, and he replied in all honesty that he didn't want too. Well, friend, he shut

the door. But that is just the way it goes some times. We can do what the Bible teaches if we want to do it. We can have a "thus saith the Lord," and, dear friend, we should and must listen to Him that speaks from Heaven if we are going to be with Him in Heaven. We must obey God rather than man. We must walk in the light as He is the light.

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk there in, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein" (Jeremiah 6:16). □

WHEN AN INDIAN SAYS "YES" AND MEANS "NO"

I RECENTLY came across the following article:

It is the habit of many American Indians to say "yes" to everything they are asked to do. This leads to confusion as to when an Indian means "yes" and when he means "no."

Each year there is a meeting of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia. At the meeting in 1952 the question was brought up on the floor of the assembly, "When does an Indian mean 'no'?"

An elderly Indian with a bronzed and wrinkled face arose and in a deep voice stated, "It is plain when Indian mean no. When Indian SAY YES and DO NOTHING, then Indian mean NO."

It occurs to me that these are not the only ones plagued with the problem of "speaking with a forked tongue." Many alleged "Christians" have the same problem.

Thousands of people in our country, somewhere in life insist they have said "yes" to God. They have committed their lives to Him, and sing with gusto: "I'll go where you want me to go, Dear Lord! I'll do what you want me to do."

But when the Lord says, "Repent and be baptized" (Acts 2:38), the "yes" suddenly becomes "no." When the Lord requires, "Don't forsake the assembly" (Hebrews 10:25), the bold "yes" changes to an argumentative "no." When the Lord commands: "Keep unspotted from the world" (James 1:27), and "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22), the dynamic "yes" becomes a timid "no." When the Lord urges: "Give as you've been prospered" (I Cor. 16:2), the "yes, dear Lord," becomes "I'm sorry, Lord, but no."

Many a church leader's bold "YES" to the call of service has melted into a puny whimpering "no" in the face of opposition.

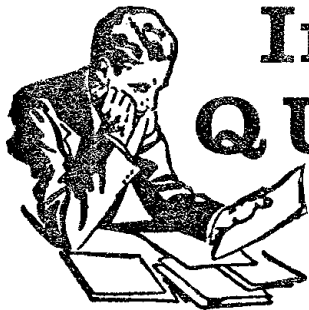
The elder's, "Yes, Lord, we'll feed the flock and discipline the disorderly" (Acts 20:28; II Thess. 3:6), has wilted into a weak, "No, Lord, there are too many problems; surely you understand."

The preacher's, "Yes, Lord, we'll preach the Word, and reprove, rebuke, and exhort without fear or favor" (II Tim. 4:2), has paled to "No, Lord, they'll not stand for it, the world is so much with them... and, Lord, you know I have a family to support."

God save us from anemic discipleship! —J. Barnett—

TWO SUGGESTIONS

RENEW your subscription after you have received twelve issues (no notice will be sent). SEND your change of address when moving. Thanks a lot.



Inquirer's QUESTIONS Answered

• By James E. Gibbons

A QUESTION was received some-time ago concerning the qualifications of elders. We are very sorry that we have been so long in getting around to answering it. The immediate nature of the question involved the elder's marriage. In the light of Titus 1:6, could a divorced man serve as an elder? etc.

Titus 1:6 reads (King James Version): "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly."

Yes, it does say, "the husband of one wife." This certainly would eliminate a divorced man from this office.

Elders are to be men who truly are successful in the Christian life. They are to set an example before the church in every way, and the church is commanded to follow their example (I Peter 5:3; Hebrews 13:7, 17).

While we are at it, let us further comment on Titus 1:6. It says that elders are to have "faithful children," i.e. children who are full of faith, believers, Christians. The idea in this word translated "faithful" seems to be two-fold: believing and living up to what one believes. It is elsewhere translated, having reference exclusively to Christians. Many translations

render these words in Titus 1:6, "having children who are believers," or other words to that effect.

Certainly we can see the wisdom of an elder having faithfully reared his children to become faithful Christians. This shows the consistency of his walk with the Lord, and he is at the present in a position to be uncompromising with the Word of the Lord. Too often parents whose children are not faithful to the Lord, or who are weak spiritually, will try to justify them in their fault (we have personally seen this more than once). They will compromise the truth of God. But a man who has reared his children to become real Christians, who are unwavering, is a real man and in a position to be a pillar in the church of God. Others can look to him in respect for stable leadership.

Following is a reprint from an old issue of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* (dated January, 1958). It involves the qualifications of elders and deacons, and it should prove interesting in view of the present discussion on elders.

QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

By JAMES E. GIBBONS

Scripture: I Timothy 3; Titus 1.

It is well for us to notice the qualifications of elders and deacons. Too many times both qualifications and work have been totally disregarded, and woe be to the man who says the qualifications in the Bible must be met and that there is really any work at all to these offices! Too many times when a preacher starts to point out the work of the elders and deacons someone will up and say that the preacher is just trying to get out of his work.

The false conceptions are so many and confusing that it is disturbing to examine them. Some say, "Let's make so and so an elder or a deacon. It will make him more interested in the church, and he will come better." I have heard this very thing said, but, friends, this view has the cart before the horse. One must be interested and faithful before he is committed to either of these offices, and that means faithful in attendance too. Too many so-called New Testament churches just carry around a bunch of dead weight in the name of the officers of the church, and about all that some of them do is serve on a "board," and then they aren't there half of the time. Another conception in contradiction to the Word of God is that all of these qualifications listed by Paul do not necessarily have to be in one man, but it is nice and desirable when these qualifications may be found in the "board" as a whole—found in the elders and deacons as a collective group. Now where did that idea come from anyway? Not the Bible!

Does the Bible really mean what it says when it

gives the qualifications of elders and deacons? It certainly does! "A bishop (Overseer—elder) then **MUST** be . . . etc." (I Timothy 3:2, etc.). This word **MUST** is the same one that Jesus used when he said that a man **MUST** be born again. That means that both are equally essential. Paul admonished the Ephesian elders, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the 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). According to Paul, the Holy Spirit had made these men the elders or overseers. One of the ways the Holy Spirit had done this was by listing the qualifications that had to be met before one became an elder or overseer in the church of God. So, the Bible really means what it has to say about the qualifications. A man must meet the requirements set by the Holy Spirit before he is a New Testament elder in the church. To say that they are not necessary is to chill any desire to measure up to God's standards.

Read the qualifications in I Timothy chapter 3 and Titus. Every word that is transcribed is meant here. When it says that an elder must be **blameless**, it means that thing. It doesn't mean that he is sinless—all of us are subject to sin. But he is not wilfully sinning. His life is above board. He is not practicing anything questionable. Smoking cigarettes would hinder a man from being blameless. When it says the **husband of one wife**, it means just that. He is a one woman man with **faithful** children. This means that he must be a married man with children old enough to be regarded as faithful and who are faithful. "**One that ruleth well his own house . . .** For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" So rearing a family faithfully is a prerequisite to becoming an

(Continued on Next Page)

QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

(Continued from Last Page)

overseer of the church; the family of God. He must have his own family in subjection: this means his children; also he must be the head of the house—he cannot be “hen-pecked.” It is easy to see why his children must be faithful. If he started to oversee and teach in the church like he is supposed to, and his family was not under subjection nor faithful, the people could have this come-back: “Who are you to be leading and teaching us? You can’t even take care of your own family!” When the Scriptures say that an elder must be **vigilant, sober, of good behaviour**, it means that. Next it says he must be given to **hospitality**, then **apt to teach**, or an able teacher. The position of an elder is a teaching position, and a person who will not nor cannot teach should not consider himself an elder in the church of the living God. Those interested in being elders should make an effort to prepare themselves. It is a matter of “desiring” the office, then taking steps to prepare oneself. **“Not given to wine”** is listed next. One who cannot abstain from drink, whether it be wine, beer, or whiskey, automatically disqualifies himself. It is a shame and a disgrace when “church leaders” are given to drink! **“No striker”** means that he is not rebellious, nor ready to fight. The church of Christ has no place for “hot-headed” men. Too many times the name of the church has been brought low by such men. He is to be **“not greedy of filthy lucre . . . not covetous.”** This has reference to money and the material things of life. If a man is so greedy and stingy that he will not even give so much as a tithe of his income to promote the work of the kingdom, he would not meet this qualification. In every thing elders must be examples to the flock, and in this case it is very important too. The Bible means just what it said when it says that elders cannot be a **“brawler,”** or quarrelsome! Anyone having a tendency to quarrel should not entertain the thought of being an elder. The church is paralyzed when it is plagued with these kind of men as its leadership. They do not have the spirit of Christ and they are none of His, if so be that they continue in this. **“Not a novice”** — a new convert, one new in the faith: a person who has not been a Christian very long should not be made an officer. He should be a Christian for a long duration and well grounded in the faith, knowing the issues with which the church is confronted. We should not just “up” and make someone an officer because of his popularity or important position in the secular world. **“Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without.”** In other words those who are not Christians cannot point at him and say that he is a hypocrite. They cannot say that he has done wrong and questionable things with them while professing Christianity. This is a very good test. Sinners know who are sincere and true Christians.

“Likewise **MUST** the deacons be grave, not double tongued, not given to . . . wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also **first be proved**; then let them use the office of a deacon, be found **BLAMELESS**. Even so must their wives be grave. **NOT** slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, **RULING THEIR CHILDREN AND THEIR OWN HOUSES WELL**. For they that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Friends, these are the qualifications that are found

in I Timothy chapter 3; Titus gives more, and there are other things that could be stressed. Paul says elders and deacons **MUST** possess these. A church that puts men in (“electing” them as they call it) who do not possess these prerequisites is headed for trouble, if it wants to grow in the purity of the truth as a simple New Testament church. Generally speaking, a church can rise no higher than its leaders. Some will say, “Is it really necessary that everyone of these be met?” My dear friend, all I know is what the Bible says. To say anything else is to go beyond that which God has revealed. Just because the world has made great inroads into the church and man may fall short of what God demands is no reason to try to explain what God says away and thus to excuse our plighted condition. Those who try to explain these qualifications away, and lower the divine standard, will have to answer to God.

Being an elder or deacon is not just an honorary office to be held as men sit on “boards,” but jobs to be done! “If a man desire the office of a bishop (Overseer—elder), he desireth a good **WORK**” (I Timothy 3:1). Some have the false notion that coming to “board” meetings and sitting around the Lord’s table is all the work that is involved in being an elder or deacon. That is why when a gospel preacher starts preaching concerning the work of these men, people, and especially some elders and deacons, don’t like it. They had rather that you let them alone in their sleep. All the names applied to the office of the eldership suggest work: bishop, overseer, shepherd, pastor, ruler, etc. The name or word **DEACON** means **servant**. That certainly suggests work, aside from the other Scriptures on the subject. Just as certain as there is the work of the preacher (II Timothy 4:5), there is the work of the elders and deacons. In fact their work is called “the work of the ministry” (Ephesians 4:11,12) right along with the preacher. Anyone who thinks otherwise will have God to face and answer, not me.

Thus, my friends, being an elder or deacon is a serious thing. The elders must face God to give an account for the flock (Hebrews 13:17). James says to be not many of you masters (teachers or leaders), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation or judgment (James 3:1). If we do not qualify and will not do the work of elders and deacons, it would be better not to be put into that office. When the day of judgment comes, it will be a lot harder on us. We will have so much more to give an account for.

You say, “I’m an elder or deacon and I feel that I do not qualify nor am I doing the work that I am supposed to. What should I do?” I say, take steps to be qualified and get to work. Do all in your power to be an elder or deacon like God demands, or not be one at all. The work of the kingdom of God is a great and responsible thing. It demands the best, or none. It is best for a church to go without officers until men seriously try to qualify to do this work. Qualified and working elders and deacons are the greatest blessing that a church can have. Those who serve well have a special reward waiting from God (I Peter 5:4).

EDITORIAL COMMENTS (Continued from Page 2)

would be an insult to every Christian who might happen to live in another country of this present world. Christians are citizens of one kingdom, and the church is an independent entity in any society. □

The Living Bible

KEN Taylor's *Living Bible Paraphrased* was a non-fiction best seller in 1972. I often see it in homes of brethren and under their arms as they come to the services. It is a valuable tool, but it must be used intelligently and critically.

Contrary to popular belief, it is not the Bible. Any one who owns a copy of it, owes it to himself to read the preface. There the author clearly states his purpose. "To Paraphrase is to say something in different words than the author used. It is a restatement of the author's thoughts using different words than he did. This book is a paraphrase of the Old and New Testament." When you read it, keep that in mind.

The *Living Bible Paraphrased* has both good and bad points. There surely is enough truth taught in it for one to learn the plan of salvation and become a Christian. The paraphrase does an especially good job of relating the truth in Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16, and Galatians 3:27. However, the same work obscures the point in Romans 6:4 and perverts the truth in I Peter 3:21. A footnote on I Peter 3:21 admits the statement is made by implication.

Many will find some usage of street language offensive to good taste. An example of this is seen in I Samuel 20:30 which is too crude to be repeated here. Not only is it crude, but it is also inaccurate.

With regard to his role as a translator, Taylor says, "When the Greek or Hebrew is not clear then theology is his guide along with his sense of personal logic..." An example of this is his obvious premillennial bias in such places as Isaiah 2:3 and II Timothy 4:1. Translations by individuals are more susceptible to this sort of thing than those done by committees.

I personally find the *Living Bible Paraphrased* helpful in Bible study. Yet, caution must be exercised. I consider J. W. McGarvey's *Commentary on Acts*, a most useful aid to Bible study, but I never had been under any illusion that it was the Bible. Neither is Ken Taylor's paraphrase. —N. L. Bales

Reputation or Character

The circumstances amid which you live determine your reputation; the truth you believe determines your character.

Reputation is what you are supposed to be; character is what you are.

Reputation is the photograph; character is the face.

Reputation comes over one from without; character grows up from within.

Reputation is what you have when you come to a new community; character is what you have when you go away.

Your reputation is learned in an hour; your character does not come to light for a year.

Reputation is made in a moment; character is built in a life-time.

Reputation grows like the mushroom; character grows like the oak.

A single newspaper gives you reputation; a life of

toil gives you character.

Reputation makes you rich or makes you poor; character makes you happy or makes you miserable.

Reputation is what men say about you on the tombstone; character is what the angels say about you round the throne of God.—William Hershey Davis.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE TEST OVER II PETER

1. True; 2. II Peter 3:17, 18; 3. II Peter 1:2; 4. II Peter 1:5-7; 5. Blind and cannot see afar off; 6. II Peter 1:10; II Peter 1:13-15; 8. It did not come by will of men—but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; 9. False prophets (teachers); 10. II Peter 2:4-6; 11. True; 12. Becoming a Christian and going back into the world; 13. The second coming of Christ; 14. II Peter 3:9; 15. Paul; 16. Writings about the second coming of Christ.

ANSWERS TO TEST OVER I PETER (From Last Month)

1. True; 2. False, I Peter 1:1; 3. I Peter 1:7; 4. I Peter 1:10-12; 5. I Peter 1:16; 6. I Peter 1:22, 23; 7. I Peter 2:2; 8. Jesus Christ; 9. I Peter 2:9; 10. I Peter 2:17; 11. I Peter 2:21; 12. False; 13. False, I Peter 3:3-5; 14. I Peter 3:5, 6; 15. I Peter 3:15; 16. I Peter 3:20; 17. By the answer of a good conscience toward God; 18. I Peter 4:1; 19. I Peter 4:3, 4; 20. I Peter 4:11; 21. I Peter 4:16; 22. I Peter 4:17; 23. Elders, I Peter 5:2; 24. Pastor; 25. I Peter 5:4; 26. I Peter 5:6; 27. I Peter 5:8; 28. Silas; 29. I Peter 5:13; 30. Mark.

STRONG DELUSIONS

(II Thessalonians 2:11)

As it was in Noah's day,
So it is in our time.
Men say let come what may,
They have no peace of mind.
With thoughts all a-muddle,
Due to strong delusions,
How great is their trouble
And wrong their conclusions.

Wrong is now enthroned,
While right is cast aside.
Crime we see condoned,
And rights of men denied.
From the home love has flown,
Gone is the binding tie.
For truth's no longer known,
But now the blinding lie.

In every realm of our life,
We need to see the facts.
Learn the why of the strife,
Find the cause of men's acts.
But be calm in our soul,
Let nothing mar our faith.
Be safe within God's fold,
Kept by the words He saith.

By Robert W. Cooke

A Complete Listing:

FOLLOWING is a listing of our own booklets, tracts, and other materials that are now available from us. Some of these things have a nominal charge and others are free. Also listed are the bound volumes of back issues of *The Sword and Staff*, which would make a valuable addition to your library and your Christian life. You may place your order, using the following price list.

- ☐ *The Subject of the Holy Spirit Made Simple*—25¢ each; 5 for \$1.00; or, 100 for \$18.00.
- ☐ *The Meaning of Suffering in the Life of the Christian*—10¢ each; 100 for \$8.00.
- ☐ *Objections to the Necessity of Baptism Answered*—8¢ each.
- ☐ *Salvation and Church Membership Chart*—8¢ each; 15 for \$1.00.
- ☐ ~~*Martyrs in the Coliseum (Picture 11 x 17)*—20¢ each; 10 for \$1.50.~~
- ☐ *Are Visions, Dreams and Religious Experiences Proof of Salvation?*—6¢ each.
- ☐ *His Church is Marching On (Song on Sheet with glue on back to stick in back of your hymnbooks)*—5¢ each.
- ☐ *The Letter That Was Never Answered*—5¢ each.
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- ☐ *Once in Grace, Always in Grace?*—5¢ each; 100 for \$4.00.
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- ☐ *In Style With the World, But Out of Style With God*
- ☐ *Dedication (Poem Plaque)*
- ☐ *A New Day (Plaque)*
- ☐ *Drinking (Leaflet with a punch about alcohol)*

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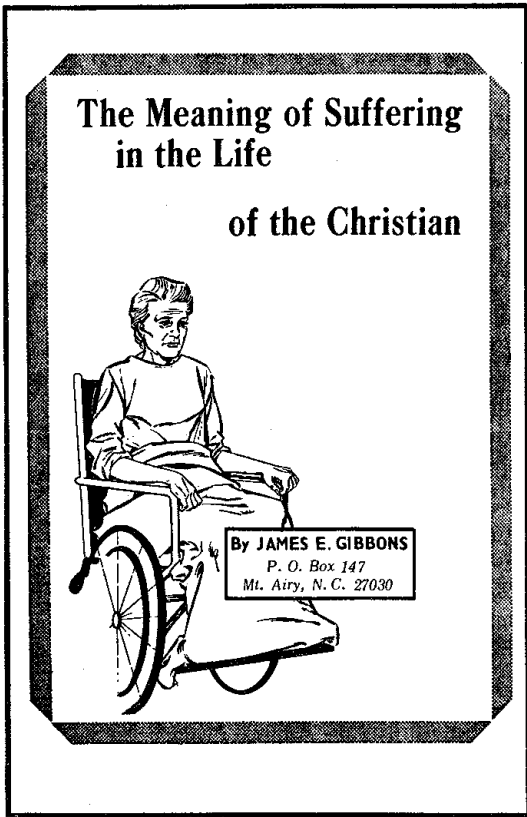
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- ☐ 1971-72 bound volumes of *The Sword and Staff* (one book)—\$3.25.

This Booklet Deserves Greater Distribution!



SOONER OR LATER suffering enters the lives of all of us. It can be a blessing or a curse, all depending on our attitude toward it. This is a time when most people are more open to realize their need of God. This booklet is written for such an audience. It is ideal to give to people in the hospital, Christian or otherwise. (It is good to give to anybody anywhere for that matter). It considers the problem of human suffering. The last page is an appeal to those who are not Christians with the plan of salvation. Many have expressed appreciation of the content of this booklet. Why not put it to use in this open and needed area? Order a supply from us today! 10¢ each; 100 for \$8.00.

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