

The AND Staff

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

•

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

DIVINE PREROGATIVES

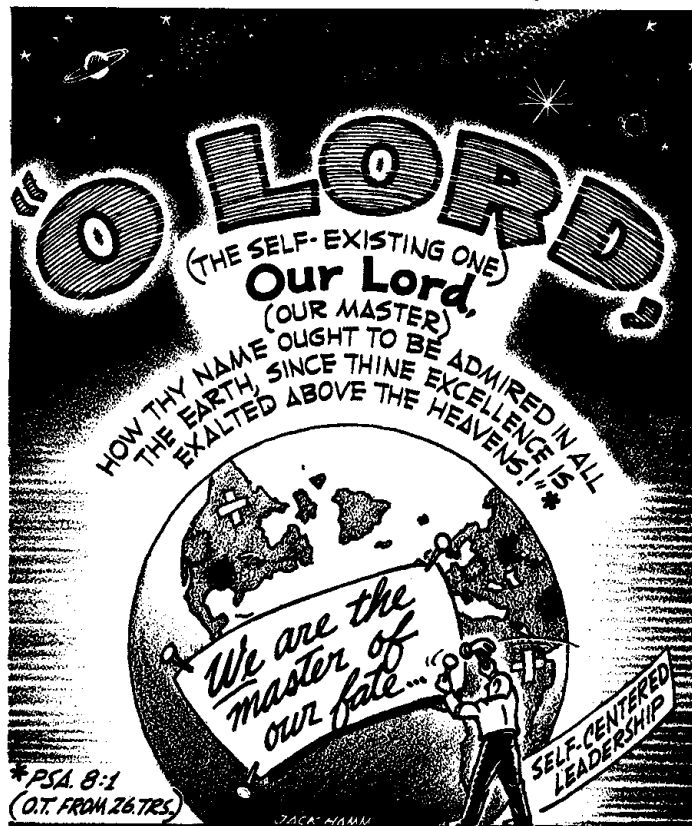
• By JAMES E. GIBBONS, 1535 Fairfield Drive
Mount Airy, N. C. 27030

THERE ARE certain areas that are "off limits" to man. We might call these areas "Divine Prerogatives." Of course a prerogative has reference to an exclusive or special right, power or privilege. Divine prerogatives are all interwoven with the Person of God, just who He is and who we are not. Sometimes God shares these prerogatives in a limited sense with man. Let us be careful and tread lightly for we are walking on holy ground.

I. WORSHIP

Certainly worship is a divine prerogative. Man nor angels are ever to be worshipped. We read how that "as Peter was coming in Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man" (Acts 10:25; 26). (How unlike some today who erroneously claim to be the descendants of Peter!) John relates his experience in attempting to worship an angel in the book of Revelation: "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am they fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God" (Revelation 22:8, 9). When the Devil tried to get Jesus to worship him, Jesus made it plain: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Luke 4:8).

When we stop and consider just who God is, worship will be forthcoming from us without hesitation. As Moses under the direction of God went to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, he was to tell them that "I AM THAT I AM" had sent him (Exodus 3:13-15). This, no doubt, has reference to God as the eternal, self-existent One. The Jews understood this and knew that Jesus was ascribing deity to himself when he said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58). They took up stones to stone him. Isaiah declares the majesty of God in these words: "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity,



whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isaiah 57:15). Just think of Jehovah Elohim, El Shaddai—the Almighty God who is from everlasting to everlasting! And to think that Jesus was the divine manifestation of Him in the flesh! "HOW GREAT THOU ART!"

II. AUTHORITY

Authority is another divine prerogative. Jesus, speaking as the voice of God, said, "All power (authority) is given me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). If God has all authority, no wonder his Word is the final say. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John

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Proverbs of Today

Self-esteem without self-respect is disastrous to the character.

"Of all the wounds inflicted upon others, the hardest to heal are those made by the tongue."

People who are strict with their children, but not with themselves, make poor parents.

"God never lets any day grow so dark but that tomorrow's sun will break through."

You can teach your children to be courteous and polite, but you (in the final sense) can't teach them to be thankful—this comes through experience.

"Our temper often gets us into trouble and our pride keeps us there."

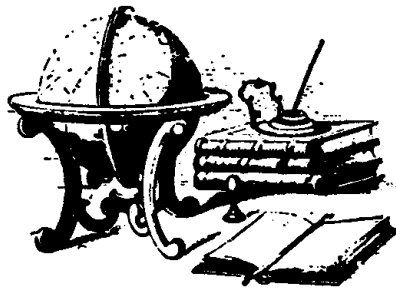
Before we think in terms of Christian growth, there must be a birth—you must be born again.

"If we are not big enough to stand criticism, we are too small to be praised."

Wisdom gives us the "nack" to do common things in an uncommon way.

"The best tranquilizer is a clear conscience."

To not make a decision at all in reference to Christ is to decide against him.



EDITORIAL COMMENTS...

QUESTIONS INVOLVING KATHYRN KUHLMAN

THE FOLLOWING news item appeared in the local newspaper somewhat recently, and, no doubt, was released by the news service all across the country.

PITTSBURG—Evangelist Kathryn Kuhlman was worth \$732,543 at the time of her death last February, a final court inventory revealed.

The chief recipients of Miss Kuhlman's estate were D.B. "Tink" Wilkerson, an Oklahoma car dealer, two of her sisters, a sister-in-law and 20 employees.

Nothing was left for the Kathryn Kuhlman Foundation.

Included in Miss Kuhlman's estate was her \$130,000 Fox Chapel ranch home and jewelry valued at \$94,000.

Certificates of deposit and interest totaling \$187,350 at Pittsburgh National Bank and Dollar Savings Bank accounted for the largest single amount of her estate.

In addition to her jewelry, the internationally known preacher, whom many claim was a faith healer, left a Russian sable coat and a leopard coat worth a total of \$5,500.

Miss Kuhlman's ministry was based in Pittsburgh, and she made frequent trips around the country and also appeared on a regular television program.

We do not stand in the position of judge of Miss Kuhlman, that is the Divine prerogative. But, knowing God's Word and having read the news item, it raises several questions.

If Miss Kuhlman was a faithful follower of Christ, what was she doing preaching as an "evangelist"? Paul instructed, "But I suffer not a woman to teach, NOR to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (I Timothy 2:12-14). Then he tells us why: "FOR Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (For additional thought also notice I Corinthians 14:34 and Genesis 3:16).

There is no way you can get around it (regardless of woman's LIB, Miss Kuhlman, or the "Pentecostal" movement). The Bible teaches that in the religious/church connection a woman is NOT to teach or usurp authority over the man—not because of first century customs, but because of the order of creation and what happened in the Garden of Eden. God has ordained that man take the leadership.

If Miss Kuhlman was a faithful follower of Christ, how do you explain her preoccupation with jewelry and extravagant clothing? The apostle Paul wrote, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (I Timothy 2:9, 10; ALSO notice I Peter 3:3, 4).

Paul and Peter are very plain in writing on this. How could one misunderstand to the tune of jewelry valued at \$94,000 and "a Russian sable coat and a leopard coat worth a total of \$5,500"? What is the answer?

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DIVINE PREROGATIVES

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12:48). His authoritative words are not to be added to or taken away from (Revelation 22:18,19). If God has all authority, he alone can forgive sins.

If man has any authority today, it is only in a delegated, secondary sense (Mark 13:34; Titus 2:15; Hebrews 13:17). Evangelists and elders may have a certain amount of ecclesiastical authority, but it only comes through Christ and his Word. Officers in the church derive what authority they have, not from the people, but from God. And may they act accordingly in humility.

III. JUDGMENT

God stands out in this divine prerogative as the judge of the universe. James wrote, "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" (James 4:11,12). The Father will one day judge the world through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 5:22,27;

EDITORIAL COMMENTS . . .

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There are many other questions we could ask, but these came immediately to mind upon reading the news item. Other questions of a wider range with a more sweeping implication and indictment come to mind; questions also involving the whole so-called "charismatic" movement.

We find vast numbers of religious people with diverse and contradictory convictions, as well as contradictory lives, all claiming the same results—"tongues" and "healing." Under the "charismatic" blanket you have such radical groups as "JESUS ONLY." Then one man personally told us he was a religious liberal (modernist) and that he had experienced the tongues thing. Such Scripturally antithetical groups as Catholics are involved in it. Even though people's lives are contradictory, they seem to get the same results. We have noticed the irregularities of Miss Kuhlman—shades of A. A. Allen! Do you remember him? He was reputedly one of these "healers." Upon an autopsy, following his death a few years ago, it was stated that he had died an alcoholic.

This article is not intended to reflect upon the sincerity of many taken up in this movement, but it should make one think. Any movement that detracts from what the Bible teaches in favor of a supposed experience should be suspect. Nothing could please the Devil more than to have people think that doctrine doesn't really matter just so one has had some "experience." What the Lord really wants is humble and loving obedience from hearts that have been surrendered to Him. Nothing can take the place of this! □

Acts 17:30,31; II Corinthians 5:10). We did not make life (in fact, we are but one of God's creatures), nor are we the author of God's Word. Therefore, judgment is in the hands of God.

However, again in a secondary sense we are allowed to (even commanded to) judge in certain ways. When God's Word pointedly says something, that is the way it is when we tell people: God has already judged. In our trying to help people, we are to be careful lest we enter into self-righteous, hypocritical judgment (Matthew 7:1-5). (Notice I Corinthians 5).

IV. VENGEANCE

Vengeance definitely is a divine prerogative. Paul wrote (and may we heed), "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:19-21). Hebrews 10:30 declares the same thing: "...Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord..." If vengeance belongs to God, it doesn't belong to you or me. So don't take things into your own hands. The day of eternal judgment will correct a lot of ills.

May we be careful about threatening others (vengeance is not ours to give). Jesus has left us an example, "Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (I Peter 2:23). Paul instructed masters to forbear "threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him" (Ephesians 6:9).

WE COULD POINT out many thoughts under this heading of "Divine Prerogatives." But these are enough to stimulate your mind to think of some of your own. There are certain things that belong uniquely to God. There are things he knows that we will never know. As Deuteronomy 28:28 says, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." Let us walk humbly with our God. □

Your Obligation If You Disagree

BROTHER PAUL PREACHWORD spoke on "worldliness" last Sunday, and included a discussion of social drinking. He was aware of some who, because of the pressures of business, engaged in this wide-spread social custom. Brother Paul presented his arguments from the Bible plainly, yet with love.

On Monday, brother Tom Tradesman had prospective customers of his firm home for dinner. Included in the gracious hospitality offered was a round of cocktails. Tuesday after supper, Tom's children questioned him about social drinking in view of Sunday's sermon. Brother Tradesman dismissed their questions with these comments: "Well, kids, brother Preachword is expected to say things like that from the pulpit. But he's just a preacher, and doesn't really know what it's like out in the real world. I have to do this in order to make a living and provide for all of you. So, whenever brother Preachword teaches such things like that, just take it with a grain of salt." "Oh, I'm beginning to see," said

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YOUR OBLIGATION IF YOU DISAGREE

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little Tommy. "In other words, just because the preacher says it, doesn't make it so." "Exactly," replied the father. And the discussion came to an end.

In the Wednesday night Bible class, sister Tessie Teacher taught a lesson on "Christian Living" to her third and fourth grade students. Included in the study was a section on modest apparel, pointing out the dangers in mixed swimming and related styles of clothing.

Thursday after school, third-grader Sally noticed her sixteen-year-old sister, Sylvia Skin, putting on her swimming suit and heading for the community pool. Sally asked her mother to explain why she let Sylvia do that if it was wrong. "Well, honey, I know sister Teachwell means well, but she is an older woman, and these things *were* considered wrong when she was a girl, but *everyone* does it now. She has a lot of funny ideas like that, but don't pay too much attention to her. O.K.?" "O.K., if you say so, Mother." End of stories.

What is happening in these not-so-fictional stories? Mark my words, dear reader! These parents are sowing the wind, and one day they will reap the whirlwind (Hosea 8:7)! God has an immutable law which states: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). When parents teach their children to disregard the teaching of elders, preachers or teachers *without giving a Scriptural reason*, they are conditioning the children to reject anything they don't like. It cannot be successfully denied!

No one could agree more than I that "just because the preacher says it doesn't make it so." But if what he says is not so, be prepared to sit down with your children, Bible in hand, and begin thusly, "Now, we do not agree with what was taught because the Bible says..." If you can not do this, then perhaps you could profit by giving heed to God's Word, teaching your children to do so, and re-examining your attitude toward the authority of Jesus Christ as your Lord. Otherwise, your children are going to reason one day that since they don't like what Mother or Dad says, they don't have to obey. And, *who taught this to them?*

When Aquila and Priscilla disagreed with the preacher they took him aside "and expounded unto him the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:26). They didn't go home and dismiss the whole affair by telling the kids, "He's full of prunes."

Disagree all you want to. But you have an obligation to back up your disagreement by the Word of God. If you can't, watch out for the whirlwind! — J. D. Tant □

PUNKS ON TRIAL

A "NEWLY RICH" but ignorant millionaire, greatly impressed with his own importance was seeking to appear sophisticated, when on an extended tour of Europe's most celebrated art galleries. As he looked over the masterpieces, he spoke his mind—criticizing both the artists and their works. "Very amateurish," he mumbled, "just a bunch of punk pictures!"

Finally a man standing next to him—a scholarly patron of the arts—could stand it no longer. Turning to the self-styled critic, he said, "These pictures are not on trial. They have been praised by kings, artists, and scholars for hundreds of years. You are the real punk,

my friend, YOU ARE ON TRIAL, not the paintings! Their worth has been established. Your ignorance is fully revealed by your estimate of these superlative works of art!" So, too, any man who finds fault with Jesus Christ of the Bible is out of order. He himself is judged by that word! — Selected □

THE TWENTY-THIRD CHANNEL

THE T.V. SET is my shepherd. My spiritual growth shall want.

It maketh me to sit down and do nothing for His name's sake, because it requireth all my spare time. It keepeth me from doing my duty as a Christian, because it presenteth so many good shows that I must see.

It restoreth my knowledge of the things of the world, and keepeth me from the study of God's Word. It leadeth me in the paths of failing to attend the evening worship services, and doing nothing in the Kingdom of God.

Yea, though I live to be a hundred, I shall keep on viewing my T.V. as long as it will work, for it is my closest companion. Its sound and its picture, they comfort me.

It presenteth entertainment before me, and keepeth me from doing important things with my family. It fills my head with the ideas which differ from those set forth in the Word of God.

Surely, no good thing will come of my life, because my T.V. offereth me no good time to do the will of God; thus I will dwell in the place of the Devil and his angels for ever. — Selected □



J. R. Clark

I AM INDEBTED to a writer of the Sunday School Times for the "Three Rules of Bible Study" discussed in this article. Of course, other rules could be added, but these three set forth three great principles that are complete enough to give us understanding and blessing.

First, we will list the rules. 1. What does the passage say? This is observation. 2. What does it mean? This is explanation. 3. What does it mean? This is application.

To illustrate these three rules let us select Luke 3: 4-6, which reads as follows: "As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, The Voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, And every mountain and hill shall be brought low; And the crooked shall become straight, And the rough ways smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

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Doing Your Own



"THING"

• By William E. Paul

THE ABOVE TITLE seems to be a current phrase used widely to indicate that someone is performing his or her particular task or responsibility. The idea seems to imply that this task is the one for which the person is most well adapted or best suited to perform. At least this is what I get from the way people speak of "doing your own thing."

But this phrase leads me to think of a similar idea expressed in the Bible regarding each Christian's responsibility to serve God in that capacity for which he is best suited. Romans 12:6 says, "And having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us." It then goes on to list seven of these different "gifts." The first four appear to be miraculous in nature: prophecy, ministry, teaching and exhorting. This would harmonize with I Corinthians 12:4-7 where nine spiritual gifts are mentioned as being given "to each one" by the Holy Spirit "to profit withal."

Now certainly those gifts which were of a miraculous nature have ceased to be given, simply because they were no longer needed; BUT, what about those gifts which were given that were NOT miraculous? Look at Romans 12:6-8. There we have listed "giving," "ruling," and "showing mercy," none of which require supernatural power. Does this not teach that various ones are granted by God endowments, called here "gifts," which they are required to minister in HIS name for the good of others?

Consider I Peter 4:7-11, "According as each has received a gift ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" Verse nine suggested that such ministering involved "using hospitality." This is non-miraculous and is surely needed today. Verse eleven gives "speaking" and "ministering" as gifts which are to be ministered among Christians, each being considered a gracious gift from God. The New Bible Commentary comments on this verse as follows: "Each one has been endowed with some particular gift from God and they are to use that gift as those who shall give account of their stewardship. The exercise of any special aptness for any piece of work for the church... was to be regarded as ministering unto Him" (page 1140).

Brethren, the Bible teaches that each one of us has a work to do. That work for which we are most aptly suited is to be the work we put our hearts to doing. This not mean we make no effort to do many other things for the glory of God, but it does mean that in whatever avenue of service we are led, whether by special aptness, natural

inclination or native talent, THIS becomes "the thing" for us to do with our whole strength and mind.

In I Corinthians 12:14-22 we have the illustration of the various parts of the body each being made to acknowledge the need of the other, simply because each had its own particular function which none of the other parts could do. While this passage teaches primarily the unity of the members of the Lord's body, it also teaches the diversity of responsibility of each one in the body. After listing various works requiring miraculous endowments in verse 28, Paul then asks, "Are all apostles? Are all prophets?..." Again, let it be emphasized that we are not suggesting THESE particular miraculously endowed offices are given men today. But the PRINCIPLE that each person has a different, distinct work to do surely still applies.

Now consider the application of this teaching among us today. Some are preachers while others are not. Should all be preachers? Are those who do not enter the work of being an evangelist doing wrong? Obviously, no! Even among preachers some are continually sought for gospel meetings, while other, equally dedicated preachers, seldom if ever hold meetings. Are those who hold meetings to be commended while condemning those who don't? Again, of course not! God expects each of us to serve in that capacity for which he is best suited and in which doors of opportunity are opened to him.

Some have special talent in singing and God has laid upon them the burden to use this ability for the spiritual good of others. Let them do it to the glory of God. Let those who feel more talented and led in some other realm of service NOT criticize those who are using their lives to bring glory to God in song. (However, let us be done with professional and gaudy showmanship—Editor).

For years it has been said that God has no "teenage Bible" so teenagers are preached to and dealt with without any regard to their special need. The results? Preachers have preached over the heads of our youth or else have failed to understand their particular problems and needs and thus have been completely ineffective in helping them. Let's face it. Some brethren are better suited to relate to young people. This is evident from the fact that some are used in youth camps while others are not. Let those who feel the burden of youth work and have special aptitude in gaining the confidence of youth reach out in that field. Let no one object so long as the brother is doing a faithful work for the good of souls and the glory of God! (And it's done in a Scriptural context—Editor).

Some preachers seem especially gifted in teaching and training others in the Lord's work. Since this is certainly a needed and Scriptural work (II Timothy 2:2; this is part of the work of an evangelist—Editor), let capable brethren give themselves to this vital work. We need men with the ability to help prepare workers for the coming generation.

Have you ever felt slightly sheepish at having to rely on Presbyterian Barnes, or Methodist Clarke, or some other denominational commentary writer for helping you to understand the Bible better? Have you just brushed the thought aside? Well, the thought is still there. It won't go away. We are forced to depend on sectarian writers for the answers to many of our questions in teaching and preaching the Bible. Why not write commentaries and other study aid books of our own? Simply because anyone spending time writing and not preaching is looked upon as fall-

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DOING YOUR OWN "THING"

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ing down on the job in the eyes of many. Let that brother who has the keenness of intellect, perseverance in study habits and burden of heart to prepare something worthwhile for the good of souls and the glory of God go to it! This doesn't mean he stops everything else, but it does mean he recognizes what field of service God may have especially endowed him with and has set about to exercise his gift of writing.

Philip was selected to serve tables and set his mind to the task. But God evidently gave him the ability to to preach the Word so he became an evangelist. Barnabas started out as a liberal giver and God ended up using him as a "son of exhortation." Aquila never became a preacher, but helped establish churches by beginning services in his own home. I don't know what all Epaphroditus did but he almost died helping Paul get the gospel out to others. Yes, let each one pray and seek God's leading in that field of service for which He has fitted him. In the meantime use every talent and opportunity at your disposal to reach the lost and build up the saved.

Right here, brethren, is the secret to happiness in the service of Christ. Many a young man has tried to "be" what others are, or what is expected of him by the home congregation. In the process many have floundered and and fallen in discouragement. Happiness and contentment in the Lord's service comes from finding out what God wants you to do and then, with real determination and and enthusiasm, throwing your soul's fresh glowing ardor into that task.

Maybe God wants you to be an elder in His church. Pray about it and watch for God's providential leading. If you see this to be your place of service, put everything into preparing for it. If this is not YOUR gift of God's grace seek some other avenue of service. Not everyone is supposed to be an elder. Maybe it is a deacon. Maybe it is a teacher of the Bible. Maybe it is working with young people in the church. Maybe it is in the field of writing or singing or one of many other needed responsibilities. But find YOUR place and serve in it, while at the same time your best at every other job that you can.

I am convinced that much unhappiness among Christians (but they try not to admit it or show it) stems from feeling guilty for NOT doing what someone else SAYS or THINKS they should be doing. What a blessed freedom of spirit and conscience to be doing what you KNOW God wants YOU to do without worrying about what others think about it.

How much better it would be if the energy and time now being spent by some in evaluating the work of others were spent in praying that God would raise up specialized workers in every field of service for the advancement of the Lord's church. Let not the eye (maybe a preacher) say to the ear (maybe a singer), "You're a second-class servant because you're not preaching." Let not the foot (a youth worker) say to the hand (an elder), "You're not meeting the needs of the youth of the church like I am." While this attitude may not be the major cause of division of the church today, it still comes in for its share of problem making. Each person tries to determine the most important job in the church on the basis of what HE is doing himself instead of realizing that not everyone is gifted alike. Can you see the point? Is there something to it? Then let's recognize it and act accordingly! □

THREE RULES FOR BIBLE STUDY

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What does this passage say? It pictures a herald crying in the wilderness, exhorting the people to join him in building a highway for a coming king. In so doing hills must be cut down, valleys be built up, crooked places straightened, and rough places made smooth. Then all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

This is what it says, but what does it mean? The context makes it plain that the herald is John the Baptist. He is the great road builder. The highway is for a King, God's Son. John is the forerunner of the King. He is tearing down the hills of pride and filling up the valleys, by bolstering assurance of the outcasts. For example, Nicodemus needed to be graded down and made to realize that he needed to be born again, while the Samaritan woman needed to be depressed (as a valley) and needed to know that the coming blessing was for her too. The crooked ways were crooked lives which needed to be straightened. The rough places that needed to be smoothed were rough places in their conduct. John was a great road builder for the Lord, preparing the way. With heavy words he broke up the stony hearts of his people, getting them ready for the King.

But what does this Luke passage mean to me? A preacher was beginning to work with a congregation. He decided to speak on "And the crooked shall become straight." It came to him that first he should have a heart-searching of his own. He discovered some crooked places in his own life. He got right with God on those matters by making some resolutions, and prayer to God for forgiveness. It did something to him. He then entered the pulpit and preached with convicting power. Some thought that he had found out about them. They so indicated in remarks they made to the preacher at the door. Revival fires were kindled and the church took on new life. The preacher was setting out to prove that the minister himself was largely responsible for dead churches. Said an old preacher to a young preacher, "Get on fire and the people will come to see you burn." Here is the application.

Try out these three rules on other texts: observation, explanation, and application. It will make Bible texts live. *(Adapted)* □

YOU DON'T NEED TO APOLOGIZE...

1. For telling the truth.
2. For living a pure life.
3. For your faith in Christ.
4. For acknowledging your sins.
5. For doing your best.
6. For thinking before acting.
7. For hearing before judging.
8. For forgiving your enemy.
9. For helping a fallen brother.
10. For being honest in business.
11. For thinking before speaking.
12. For being true to the Lord.
13. For standing on your principles.
14. For harboring only pure thoughts.
15. For being courteous and kind.
16. For money given to the Lord's cause.
17. For sympathizing with the afflicted.
18. For frankness and candor at the right time.

— SELECTED

Does the Bible Teach That We Are Saved by "FAITH ONLY"?



• By STUART FITZGERALD, 214 Keiser Avenue
Pt. Marion, Pennsylvania 15474

THERE IS really no need to give you an example of the faith *only* teaching. If you have lived in this world very long, you have heard the doctrine preached with your own ears and you have read it with your own eyes and perhaps you have spoken it with your own mouth.

Now you are being called upon to consider the "faith *only*" doctrine with an honest heart. Jesus stressed to His disciples that the honest heart was the type of soil in which the seed or Word of God would take root and produce fruit.

First, let us define *faith*. According to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon it means: conviction of the truth of anything, belief. The dictionary defines faith as: confidence in or dependence on a person, statement, or thing as trustworthy.

Next, let us define *only*. According to Thayer's it means: alone, merely. The dictionary defines "only" in this manner: In one manner or for one purpose only, solely; exclusively, merely, just, single or solitary.

We cannot stress the importance of this word *only* enough. It is one of those four letter words that is dynamite! You can't play around with that word without serious consequences. You can't just tack it on here and take it away there...without gravely altering the truth.

To illustrate what we mean let us consider some Bible truths and add the word *only* as we choose.

1. Genesis 1:1—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth *only*." We merely added four letters, but it changed the truth didn't it? We know that God created many more things, including man.

2. I Kings 1:1—"Now *only* king David was old and stricken in years..." There were many old and feeble

men and women besides David, but by simply adding *only* we could deceive others or ourselves.

3. II Samuel 11:2—"And it came to pass in an evening tide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon *only*." If David had thought she was beautiful to look upon *only*, how much sin and grief he would have spared himself!

4. Matthew 4:17—"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say *only*, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Now we know that Jesus preached and said many more things.

See how *ONLY* when added to a Bible truth can distort the whole truth? We must be very careful of that word *only*. You have seen how it can change a truth into a falsehood quickly.

Even in our everyday speech chaos can result in a careless use of this word. For example:

1. Use flour in this cake recipe. Or use *only* flour in this cake recipe. I like cake with flour in it, but forget me when you serve the cake with *only* flour in it.

2. We have singing in our worship service. We have singing *only* in our worship service. What about preaching, praying, fellowship, and the Lord's supper?

3. Pie tastes good. *Only* pie tastes good. Surely other food tastes good, but the little four letter word changed the truth completely, didn't it?

Why don't you think of several true statements and then add the word *only* where you choose and notice how it changes the truth. You see *ONLY* must be used with care. Now that you have seen the word's importance, let us be careful not to add it to a teaching of the Holy Scriptures. *If God has revealed and recorded the word ONLY in a passage, let us accept it, but if He omits it, let us do likewise.*

Consider the following Scriptures which deal with our salvation. Remember if we are able to find one Scripture that teaches we are saved by something other than faith, then the *faith only* doctrine must be a false doctrine! Here are just a few Scriptures for you to examine:

Matthew 7:21—"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." The Father's will is revealed in the Scriptures, so let's find His will for our lives.

Acts 13:39—"all that believe are justified from all things" (BELIEF).

Romans 3:24—"justified freely by his grace" (GRACE).

Romans 3:28—"a man is justified by faith" (FAITH).

Romans 5:9—"justified by his blood" (BLOOD).

James 2:24—"by works a man is justified" (WORKS).

Acts 2:21—"whosoever shall call...shall be saved" (CALLING).

Romans 5:10—"saved by his life" CHRIST'S LIFE).

Romans 8:24—"for we are saved by hope" (HOPE).

(Continued on Next Page)

DOES THE BIBLE TEACH THAT WE ARE SAVED BY "FAITH ONLY"? (Continued from Last Page)

I Corinthians 15:1—"gospel...by which ye are also saved" (GOSPEL).

II Thessalonians 2:10—"love of the truth that they might be saved" (LOVE OF TRUTH).

I Timothy 4:16—"take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee" (TAKING HEED TO OURSELVES AND THE DOCTRINE).

James 1:21—"the engrafted word which is able to save your souls" (RECEIVING THE WORD).

I Peter 3:21—"even baptism doth also now save us" (BAPTISM).

Romans 10:10—"with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (CONFESSION).

II Corinthians 7:10—"sorrow worketh repentance to salvation" (REPENTANCE).

Philippians 2:12—"work out your own salvation with fear" (WORK).

Hebrews 5:9—"the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (OBEY).

The conclusion is evident! We are saved by more than faith *only* according to the divine Word of God. If you really believe the Holy Scriptures more than the writings of Augustine and Calvin then you must reject the *faith only* doctrine. God knows if you are considering this with an honest heart.

Let us now notice the great commission given by Christ and His apostles. This is the message that Jesus wanted His disciples to preach to the world. We have no right to alter His commission. If we love Him we are going to teach and preach what He has told us to preach! Look for yourself at these passages containing the great commission.

Matthew 28:18-20—Teach...baptize...teach...

Mark 16:15, 16—Believeth and be baptized shall be saved...

Luke 24:47—"Repentance and remission of sins be preached..."

NOTICE JESUS DID NOT COMMISSION THE APOSTLES TO PREACH SALVATION BY "FAITH ONLY." Augustine and Calvin have commissioned many to preach it, but I am not converted to Augustine and Calvin, are you? Let us preach what Jesus said to preach if we are converted to Him!!!

We dare not teach less than or more than the Holy Word of God teaches in regard to salvation. Paul warned all mankind: "But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8).

Since salvation by *faith only* is contrary to the Scriptures, it must be false doctrine and those teaching such must be false teachers receiving their message not from God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, or the apostles, but of the father of all lies, Satan himself.

If you have been preaching, teaching, practicing or supporting this false doctrine, then in the name of Jesus Christ, I plead with you to stop it! You have no right or authority to preach or practice something that is contrary to the teachings of Jesus and His apostles.

Prove your faith and love for Christ! Repent of your sins, confess Christ before men, be immersed for the remission of your sins and live faithfully for Him until death or His glorious coming. Amen. □

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Changing the Labels

WE ARE LIVING in a day when sin is soft-pedaled, and sinners are glorified. Truly this is a time when men "call evil good and good evil" (Isaiah 5:20). Lawbreakers (Romans 2:25) are merely called *demonstrators*. Murderers (I Peter 4:15) are called *terrorists* or members of some kind of *army*. Traitors (II Timothy 3:4) are merely called *political activists* or *liberals*. Adulterers and adulteresses (Hebrews 13:4; Romans 7:3) are called the *jet set* or *swingers*. Fornication is called a *meaningful experience* or *relationship*, or perhaps a *trial marriage*. Folks are not liars (Revelation 21:8), they are just *prone to exaggeration* and have *vivid imaginations*. You seldom hear people called drunkards (I Corinthians 6:9), they are now *alcoholics*. And if this sounds to "cruel," call them *dipsomaniacs*. A *kleptomaniac* is one who steals and is a thief (Ephesians 4:28; I Peter 4:15) but *he can't help it*. The effeminate and their tribe (I Corinthians 6:9) are merely exercising the *dignity and right of their selfhood*. Politicians and public officials who cheat and break covenants (Romans 1:31) are merely being good *diplo-mats* and *shrewd operators*. Sorcerers (Revelation 22:15) are given a daily column in the newspaper as *astrologers*, *forecasters* or *horoscope readers*. And whoremongers and their counterpart (I Timothy 1:10) are many times elected to public office or idolized in the field of entertainment by parents and their children. Whisperers, back-biters, boastars, the implacable, unmerciful, envious, proud, inventors of evil things (Romans 1:29-32) and the jealous (Song of Solomon 8:6; Proverbs 6:34) are not sinners, they are merely *sensitive souls* and *believe in saying exactly what they think*. But all of this label-changing and *situation ethics* is merely the devil's white-wash. When he and his followers are eventually cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the fire is not quenched and the smoke of their torment ascends day and night for ever, they will then know that changing God's labels and soft-soaping sin didn't help them any. And their calling Satan something else, and hell merely an expressive *expletive* and the practice of sin as a *naughty-naughty* (LAUGH) will not make that place any cooler for them after the flames engulf them.

—J. KIRBY (adapted).

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THE HEAVENS DECLARE HIS GLORY

DURING the French Revolution it was determined to abolish all religion and everything that reminded people of God. Someone was loudly proclaiming this to a farmer one night. "Everything will be abolished—churches, Bibles, priests. We shall remove everything that speaks of religion," he concluded.

The farmer gave a quiet chuckle. "Why do you laugh?" asked the other.

Pointing upward to the stars, he replied, "I was just wondering how you will manage to get them down!"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

VERSATILITY IN THE WORK OF GOD



• By **DON HEESE**, 15 SOUTH REED STREET
Denver, Colorado 80226

JIM HOLLIS was ordained to the ministry ten years ago. He was taught that a preacher who pleased God must be a virtual Jack-of-all-trades. If you plan to be a success, he was told, you need to be an outstanding public speaker, and a versatile classroom teacher. Be able to skillfully impart the Word to individuals in private study. Since the work has many false teachers, being a polemist is a must, for their mouths must be stopped. It is obvious you'll never effectively shepherd the flock if you cannot counsel with people. To make the church known in the community you'll need to know something about advertizing, writing in local and national publications, and conduct a good radio program. Administration will be needed to lead the congregation. We dare not neglect the young people, the singles, women and men's groups, the handicapped or the senior citizens. You'll need to be adept in these areas. You should acquaint yourself with finance, real estate and the building of church buildings. Jim, if you want to please God you must be versatile.

Jim has just resigned from the congregation where he has preached two years. He feels he has failed completely, not able to accomplish all the things expected of him. His faith is shaken. Even the reality of God is beginning to be questioned. Jim's experience has been duplicated over and over again where people have expected more of themselves and others than God expected. Few men can fit the complicated mold which Americans have designed for their spiritual leaders. Many men of God have given up in despair because they could not handle all they felt was demanded of them by God and people.

I do not believe our heavenly Father ever expected a man to fit this definition of versatility. In I Corinthians 12 God compares the varieties of gifts given to Christians to the different parts of the human body. He reminds

us the body has many members performing different duties. The preacher is but one part of a functioning body of Christ. Each member has responsibilities according to the gift God has given him. This is made clear in Romans 12:3-8. What makes the eye of the body versatile? It is not giving the eye the ability to speak, smell and hear. Versatility comes from doing a good job of seeing under a variety of conditions. Why should we expect ministers to perform many functions when it is God's plan for all members of the church to take part in the work?

The minister of the gospel works in a leadership capacity. He needs to lead and co-ordinate activities. He should be working to motivate others to do the work in the church of Christ. He will have some area where his talent shines. If he can do that work well under many different circumstances, then he is versatile the way God wants him to be.

I know one denominational preacher who is considered by some of the members to be a mediocre preacher. Yet he effectively leads one of the largest churches in America. He does not need to be an expert in many areas. But the church grows because he excels in his strong traits.

People of God, let's get behind our preachers. Let them know we do not expect them to be a one man circus. We will pray for them, encourage them and do all we can to help them.

(Consider Ephesians 4:11-16 in the light of this article of admonition—EDITOR). □

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"MAKE US A GOLDEN CALF"

*Back in the days of Moses
Israel fled from Egypt's yoke;
And the people stood and trembled
When God's voice from Sinai spoke.
As the mountain flashed and rumbled
All the people fled in fear;
They said, "Moses, you go talk to God;
You can tell us what you hear!"*

*As Moses stayed for forty days,
They were sure that he was dead;
They took aside his brother, Aaron,
And this is what they said:
"Make a god for us to worship;
We want something we can see!"
And why Aaron ever listened
Is an ageless mystery...*

*So, he took their golden ear rings,
Threw them in the melting pot—
The results are in the Bible—
And a calf is what they got!
They forgot the God of heaven,
And His anger for them burned;
Many mighty men had fallen
Ere His wrath from them was turned.*

*Today men ask for golden calves
In worldly fame and pleasure,
Forgetting Christ who gave His life
And love beyond all measure.
Today they're still as foolish
As they seek their gods of gold;
The results will be as fatal
When the final tale is told.*

By **AGNES WELLS**

ALONE AND AFRAID

A LITTLE BOY was playing in the sand at the sea shore. He built a city in the sand, making streets and houses and surrounding them with a wall. Outside the wall he laid out highways, farms, and farm houses. All afternoon he worked. He did not notice the sun was setting, the clouds gathering, and that the wind was growing chill. He was too busy with his city to notice that the tide was coming in, but the waves mounted higher and higher. One wave mightier than the rest came sweeping in about him, washing away his houses, his city, and his farms. In terror the child ran back, alone and afraid.

And so it is with the children of men. They build, labor and toil, failing to see the setting sun, the mounting waves, the coming judgment. Some day it will sweep down upon them as a mighty wave, destroying all of their material hopes and dreams. And then before the judgment bar of their Maker they will be found alone and afraid.

In all of life's doings and buildings, take God into consideration. —Adapted □

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THAT GOOD MAY COME

IF THERE were only some way that during the dark days of trial and suffering one could see that good may come from it! But how difficult that is! While Joseph was confined to an Egyptian dungeon he had years to ponder the question "WHY?" Surely there was no answer then evident. Just as these experiences worked out for his good and the saving of his people, blessings often come in disguise today. Consider the testimony of those who learned by experience:

DAVID:

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes" (Psalms 119:71).

JOB:

"He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).

PAUL:

"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:17).

JAMES:

"The trying of your faith worketh patience" (James 1:2).

PETER:

"But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (I Peter 4:13).

WRITER OF HEBREWS:

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby" (Hebrews 12:11).

While the clouds are the darkest and the storms the heaviest, remember these golden words from God. Think of the good that might come as a result of today's sufferings. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Corinthians 4:17, 18). —W.T. Hamilton □

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"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!"

ONCE A traveler came to a little French village. Night was approaching and the people were hurrying through the streets. The traveler noticed that each person was carrying a lamp. To his inquiry about this, he received the following reply: "These people are going to the village house of worship. When the meeting house was built, it was decided that each of the members would bring their own light to the night services. There was no other way to light the building and everyone realizes if he is absent the building will be dark."

The traveler went to the village church building, and there he found that every seat had a place to hang the lighted lamp. As more and more members came the building grew brighter and brighter.

Do you realize that the church is darker when you are absent from your regular place at night? Your light is needed not only on Sunday morning, but also, and especially, in the night services. —Selected.

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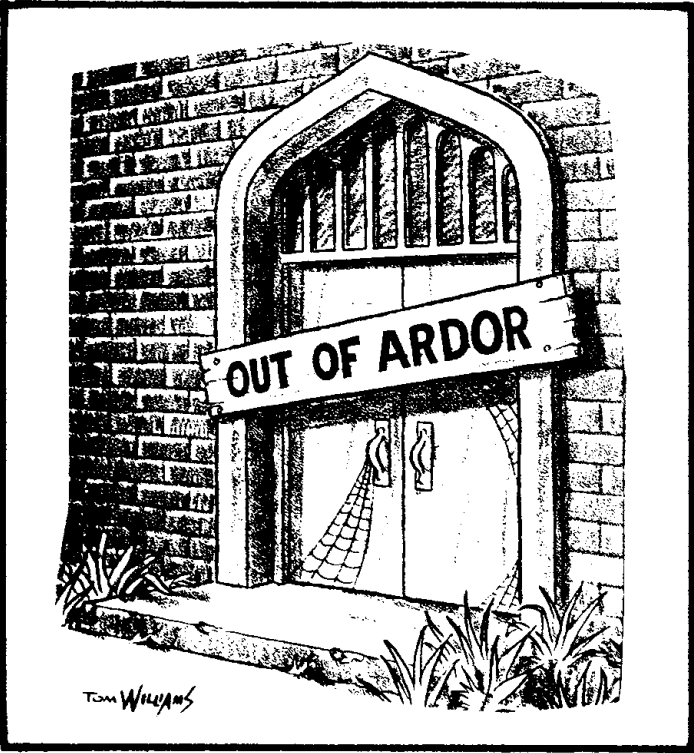
"CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON"

A YOUNG, unknown artist desired to copy a beautiful picture that hung in a palace in Rome. He was refused permission to copy it in the palace, so he set to work to reproduce it from memory. Hour after hour he would sit before the picture until it took possession of him, and then hurrying home would begin to paint.

Each day he spent some time gazing on the original, and each day saw some new loveliness. As he looked and toiled, his power grew. At last there stood in his studio such a wonderful copy that all who looked said, "We must see the original."

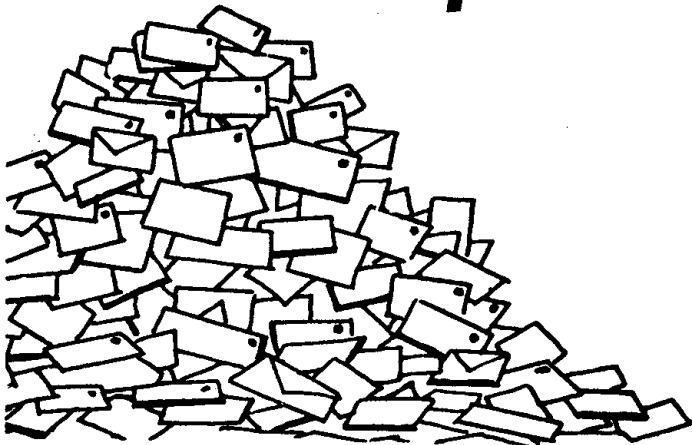
This should be the ultimatum of all our Christian service: to reproduce the Lord Jesus Christ so that men will say, "We must see Jesus."

A timely question for every Christian to ask himself is: "Do others see Jesus in me?" —Selected □



READERS'

... Response



NORTH CAROLINA:

■ *"Your publication deals in cliches rather than in fruitful search of the Scriptures. I am sorry to admit that this type of work is what nearly pushed me away from my beloved Lord and Savior many years ago—since then I have learned to search the Scriptures."*

"Much of your publication is devoted to what I hold to be true, but it is couched in the rhetoric of separatism—it appears God has given the divine task of deciding who will or will not be allowed to enter Heaven's gates over to you. I admit I fall short of the Glory of God, but that is why I need and depend on Christ. You evidently do not fall short of His Glory and have only need to ride your hobby horses wildly into the sunset, dust flying in the faces of those who dare to confront you with the Truth."

"Bless you, you have now been persecuted and can use this letter to gain another star for your crown. My human weakness keeps me from wanting to admit it, but I suspect that you really are my brother in Christ, so I pray you Godspeed in your service for the Master. Only in the interest of good stewardship, please refrain from sending any further issues of THE SWORD AND STAFF to this address for when I find time to read them I am struck by how little thought is put into your work. May you someday be raised from the gutter of hatemonger to the heights the Lord has really prepared for you."

(EDITOR'S COMMENT: I have never met, nor heard of this correspondent—but he seems to know all about this unworthy writer (in fact, more than I know myself). It seems that when you try to separate people from their sins and traditions, they will call you a "separatist" and try to make you appear self-righteous. Instead of constructively pointing out wherein they disagree with what is written, they make a lot of noise and static, and to use the language of our articulate (but unclear, and unkind) critic, ride their "horses wildly into the sunset, dust flying" in your face.)

VIRGINIA:

■ *"The SWORD AND STAFF is the best publication I have ever read and I look forward to each issue. I pray that God will continue to bless you in your every effort."*

■ *"Some weeks ago I began receiving THE SWORD AND*

STAFF magazine, which some kindly soul saw fit to send us. I want them to know we're very grateful to whoever it was. We enjoy the magazine thoroughly. I am trying to repay this kindness by sending you three subscriptions... I pray God to help and strengthen you in this work so it may continue."

■ *"Thanks you for leaving me on your mailing list after the subscription ran out. Enclosed is a check which hopefully will cover the past and next year."*

TENNESSEE:

■ *"Please renew my subscription for one year, but please note change of address... Someone sent me your paper last year and it has some very good Bible truths in it. So I would like my subscription renewed and I want to subscribe for a friend. Thank you so much."*

KENTUCKY:

■ *"I enjoy your publication to the utmost. I find it spiritually uplifting and rewarding... May God bless you and your efforts."*

INDIANA:

■ *"I consider THE SWORD AND STAFF the best paper printed today; may God bless your work."*

■ *"Recently I had the privilege of reading a copy of your paper. I enjoyed it very much and would like a subscription to it... It's exciting to me to read God's Word contended for so boldly and helps me in my day to day confrontation with those led astray by false teachings. God bless you in your work for our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."*

MICHIGAN:

■ *"This is just a short note of encouragement to let you know the church here in Charlotte, and Grand Ledge and Hastings, Michigan, who've received THE SWORD AND STAFF deeply appreciate sound doctrine and true and faithful servants sharing the good news!! Thank you for your efforts in mailing this good material for our minds to mediate on, like Philippians 4:8 says to think on!! Now days as former times there's been such few good things to put besides the Bible into our homes that's considered worthwhile. Please send my household your four bound volumes... Our prayers... to continue fine efforts and for boldness to continue preaching and teaching the TRUTH and that God may bless you also."*

MINNESOTA:

■ *"Please accept my offering for past editions of THE SWORD AND STAFF. I enjoy your articles very much and learn much from them. I'm sorry I have not sent an offering before; will try to do better in the future. Keep up the good work of spreading the TRUTH through your magazine."*

KANSAS:

■ *"May God bless your ministry. I cherish your paper and read it thoroughly! Enclosed is my renewal."*

You cannot raise yourself by tearing others down because you have not moved from where you were.



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BELOW IS a listing of the booklets, tracts, and materials which are currently available from **THE SWORD AND STAFF**. If something is not listed here, that means it is presently out of print. This listed literature has been, and is being, widely used. We believe that you will be pleased with the Scriptural soundness and helpfulness of each item. Place an order today. And while you are at it, order the bound volumes of the back issues of **THE SWORD AND STAFF**. More and more people are seeing the value of doing this.

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ALSO, we point out that Victor Knowles has recently written a book, **THE ONE CUP FAITH**, concerning those who use only one cup in the Lord's supper. Obviously a lot of effort went into the book. Whether you agree with everything in the book or not, you will find it valuable reading. It is one of a kind. ☐

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