

The Sword AND Staff

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

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



- whether material or spiritual.
- (2) The root idea (in O. T.): Deliverance from some danger or evil in a temporal and material sense—hence, reaching a state of safety, being saved.
- (3) Read Exodus 14:13.
- (4) Read Psalms 62:1, 2.
- (5) It came to be used in a spiritual sense (as well as temporal) before the O. T. ended.
- (6) The primary use of the word salvation in the New Testament has reference to the spiritual.
- (7) Related words: Salvation, Saviour, Saved.

I. THE UNIVERSAL NEED OF SALVATION.

A. Mark 16:15.

- 1. "Go ye into all the world."
- 2. "Preach the gospel to every creature."
- 3. Why? There is a universal need! All of mankind needs salvation!

B. Romans 3:9-18, 23.

- 1. ALL have sinned—Jews and Gentiles!
- 2. In Romans 1:22-32 Paul shows the depravity of the fallen Gentiles (Notice verse 22).
- 3. In Romans 2 he shows the hypocrisy of the Jews (Romans 2:1, 17-24).

SALVATION

By James E. Gibbons

Introduction:

1. The subject of salvation is the theme of the Bible.

- (1) It starts with man's need of salvation with the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.
- (2) The Bible is an inspired history of man's sorry experience with sin and the gradual unfolding of God's plan of salvation, climaxing in the coming of Christ.
- (3) The last book of the Bible ends with salvation restored to man, a vision of heaven, and an invitation to come (Revelation 22:17).

2. The meaning of the word "Salvation."

- (1) It is not necessarily a theological term (when we first find it in the Old Testament), but simply a word that denotes DELIVERANCE from almost any kind of evil,

4. Conclusion: Romans 3:23.

C. The different Bible ages point out the universal need.

- 1. The Bible is the unfolding of God's plan, proving many things by experience to fallen mankind in the process.
- 2. The Patriarchal, from Adam to Moses (period of no written law)—but man failed! He did not attain the righteousness of God without law.
- 3. The Old Testament, from Moses (Mt. Sinai) to the death of Christ on the cross (period of much law)—but man failed! He could not keep the law perfectly; he stood condemned (Galatians 3:10)—if you brook one law, you were as guilty as if you had broken all the laws.
- 4. The Christian age (New Testament): So that brings

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THE SWORD AND STAFF

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Proverbs of Today

People who are wed to this present world will find a hard time being part of the bride of Christ.

"When a man who is honestly mistaken hears the truth, he will either quit being mistaken, or cease being honest."

There will soon be nothing left of the man who trims himself to please everybody.

"Half of the hurts of the world would be healed if people would only lavish on the living the tenderness they feel for the dead."

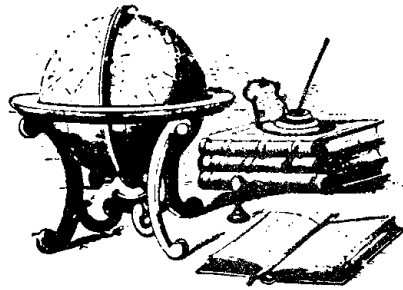
A person is really getting pretty LOW in the sight of God when he becomes HIGHMINDED.

"That which depends upon a clever argument is at the mercy of a cleverer argument."

The impulsive person is often repulsive.

"A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing with God."

If you live wrong, and death finds you that way, then you will be dead wrong.



EDITORIAL

COMMENTS...

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

THE FOLLOWING REPRINT from part of our last "newsletter" will speak for itself. We present it here so that you can better understand the inworkings and problems involved in getting out this publication.

...When people asked how much it costed to get out a single issue, the figure we have quoted this year has been \$600. Then with this present issue the mailing cost went up about half as much again, and the quotation we gave one brother was that it now costs \$700 to get out a single mailing of THE SWORD AND STAFF. But we hadn't got our last paper bill yet when we said that! The bill alone for the paper to print 10,000 copies of THE SWORD AND STAFF was \$778! And the total expense for getting this current issue of the paper (Vol. 17, No. 3, 1979) into the mail comes to something like \$1200. It is unreal, but that is the situation. We hope to find another source of supply for our paper.

Things were looking great the first part of this year. There was talk of me (the editor) going full-time in this full-time work (since it had come to so completely dominate my life). But we might as well mark that off and forget about it now. We had dreams of eventually reaching out to all churches that have come out of the so-called Restoration Movement as a conservative and leavening influence. But now, if things continue in the upward spiral, there are question marks about the future of the publication. We will try to get the paper out as frequently as we can, but it may not fall into the planned bi-monthly pattern. Please pray for us in this endeavor. It would be great if some brother of means (whom the Lord has so blessed) would endow us in this matter. We thank those who are helping. We believe that as never before what we are trying to do is needed.

WHAT REACTIONARIES TEACH US

REACTIONARIES are people who over-react in a given situation. What they stand for, or what they oppose, may largely be right. They have a just grievance. But in their opposition to the wrong they have become like the pendulum in the old grandfather clock. They have gone to the extreme in the other direction. In trying to correct one evil, they have unintentionally become responsible for the introduction of another.

This can be seen throughout history. It can be seen in modern times. This is in evidence in religion as well as politics. It is to be found in the form of great movements, as well as on an individual basis.

The rise of monastic orders in ancient times was of a reactionary nature. Whether one investigates the Jewish Essenes of some 2,000 years ago, or the monasteries which came into being after the church had been here a few centuries, the truth is the same. The world, and even the supposed church, became so corrupt that sensitive and pious souls wanted no part of it. So they withdrew from society. A false asceticism came into being. But Christianity is to be lived in the world. Jesus prayed, "I pray not that thou wouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from evil" (John 17:15). They were to be Christ's witness in the world, but they were not to be of the world. (In reference to the rise of this false asceticism,

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SALVATION

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us to the need of this age of grace and forgiveness.

D. The awfulness of sin shows the need for salvation.

1. Very few people really realize just how awful sin is—consider the following.
2. One sin in the Garden of Eden made the human race a dying race.
 - (1) Genesis 2:17—from the viewpoint of this earth, can anything be more drastic than death? The body rotting, disintegrating and going back to the dust.
 - (2) "...AND HE DIED" (Genesis 5:5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, 31...).
 - (3) Romans 5:12.
3. The Old Testament was calculated to show the awfulness, the exceeding sinfulness, of sin—THE PENALTY, usually stoning to death.
 - (1) Paul called it the "law of sin and death."
 - (2) Example: BLASPHEMY (Leviticus 24:10-16).
 - (3) Example: UNRULY, REBELLOUS CHILDREN (Exodus 21:17; Deuteronomy 21:18-21).
 - (4) You name it, ADULTERY SABBATH BREAKING, etc.—death!
 - (5) You may exclaim that you are glad that we are not under the Old Testament today—BUT, sin still is as awful today (READ Hebrews 2:1-3)!
 - (6) And ALL of US HAVE SINNED! We are under God's wrath until we find salvation! How we need salvation from our sins!

II. THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION.

A. The Gospel—Mark 16:15.

1. Meaning, GOOD NEWS—beginning of it (John 1:1, 14; Matthew 1:21, "Sweetest note on mortal tongue, Jesus, blessed Jesus"; Luke 2:10, 11).
2. The GOOD NEWS—the best part:
 - (1) Death, burial, and RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-4).
 - (2) The firstfruits of those who slept (I Cor. 15:20).
 - (3) Making possible our victory, our resurrection (I Corinthians 15:55-57)!
3. He lives for ever more (Romans 5:8-10; Hebrews 7:25)!

B. The message of salvation is Grace, unmerited favor.

1. GRACE (favor bestowed)—Ephesians 2:5, 8, 9.
2. MERCY (punishment withheld)—Titus 3:5.
3. Grace and Mercy are different sides of the same coin.
4. Read II Corinthians 5:21; I Corinthians 1:30, 31.
5. Acts 4:12.

C. This salvation (deliverance, safety, being saved).

1. Negative side: Deliverance (FROM).
 - (1) Guilt of sin.
 - (2) Penalty and future punishment of sin.
 - (3) Present power of sin over us (Colossians 1:13).
2. Positive side: Saved TO or for something.
 - (1) Life in abundance (John 10:10; Romans 14:17).
 - (2) Everlasting life (John 3:16).
 - (3) An eternal body in heaven (II Corinthians 5:1).

III. THE TERMS OF SALVATION.

A. Mark 16:16.

1. He that BELIEVES and IS BAPTIZED shall be SAVED—not, as we hear many times today, he who BELIEVES and is SAVED should be baptize (if he wants to).
2. We find elsewhere that this BELIEF must be vocalized or expressed in a personal confession of faith (Acts 8:35-37; Romans 10:9, 10).
3. Also, the Great Commission as Luke records it makes it plain that repentance is part of the terms of salvation too (Luke 24:47).
4. Acts 2:38 is a good summary verse, showing how we delivered from our past sins and enter into the safety of God.

B. You must OBEY the Gospel.

1. The MESSAGE of the Gospel and the TERMS of the are interwoven and have reference to one another.
2. The GOSPEL, as defined by Paul in I Corinthians 15:1-4, is the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. In becoming a Christian, it is said that the sinner OBEYS THE GOSPEL (Romans 10:16; II Thessalonians 1:8; I Peter 4:17, 18).
4. How does one OBEY the gospel, OBEY THE DEATH, BURIAL, AND RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ?
 - (1) First, he believes it in his heart (Acts 8:36-38; Romans 10:9, 10).
 - (2) Then, he obeys it from his heart (Romans 6:17).
 - (3) Read ROMANS 6:1-6 carefully.
 - (4) We die to sin in repentance, bury the old person of sin in baptism, and then are resurrected from the watery grave a new creature to walk in the newness of life (and you don't bury a person unless he is dead).
 - (5) The reason the Ethiopian wanted to be baptized when Philip preached JESUS to him—He wanted to OBEY the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (Acts 8:35, 36).
 - (6) Peter says that by the resurrection of Jesus Christ we are saved in baptism (I Peter 3:21).
 - (7) Then in OBEYING the gospel we live a new, resurrected life (Colossians 2:12; 3:1, 2; Gal. 2:20).

C. To put it another way: You must be born again!

1. Jesus called all of this we have been talking about a new birth while talking to Nicodemus (John 3:3, 5).
2. Good works won't do it; we must trust Jesus to take away our sins—A PERSON MUST BE BORN AGAIN!
3. There must be a birth of the SPIRIT as well as of the WATER if there is to be spiritual life, if there is to be salvation.
4. We must be born again to become a child of God and to enter into salvation. □

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"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING"

GROWING OLD GRACEFULLY

LORD, you know that I am growing old. I need your help to grow old gracefully. So, I ask you, LORD, to:

KEEP ME from being too talkative; especially from thinking I must say something on every subject or every occasion.

DELIVER ME from attempting to straighten out everybody's business; from being a busybody.

MAKE ME thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy; available but not pushy.

KEEP ME from the recital of endless details; help me to get to the point.

SEAL MY LIPS from detailing my aches and pains; they are increasing and somehow my love of rehearsing them is, too.

GIVE ME the grace to listen thoughtfully, sympathetically and patiently to the talk of those who need a listener.

TEACH ME that it is possible that I may be mistaken. Keep me sweet when my mistakes become obvious.

HELP ME to look for the good things. There are many things to bring joy if only I will look for them.

CAUSE ME to be the kind of person others will enjoy being around. Help me to bring happiness and be a good example of Christianity. — Selected □

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IS MODERN RELIGION "USING" GOD?

SUPPOSE that you have a son upon whom you pour out all your love and in whom you place great hopes. At the age of seventeen he takes the car which you have bought for him, cashes in his savings bonds which you have sacrificed to purchase for him through the years, packs up all his belongings and leaves home with the flippant boast that he is old enough to be on his own and wants to "do his own thing" as the saying goes. After his leaving, you hear no more from him. Not a letter, not a phone call and nothing in answer to all your inquiries. You know nothing of his whereabouts. Years pass and you wait anxiously for a word, for some indication that he is still alive, but you hear nothing from him. He is in your prayers and in your thoughts continually. If you could only see him. If he would only come back home and give you a chance to show him your great love again. But not a word. In the meantime, your business flourishes. You become wealthy and powerful, influential, even a bit

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS . . .

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read Paul's prophecy in I Timothy 4:1-4).

The Protestant Reformation turned out to be a reactionary movement in many ways. If anyone ever had a legitimate and just grievance, those who spoke out against Roman Catholic apostasy did. In Catholicism they found God dethroned with the pope and priests in His place, the pope claiming to be the head of the church (and called "Lord God the Pope") and the whole synthetic cleric system claiming the power to absolve sins. Men were supposedly justified by prescribed works of man as issued by the Catholic church. By all means the sovereignty of God needed to be restored among men, the great doctrine of justification by faith needed to be heralded forth again, along with many other things. But the proverbial pendulum made its decided swing. Reactionary reformers began to preach the sovereignty of the Almighty God to the point of total predestination. Everything was so ordered that man's responsive works did not enter in. The characteristic doctrine of Protestantism became "faith only." And of course, although having a grain of great truths, all of these doctrines are out of harmony with the Scriptures (II Peter 3:9; James 2:14-26; Romans 1:5; etc.). Man most surely is justified by faith, but not by an inactive "faith only."

The world today is in upheaval because of a reactionary political philosophy introduced by Karl Marx and others. No doubt abuses that this man pointed out were to a large extent true at the time. No doubt much of the religion, masquerading as Christianity, which Marx came in contact with needed criticizing (It is a shame that this man was not exposed to real New Testament Christianity). From his feelings of desperation and hate has come what we know as Communism. It proposes, in essence, to enslave man and his spirit and to remake the world after its own atheistic image. As it has been said, two wrongs don't make a right. What a shame! Mankind selling its soul (birthright) for a measly mess of potage, and in the end it may have neither.

Many modern religious movements are reactionary movements. This can be said of the so-called "charismatic movement."

This can also be said of certain ideas some would circulate among churches of Christ. Being tired of divisions and problems which seem unsolvable, some seemingly have thrown themselves open to unrestricted fellowship with almost anyone religiously. Correct doctrinal teaching is de-emphasized, it seems, to realize this longed for fellowship. Certainly improper attitudes and sectarian concepts may be barriers to fellowship, but we do not want to throw out respect for the truth to accomplish our goals. Certainly deep feelings go out from this writer toward anyone who is genuinely concerned about restoring the New Testament church among men. (But the problem is that many do not really consistently back up their claim). If we have really been "born again," we have entered the kingdom of God (John 3:5; Acts 2:38). However, we must go from there to be in reality the Lord's church, to set things in order. There are teachings that some are presenting and others are not. There are truths that are being neglected. Through this publication it is our aim to share our Bible convictions with different people of different backgrounds. If we present the truth, accept it. If not, don't accept it. But let us reach out to practice the unity of the faith, not by compromise, but by sincerely examining the Scriptures and putting them into practice. Let us practice them in love and humility, not with a sectarian slant. The truth is for all to enjoy.

Then reactionaryism is a matter of individual experience. Men

have gone forth preaching the truth of God, but perhaps with the wrong motive or attitude. Their being "strong" for the truth has been a youthful phase they have been going through. Really what some have thought to be strong preachers have been preachers with personality problems—they enjoyed the attention they got by making abrasive dogmatic statements in their flamboyancy. Then one day they grew up. They looked back over their lives. They didn't like what they saw. So, they changed their preaching. Really there basically had been nothing wrong with their message (just the man). It was their attitude and the way they presented it. But the pendulum has made its swing, and we have a reactionary liberal who has lost his mooring and sense of direction.

And, so we could go on pointing out different kinds of reactionaries. But what lesson, or lessons, do we learn from reactionaries? What do reactionaries teach us?

First, reactionaries teach us that a basic truth has been neglected. When we hear someone preach who we think is a little extreme in his views, it would be wise for us to listen instead of completely discounting and discrediting him. Almost all reactionaries have a legitimate point which needs to be considered. Look for it, and learn from it.

Second, it behooves us to be level-headed students of God's Word. Take a strong and decided (but mature) stand for the truth of God, but don't be unchristian in the way you present it or the way you treat other people. Someday you will be unhappy with yourself if you do. And, you may as a reactionary find yourself turning from the truth to become a compromiser. God forbid!

We can learn from reactionaries.

BIBLE LANDS TOUR—NOVEMBER, 1980!

FOR THOSE who are interested, the next Bible lands tour is now planned (the Lord willing) for November, 1980. The last three tours have been in March, and the last one of these especially overlapped with the rainy season. We have been told that November is an ideal time to visit Palestine.

Plans are for the tour to take in upper and lower Egypt, Mt. Sinai (where Moses got the Law), and Israel. Those who have been to Egypt before know what an exciting time we had there. We plan to stay longer this time in Egypt. Mt. Sinai, which is in the planning stage, will be a first for us. Israel is packed with Bible-related things to see. This tour will be an experience of a life-time.

All the detailed information about the tour is not available yet. However, if you are interested in making this trip, it would be a good idea for you to contact us now. Since interest in ancient Egypt is in the forefront, we expect many to respond. Let us know, and we will share what information we have now. Then when the printed brochure is available we will send it on to you. Make your plans now and work toward them. Write: P. O. Box 147, Mt. Airy, N. C. 27030.

INFLATION PROMPTS NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES

THE "IMPOSSIBLE" INFLATIONARY TIMES in which we live demand that we increase the subscription rates to THE SWORD AND STAFF (although grace has described a lot of our reader's relationships in receiving this paper). NEW YEARLY RATES: Introductory subscription, \$1.50; Renewal subscription, \$2.00; Receiving five or more to one address in a bundle, \$1.25 per copy per year.

ALSO, some have asked about bound volumes of this paper for the last two years. We plan to wait until the end of this year and put three years into one book. Wait until then to order.

Thank you!

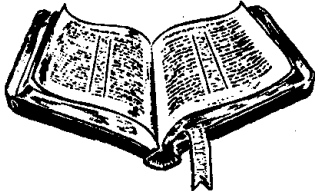
Is MODERN RELIGION "USING" God?
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famous. Then one day you get a telephone call. "Dad, I want to come home." what joy fills your heart. Your son loves you after all and is coming home to you. Your mind is flooded with exciting plans of things you will do together and all the joy you will have in the close companionship of one whom you love so much.

The day finally arrives and your son is home. It is like having one back from the dead. Your son is delighted at the beautiful home you've been able to build. He thrills at the new car he is now able to drive. He is proud to invite his friends into the home and enjoy all the luxury from his father's riches. But something is wrong. The companionship for which you had longed never develops. He is concerned only with things which you provide: the security, the comfort, the luxury and all the fun that is now his because he is home again where his father provides everything. It finally dawns upon you that your son did not come home to be with you. He did not return because of his love for you but because of his love for your gifts. It was not you he sought but the fulfillment of his own desires at your expense.

But isn't this what the church is telling people by saying, "Look what God will do for you. Come to Christ and receive all these benefits for your life."

Churches seem to be competing with one another in offering believers all manner of promises, things that God will do for them if they will only come and let Him. Testimonials usually have to do with "what God did for me." This is not to say that such are not good testimonials, for God does so many good things for us we are zealous to give Him glory and praise. But what about testimonials concerning one's devotion to God when God isn't doing all of these things, when the road is rough, when healing doesn't come, when finances get worse instead of better, when relationships are broken? Are we concerned only with using God in order to benefit our earthly lives? It might seem so from all the testimonials, books, articles and sermons that continually tell us "how to get the most out of God." —Curtis Dickinson



Unchanging Things in a Changing World

• By JAMES E. GIBBONS

THE FOLLOWING message is from the September, 1960, issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF. The contents are just as timely as they were at that time.

We are living in a changing world. Perhaps that is the least disputed assertion that we could make. The changes that have been wrought in this world and within our country, looking back in the life time of some, are astounding. Nationally, within a little more than a century, America has leaped from an unexplored frontier to become one of the most modern countries in the world, and during the same time has taken the position of world leadership. Perhaps during this time, scientifically, there has been more rapid and intensified progress in the field of learning than in all other centuries put together. Man has left the horse and buggy to take wings and fly with supersonic speed. The old oil lamp has been replaced by electricity. Modern inventions and discoveries have placed man at the brink of mass annihilation. One sudden uncalculated move could usher much of humanity suddenly and unceremoniously into eternity. During this same period many things have been happening within the religious world too. One hundred or more years ago men were bound behind denominational walls with iron-clad creeds. The doctrine of Calvinism was strongly felt in the circles of denominationalism. Men's convictions were strong although wrong. Today religious tolerance is the fad of the day. Denominational walls have somewhat disintegrated, but the element of pride still remains, and convictions are not necessarily the basis for fellowship. Great convictions seem to be a thing of the past, and many denominations find themselves with leaders who are nothing more than infidels hiding behind the word "scholarship" and "higher education."

In the midst of all this we are certainly made to exclaim that we are living in a changing world. Change has brought good things, but change has brought many evil things. Things of man are subject to change. He is shifting, moving with the sands of time. Everything is being questioned, and man is found to be like a ship at sea with no anchor or sail. Ancient landmarks have been removed. But there is something we can anchor our weary souls to. The things of God do not change. They are eternal.

I. GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE.

The Psalmist speaks of God in this fashion: "But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations." (Psalms 102:12) Then he continues in reference to the things of earth, "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." (Psalms

102:26, 27) James has this to say about God: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) Upon examining these Scriptures, here is the teaching. The things of earth shall fade away and become old and be no more, but God shall go on and on throughout all eternity. God is from everlasting to everlasting. Not only that, James tells us more. He is the same from everlasting to everlasting. He uses the figure of no shadow cast by God's turning. In other words God is the same in His nature at all times. He can be depended on. It is not a matter of Pantheism. God is the Father of man and exists as a definite personality.

God is the great Power behind the universe. As long as time is, He can be depended on to enforce His natural laws. The law of gravity holds true, and the earth turns and we see the sun "rise" every morning. Man in his scientific ventures is only finding out the natural laws of God—discovering the laws of God set into operation eons ago following His great acts of creation. The exact function of these natural laws is continuously a marvel.

God is always the same as the loving heavenly Father. James well said, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father . . ." The colored preacher's version of God making man was that God was lonely and He wanted someone to love, thus He made man in His own likeness. God loves man and is concerned about His well-being. One unbelieving religious leader has accused God of being "an old bully" in the Old Testament, and speaks of the "idea" of God in the Old Testament and the New Testament. The love of God is expressed in the Old Testament. Certainly He had patience with such a stiff-necked people as the Jews. He spared and showed mercy unto the Gentiles when they would sincerely repent and turn from idolatry. It is hard for us to conceive how degenerate their idolatry was. God wants everyone to go to heaven, and if they don't it will be in spite of what He has done.

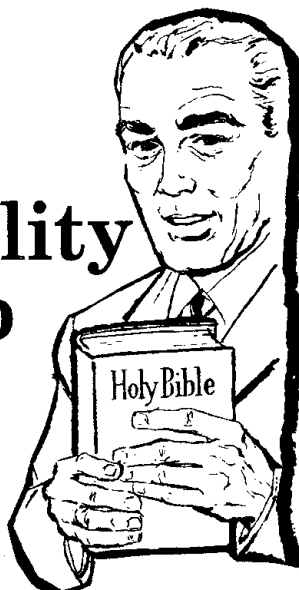
God is unchangeable in His attitude toward sin. Before there can be good (it appears) there must be evil or the possibility of evil. God is the embodiment of all that is pure and good. He has a holy distaste and hatred for all that is wicked and evil. He cannot tolerate sin in any form. Sin always brings a separation from God, which is death. Sin does not go unpunished, although it may seem that way upon earth at times. The day of judgment is coming for all of mankind. God is Holy and He says, "Be thou Holy for I am Holy." Only the pure in heart will see God, and the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

II. CHRIST IS UNCHANGEABLE.

The Hebrew writer declares: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). This verse shows the unchangeable nature of Christ, the only begotten Son of God. Of course Christ took the form of man, being clothed in flesh, as he lived upon this earth and identified with mankind. He

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Will Carnality Develop



Christian Growth?

By L. A. WILLIAMSON—Box 884; 114 Highland Avenue
Bluefield, Virginia 24605

IMMORALITY is a world-wide curse. I am sad to say, but carnal leadership among many of the so-called churches of Christ is causing the church to become part of the sickness instead of the cure.

To more clearly see the departure from holiness to worldliness, may we first notice the purpose of the church. The church of Christ is in the very center of the eternal purpose of God. As Adam needed an help meet, the church is the "fulness of him that filleth all in all." The church was brought into existence for the purpose of preaching the gospel and then to strengthen the saints. But there is a new vocabulary being heard in the church today: "skating party," "bowling alley," "swimming party," and "pajama party."

A little better than a decade back it was said of the young people of the church of Christ, "If you want to know what the Bible says, ask a 'Campbellite' brat." This is when the church put God's Word into the minds of the young "that they might not sin against God." But today in many places entertainment has replaced God's Word.

Where is the problem? The fault does not lie with the faithfully serving truck driver, who is a father numbered among the redeemed, or the tree trimmer who brings his children to church to have their lives influenced by the teachings of the Bible. Neither does the problem come from the young widowed mother who faithfully keeps her little ones attending the services of the church to grow and mature spiritually. It does not come from the God-fearing housewife who is there every service while her husband labors on the night shift, bringing her children to be trained in Bible truth. The decay comes from Bible College Professors and men who sit on the "Board of Directors" (?) of youth camps and youth centers. The propaganda of these untouchable leaders is: "If we will build a swimming pool we can attract more youth for Jesus." Elders of area congregations are stupid or gullible enough to believe their cunning and crafty idea is true "progress." Then the elders fleece the church for big offerings to support vaudeville stripping with church money. Spiritual leadership should know there will always be a larger crowd gathered at the "burlesque show"

than gathers to PRAY. With their mixed-swimming, what are these spiritual vultures teaching the children of the church of Christ?

That a belly-button display is your right? Demand your rights! BUT LISTEN: "In like manner, that your women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works" (I Timothy 2:9,10). This is what a spiritual teacher who is a real Christian will teach the young girls of the church. But she goes off to one of these "Board of Directors" CONTROLLED youth camps and she is trained to dress (or undress) before male instructors and young male campers—to strip down into scanty bathing attire. This is immodesty, not modesty. This is dressing to be CHASED rather than CHASTE. But the "Board of Directors" which promotes teaching which is 180 degrees from the truth are untouchable; they aren't accountable to anyone. Everything they do is done in the name of "PROGRESS"!!! Is mixed-swimming spiritual progress or carnal progress?!!!

Now let's look at the progress from the male teacher's and male student's side. Jesus taught, "...that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:28). Will the alluring dress of female bathing clothes cause the male instructors of our youth centers to be more "spiritually minded with life and peace" or to have roving eyes—"eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way..." (Romans 8:6b and II Peter 2:13-15). Yes, we are absolutely foolish to believe that our young teenage sons are going to be in the right frame of mind to pray and memorize Scripture at youth camp as long as they gaze on shapely well developed 15, 16, and 17 year old teasingly attired girls.

In case the elders of the church have forgotten what an attractive female body can do to the male, please remember. Improper thoughts and improper actions have resulted from it. Are men today stronger than King David (a man after God's own heart)? The supposed "spiritual" leadership talks out of both sides of their mouths. They loudly condemn fornication and adultery, and are at the same time promoting things that cause it.

Now let us examine the "Christian" swimming pool from the stewardship standpoint. In most communities of any size there are already several public swimming establishments available—if not, there is a clean river or lake close by. If it is necessary that our Christian youth swim (but not mixed swimming), why not utilize what is already available rather than take from the treasury of the Lord's church

(Continued on Next Page)

EDITOR'S NOTE: In the last issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF we ran a timely article entitled "Sipping 'Saints'." It bore the name of Gary Flom, and in the form we used it had appeared in IMPACT, the paper published by William E. Paul. But it seems that credit for the article should largely be given to David Wilkerson. Brother Flom extensively used and adapted this article. We want to make this correction.

WILL CARNALITY DEVELOP CHRISTIAN GROWTH?

(Continued from Last Page)

to construct a swimming pool? Would not this leave more ready cash on hand to do the Lord's will with? Why should we cry, "We don't have the money to send evangelists out to the poor lost heathen" when we are building a swimming pool? "Oh, oh, you Christians need to sacrifice and contribute above your normal giving because the church treasury is low" (???). Would it be low if what was contributed to run a sex-bait youth camp was kept at home? The "Board of Directors" of these camps that come up with these brainstorms of a fleshly nature will not openly and publicly discuss the *pros* and *cons* of their more than questionable schemes to fleece money out of the Lord's storehouse.

The only answer to stop a sex-oriented program from developing in the church is for elders of the church to gain enough courage to stop the flow of money to mixed-swimming activities. If elders of the Lord's church are short on "guts" and will not go against the work of the flesh to drain the church dry, then get new elders. The work of the church is not recreation, amusement, and entertainment. □

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UNCHANGING THINGS IN A CHANGING WORLD

(Continued from Page 6)

lived life just as human beings, yet without sin. He tasted death like every man and for ever man on the cross of Calvary. But unlike man he was victorious over the grave and was not confined long to the abode of the dead. Christ was the Son of man and the Son of God. Now He is back in heaven, living for ever to make intercession for the Christians. He came to prove His Deity and to save the human family from the awful consequence of sin. That is still His purpose on the earth. Christ is unchanging, and the part about Him that is unchangeable is His Divine purpose and nature.

Therefore, inasmuch as Christ is unchanging, that means the gospel in changeless. Christ is the gospel (good news), and the gospel hinges around His death, burial and resurrection (I Cor. 15:1-4). (Thus, to preach Jesus is also to preach baptism since that pertains to his death, burial and resurrection—Acts 8:35, 36; Romans 6:3-6.) But many today say, "Let's streamline the gospel." They claim that we have too much of a "slaughter house" religion (how blasphemous!). A man dying on a cross for the sins of the world is just too crude for the modern mind, it is claimed. Let us hear "nice" things. Hence, men come up with the social gospel, which has been defined as the gospel of "soap, soup and science"; a moral, do-good religion without the blood of Christ. But, may I say, dear friend? The gospel of Christ does not need streamlining. It is far ahead of this age, or any age to come, for Jesus said it would be "unto the end of the world." Degenerate and fallen man needs to conform his life to the streamline pattern of Jesus. The world is out of step with that which is right, not the Christian. Perhaps we are using the wrong terms when we say "Old-fashioned Gospel" or "Old-time Religion." There is nothing "old-fashioned" about the gospel of Christ. It does not have the mark of time upon it. (Religions of men do, though.) It is always new, vital, and the timeless good news. It

should be just as fresh as if the apostles penned the message this morning. Men need to bring their lives up to date with the gospel of Jesus.

III. THE WORD IS UNCHANGEABLE.

Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35). Jesus further said "... the Scripture cannot be broken." In I Peter 1:25 we read, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." Yes, friend, when God speaks, it is for all eternity. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2). If God is perfect, His word is perfect. If God is eternal, His word is eternal. I have no doubts about the Bible being the Word of God. We have the Divine promise that the Word of the Lord would be with us for ever. God has communicated His Divine will unto us, and He will keep in contact with every generation with His recorded Word.

But, oh how men have reproached God and His Word! Men imply that God's Word is not plain enough. They formulate their creeds and crystalized religious prejudices into a man-made book, usurping the authority of the Bible. This man-made creed afflicts oncoming generations. Their thinking and study of the Bible is stifled by preconceived dogmas. False doctrine has been endeared and canonized in the hearts of people because loved ones have died in that religion. Thereafter their descendants have a closed mind to any new idea or further investigation of the Bible. How sad the situation becomes as men seek to justify denominational divisions, saying that it doesn't actually matter what one believes.

Then modern theologians have terribly disgraced God's Word. Along came the theory of evolution. Theologians revised their thinking to fit the situation of the human theory and thus have destroyed the Bible. Many are so obsessed with the idea that they are trying to make the Bible itself fit into an evolutionary pattern. The theory of evolution is falling into the background today as unproved and irrational, and these "change-with-the-weather" theologians will be left holding the bag. The Word of God is Unchangeable.

Jude says to "... earnestly contend for the faith which was once (and for all) delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). The wrath of heaven is pronounced against any who will add or take away from the words of the Book (Revelation 22:18, 19). It is a very, very serious matter. Paul charged: "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). Yes, God's Word is unchangeable, and it shall be opened at the day of judgment. The unlearned and unstable wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction (II Peter 3:16).

In the midst of uncertainty and change let us keep our souls anchored to the Rock. Our whole social pattern of civilization has been and is in process of change. People change constantly. They may say one thing one day and do another thing the next day. But in the midst of an uprooted society, a restless, moving modern world, let us ever keep in mind that God is

(Continued on Page 10)



Timely Questions Answered

1. What should a church do that has no qualified men to be elders and deacons? Who is responsible for seeing to the needs of the church?

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

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

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

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

This is God's plan.
We do not believe a treasury separate from the church is Scripturally justified or needed.

3. Do you have any information or have any idea when all these organizations, such as Sunday School, started?

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

The early days of men leaving denominationalism (the first part of the last century) saw them also oppose man-made religious organizations aside from the church. But later, we understand, men like D.S. Burnet and others began to introduce organizations and societies into this New Testament fellowship (organizations other than the set-up the Lord instituted). Then, in his declining years Alexander Campbell seemingly reversed his former position, going along with a national Missionary Society (forerunner to the UCMS and the Disciple apostasy).

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

4. Should a woman teach a mixed adult class?

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

5. What about churches having bake sales, selling projects, and other fund-raising schemes?

Throughout the New Testament we find instructions for Christians to give systematically and proportionately. Giving is a part of weekly worship just like the Lord's supper (I Corinthians 16:2; Acts 20:7). Never do we find the church involved in "selling" to "raise" money. The giving of ten per cent religiously was a principle in existence before the Old Testament Law was ever inaugurated (Genesis 14:20; 28:22). When the Old Testament was given, it required tithes of the people. Christ made the supreme sacrifice. Christianity motivates liberality, and our giving should not fall below the ten per cent level. When supposed Christians give like they ought to, money problems are nonexistent in the church. However, the name of religion is cheapened when the supposed church must go to the world for financial assistance. God's plan does not allow that. □

BEWARE AGING CHRISTIANS, PREACHERS...

WE RECENTLY clipped the following from a newspaper:

When we are young, we are infused with the desire to change the world.

As we get older, we begin to recognize that it is hard enough just trying to keep the world from changing us. □

UNCHANGING THINGS IN A CHANGING WORLD

(Continued from Page 8)

unchangeable. He is still in His heaven, and His purpose is still the same with the human race. The earth still moves on its axis. While man may think that the gospel needs streamlining and that he is his own saviour, there is no getting around the fact of Christ. He is the unchanging Son of God and the only way under heaven whereby we may be saved (Acts 4:12). Men need to streamline their lives to fit the plan of Christ, which is way ahead of this age, looking forward to the age to come. Men may say they no longer believe the Bible, that it is a book of fables, but **CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IT!** It would be mighty stupid to think that Supreme Deity could not reveal His will to mankind. Yes, the Bible is still that grand old Book read by our mothers, setting forth God's road map to heaven. If we anchor our souls to these truths, we will find them anchored to eternity, and a home that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for us. If we sincerely believe these things, we will find ourselves being obedient unto every good work. The cares of this life will be of little importance in relation to the over-all view of God's plan. These are unchanging things in a changing world! □

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Following A THIEF

MANY TIMES people use the thief on the cross as an example to "prove" that baptism has nothing to do with salvation, but I'm afraid that these people who think they are following (and teaching others to follow) the thief on the cross who repented are actually following the thief who did not repent, and will wind up in the same place with him. They are rebelling and/or teaching rebellion against God! And rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (I Samuel 15:23) and they who do such things as witchcraft shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21).

The thief on the cross cannot save you! Get your eyes off him, and keep them on Jesus (Hebrews 12:2). Jesus is able to save you (Hebrews 7:25). The thief isn't (Acts 4:12). Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

Jesus does not promise to save you like he did the thief on the cross. The thief died while the Old Testament was still in effect (Hebrews 9:15-17; Colossians 2:14).

We live under the New Testament now, which came of force after Christ's death. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force *after* men are dead: Otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth (Hebrews 9:16, 17).

Romans 10:9 teaches that we must believe in the resurrection of Christ to be saved, but even Christ's hand-picked apostles had a hard time believing in his resurrection before he appeared unto them (See Mark 16:9-14; John 20:14-29).

Jesus' earthly ministry was to the Jews (Matthew 10:6; John 1:31). After he arose he changed it to "all nations" (Matthew 28:18-20); when Christ became our high priest he fulfilled the old law (Matthew 5:17) and dedicated or

instituted the New Testament (Hebrews 7:12; 9:18).

Christ's will for us now is not only FAITH—Hebrews 11:6; James 2:19-24; I Corinthians 13:13, but also REPENTANCE—Acts 2:38; II Peter 3:9; Acts 17:30, CONFESSION—Romans 10:9,10; Acts 8:36,37, and BAPTISM—Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 4:5; Romans 6:3-5.

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us..." (I Peter 3:21). "...Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins..." (Acts 22:16). "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth..." (I Peter 1:22).

Are you teaching people to follow Jesus or the thief who didn't repent? "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them who OBEY him" (Hebrews 5:9). See also Romans 16:17, 18; John 8:51; I John 2:3, 4, 17; Revelation 22:14; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; John 14:21-24.

"PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD" (I Thessalonians 5:21). —Selected □

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JESUS THE SHEPHERD

THE SHEPHERD knows what pastures are best for his sheep, and they must not question or doubt, but trustingly follow him. Perhaps he sees that the best pastures for some of us are to be found in the midst of opposition or of earthly trials. If he leads you there, you may be sure they are green for you, and you will grow and be made strong by feeding there. Perhaps he sees that the best waters for you to walk beside will be raging waves of trouble and sorrow. If this should be the case, he will make them still waters for you, and you must go and lie down beside them, and let them have all their blessed influences on you.—Selected □

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If a Church...

DOES NOT seek to exalt Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God...

does not honor His authority be deliberate study and proclamation of His revealed Word...

does not maintain His ordinances just as He ordained them...

does not manifest His compassion by ministering to those in physical, emotional and spiritual need, not just occasionally but regularly...

does not maintain the exact organization as revealed for His congregation in the New Testament...

does not renounce worldliness and materialism...

does not speak strongly against falsehood and hypocrisy...

THEN IT IS NOT A CHURCH OF THE CHRIST, no matter what name it wears.—The Lamplighter □

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LIKE A DEADLY SNAKE

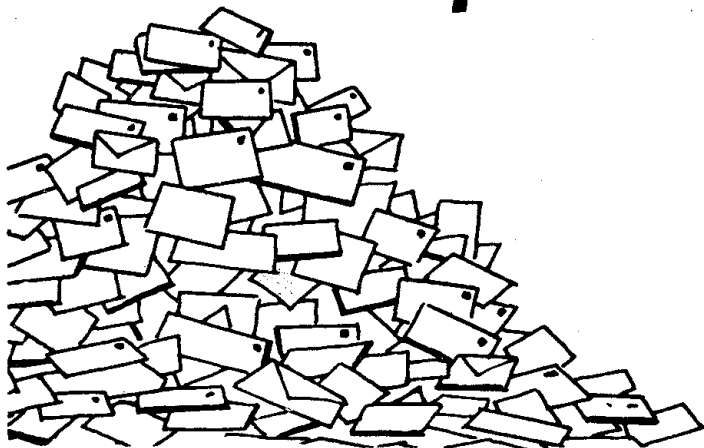
HAVING A TELEVISION set in your home is like keeping a deadly snake in a cage in your living room. Every time you turn the TV on is like opening the door to the cage. Leaving it on and indiscriminately watching is like leaving the door open. It is only a matter of time until the poisonous venom from the fangs of the deadly snake will be felt with its fatal results.

BEWARE!!! Consider Romans 8:6. □

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READERS'

... Response



NORTH CAROLINA:

■ "...I certainly hope you can continue to keep *THE SWORD AND STAFF* going. It is the most down to earth in understanding the true Bible explained I have ever read."

WEST VIRGINIA:

■ "I sure appreciate *THE SWORD AND STAFF* and feel a great need of such a paper. I would like the whole world to read and observe what you write. The letter you just sent out: I pray that someone will underwrite this. I would that I was able. Here is a small token of appreciation..."

TENNESSEE:

■ "God bless you in your good fight of faith. May God always give you the physical and spiritual strength to tell the truth without favoritism.

"Often when I have been deeply discouraged by Satan's clever efforts I have found some article of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* that contains sweet words of God's encouragement. No money can buy a special word of hope and this fact makes the message of your publication so much more special to me.

"Thank you."

TEXAS:

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■ "We surely have enjoyed your paper over the years and are thankful for you and others who are committed to publishing Christian reading matter. Thank you for your dedication for which we also praise God."

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■ "Thanks for your good paper. I have the five papers by my chair and read them over and over. You have good writers. Thanks again, and I hope to keep getting the paper..."

OREGON:

■ "Thank you for the good help you have given me, and for the really fine service you are rendering through your great

little publication. May our Lord enable you to continue to do this with vigor and great effect."

NEW ZEALAND:

■ "We have read one or two copies of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*, and have enjoyed reading the material contained in them. We would like to take advantage of your offer and be a regular receiver of your paper."

MISSOURI:

■ "Please discontinue *THE SWORD AND STAFF*."

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A Covenant With Your Eyes

SUMMER is shedding time. Clothes are shed without a second thought. Few seem to be concerned. I am.

You must live "in the world." The big question is, are we "of the world" (John 17:11, 14)? It reminds us of camouflage, the ability to be "of" the background so as to escape notice. Many Christians do just that—blend in with the world and become "of" the world.

Women "of the world" wear shorts and halters, go braless and frequent public swimming pools where they are met by the gazes (some would say leers) of men "of the world."

It was Job who said, "I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?" (31:1). Why the agreement with his eyes? Job knew that where the eyes linger, the heart soon follows (vs. 7). That which catches the eye, often snares the heart and "out of the heart come ... adulteries, fornications..." (Matthew 15:19, 20).

Jesus said, "Every one who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart." Do not blame your body, you know, "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." If your eye, by looking to long for her, causes you to stumble, tear it out. If your hand, by longing to reach for her, causes you to stumble, cut it off (Matthew 5:27-30).

Men, these are our passages. Other verses talk to the ladies about modesty. To be sure, women should make covenants, if not with their eyes, perhaps with their bodies, and dress with reverence for God, regard for men and respect for themselves. Even should they not, much of the corruption in the world by lust (II Peter 1:4) would vanish if more men would make this covenant with their eyes. Frankly, such a covenant will keep us away from public pools and away from magazines and books which exist for the sole purpose of lust and sexual arousal. A covenant with your eyes? Are you man enough to do it?—S. Bobbitt □

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MARVELOUS LOVE OF GOD

Let's bask in the sunlight of love today,

The love of God through His Son,

A love that is glorious, grand, and pure

And sent to bless everyone,

A love that brings pardon and peace and joy,

That never grows cold or dim,

But flourished brightly and constantly

To draw us all back to Him.

—By DALE V. KNOWLES



SOLID

BIBLE-RELATED MATERIAL:

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ALL-SUFFICIENCY STATEMENT

THE POSITION of The Sword and Staff is this:

We believe in the all-sufficiency of the blood of Christ to take away sin.

We believe in the all-sufficiency of the Bible as our only rule of faith and practice.

We believe in the all-sufficiency of the church as the Lord has given it to us to get the Lord's work done on this earth. — Editor. □

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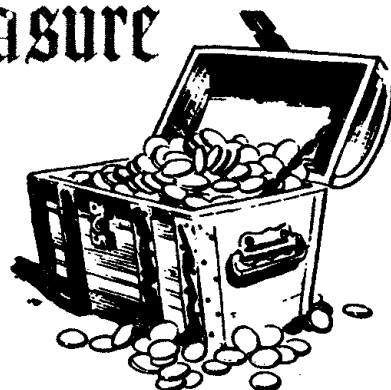
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THANK YOU—The Editor.

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