

# The Sword AND Staff

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

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



## PRAYER ANSWERED *According to God's Will*

- A closer look at how the will of God is involved in getting prayers answered.

By JAMES E. GIBBONS — 1535 Fairfield Drive  
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IN A PREVIOUS STUDY in this paper (many volumes ago), we ran an outline-study on "PRAYER." In that study we noticed that the word prayer basically means to ask, to beseech. We expanded on this to emphasize praying (asking) to get the answer from God. In that part we brought out that to get the answer we must pray with urgency (be convinced of and feel the need), we must pray with expectancy (be convinced that we are going to get the answer), and we must pray with persistency (don't let up on praying if we don't get the answer right away).

In spite of the fact that we pray like this, sometimes we still don't get the positive answer we desire from God. Why?

There is more involved. In addition to praying as we have mentioned above, our prayers must be according to God's will. I John 5:14 and 15 reads, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, he heareth us: And if we know he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

But, what does it mean to pray according to God's will? We believe this can be broken down into two categories, namely, (1) according to God's revealed will (His purpose as found in the Bible); (2) according to God's permitted will (or purpose involving our individual lives).

Let us look into each of these as we seek to have our prayers answered, realizing they must harmonize with God in this area to be answered.

### I. PRAYER ANSWERED ACCORDING TO GOD'S REVEALED WILL

One element in reference to God's revealed will is what He has said about the pre-conditions to answered prayer. This was touched upon in our former study, but there are many other thoughts and Scriptures that could be tied in with this. Jesus states in John 15:7, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (originally spoken to the apostles, but seemingly of general application). We must abide in Christ, His words must abide in us, and we must will it to be so when we pray. I Timothy 2:8 says, "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." Paul's desire that men pray is not only shown here, but so are conditions to answered prayer: (1) holy hands; (2) no wrath; (3) no doubting. Likewise, James 4:2-4 relates that our prayers must be unselfish in intent and content. James 5:16 tells us that, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Other Scriptures could be given, but all of these show that pre-conditions in this respect must be met. It is according to God's revealed will. He said so.

Another element in reference to God's revealed will has to do with what we pray about. We cannot ask anything that would make God contradict Himself in His Word, or that would violate His righteous nature or Self-imposed restrictions. Yes, Jesus said that "with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). Yet this statement is modified and qualified by other Scriptures. Elsewhere we are told that it is impossible for God to lie (Hebrews 6:18; Titus 1:2). God cannot lie. He cannot be untrue to Himself, His Word, His holy and righteous nature, or His eternal purpose.

Some quote Hebrews 13:8 where it reads, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." They say that since this is true, Jesus will do what He did when He was here upon this earth. They tell us we can have the power of the apostles and the supernatural gifts evidenced in the early church. After all, Jesus is still the same.

But we are afraid that they really haven't thought this thing through. Besides the Scriptures (God's revealed will) that have a bearing on these gifts ceasing (Hebrews 2:1-4; I Corinthians 13; etc.), they fail to realize some other things. For example, God created the first man from the

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## Proverbially SPEAKING...

*Some people who pride themselves in "using psychology" are really "using" people.*

*"If men but persuade themselves that they shall die like the beasts, they soon will live like beasts too."*

*A good leader doesn't take sides with people, he takes the side of principle—whether a matter is right or wrong.*

*"Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer."*

*To the victor belongs the "spoils" (not to the loser)—so press on.*

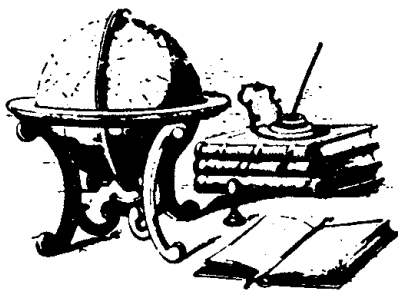
*"One has to know a great deal to say a little properly."*

*ENJOYMENT is to be found in EMPLOYMENT (stay busy).*

*"When you fail to plan, you plan to fail."*

*Before we can talk about Christian unity, we must have Christians; and we must have people living Christian lives.*

*"If you are a stranger to prayer, you are a stranger to power."*



## EDITORIAL

### COMMENTS...

**TARGET DATE FOR BIBLE LANDS TOUR: NOV. 24- DEC. 4, 1980**

THE WAY things are shaping up the dates for our planned Bible lands tour of this year will be November 24–December 4. The tour will include EGYPT, ISRAEL with MT. SINAI as an optional feature. It should prove to be another great tour—a tour of a lifetime! Why don't you make plans to go with us? Write for more exact details. You will be glad that you went. □

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## EDITORIAL

### By-Ways

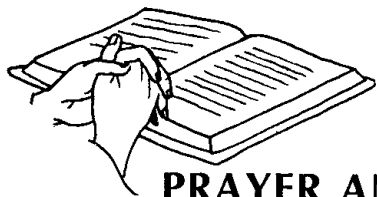
#### FACING UP TO WHAT WE SEE

LOOKING OUT the dining room door of my house (across the carport and to the drive-way which goes around behind it), my attention was unavoidably alerted to a most unusual sight. There parked in the drive-way was my big "Chevy" station wagon, reflecting the welcomed green grass which was becoming increasingly evident because of the spring showers. But that was not what got my attention. A robin was positioned on the pavement behind the station wagon. He was looking up into the massive chrome bumper. He would take to the air and make repeated dives, pecking at the bumper. His wings were aflutter in a wild frenzy as he repeatedly did this. He would land back on the pavement, look up at the bumper, then do it all over again.

In bewilderment I thought to myself: "What's going on here?!" Then I saw... The bird was seeing himself in the chrome which served as a perfect mirror. Obviously he didn't like what he saw. This accounted for the wild attacks on the bumper. I scared the bird away. I thought he might destroy himself in the determined disgust he was showing for his newly discovered likeness and his complete abandonment of self to attack what he saw. But later throughout the day there he was back doing it again. Although the rain was falling the next morning, there he was again. He must get back at that hostile intruder he saw reflected in the bumper of my car. Every time he soared into the bird in the bumper, the bird in the bumper just as violently reciprocated. It has been about three days now since I first noticed this strange thing, and it is still going on. The bird doesn't like what he sees, and he is not content to go on and forget about it.

And how like human beings this dumb bird appears. Many people have never come face to face with themselves

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## PRAYER ANSWERED ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL

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dust of the earth and woman from this man's rib. God is still the same God today as He was in the beginning. Why doesn't He create every male and female that way today? Does it mean that He cannot? No, it simply means that His will is otherwise. The process of birth brings human beings and other creatures into this world. So this has to do with the will of God, and not the power of God. What is the Word of God on the subject?

And so it is in reference to getting our prayers answered today. They must be prayed according to the revealed will of God. What we pray for must not come in conflict with God's Word (what God has ordained to give and how God has promised to give it).

For example, God tells us that the believing sinner must REPENT and BE BAPTIZED FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS to be saved from his past sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Peter 3:21; etc.). Some people take a short-cut, misinform the seeking sinner, and tell him he is saved before this is accomplished. They have the sinner PRAYING FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, disregarding the revealed will of God on this subject. And because the sincere sinner has relieved the burden of his heart in prayer, he feels great and thinks that he is saved. We hesitate to forbid the sinner from praying, but it is wrong to encourage him to pray for the remission of sins and to expect this before he is baptized for the remission of sins like the Bible says. Such a prayer would not be according to the will of God, as it would be asking God to disregard His Word.

Many things could illustrate this. It would be wrong, not according to God's will, for a woman to pray to God for another man when she is already married to one. God has spoken on this already. Some have said that they prayed to God about smoking, and their consciences didn't bother them, so they are still smoking. These people need to study God's Word and not expect a modern day revelation from heaven (who do they think they are?). Any way you look at it, it is never right to do wrong—even if we try to sanctify it by prayer.

To pray that we would never die would be wrong, because it is appointed unto man once to die (Hebrews 9:27).

We could go on, but it surely is obvious that our prayers must be within the realm of God's revealed will if we expect to have them answered. Get this matter cleared, then proceed with more assurance before God.

### II. PRAYER ANSWERED ACCORDING TO GOD'S PERMITTED WILL

In addition to God's revealed will, which constitutes His eternal and over-all purpose, there is such a thing as God's personal will for each individual life. This we are calling His permitted will. Romans 8:28 reads, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." We believe that God is personal and is personally involved in each Christian's life. This is especially true (even beyond the point of His revealed will as to how we are to live in His Word); yes, this is especially true if

we are truly surrendered to Him. In view of who we are, where we are, and what we are God is working out His personal plan for our lives. Our being open to His leading will determine the outcome, to what extent He can and will use us. Someone has said that if we live by plan, we will die by plan. If we live by chance, we will die by chance. And perhaps there is great truth in that.

Paul on his way to Jerusalem told the brethren at Ephesus, "I will return again unto you, if God will" (Acts 18:21). At another time Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will..." (I Corinthians 4:19). At a later date he wrote the Romans, and desiring their prayers for him, said, "That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed" (Romans 15:32). All of these references point to God's personal will being involved in the apostle's life. It is no wonder he said, "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (II Corinthians 5:7). And every real Christian should look at it in the same light.

The writer James has some very noteworthy directives concerning the personal and permitted will of God in our lives (and may all of us take heed): "Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For we ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that" (James 4:13-15).

A profound teaching follows Romans 8:28 in the next two verses. It is hard to fathom the depths of these thought-provoking verses, but implications of God's personal involvement in our lives are great. Listen: "For whom he (God) did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." God's omniscience is all engulfing! It is like the writer Luke says in the book of Acts: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). This Romans Scripture tells us that from eternity God foreknew who would be Christians. He foreknew who who would have good and honest hearts and accept the Saviour. The foreknowledge comes before the predestination, and the predestination does not determine the foreknowledge, but the foreknowledge determines the predestination. In other words, God foreknew from eternity who would accept the "whosoever will may come" invitation of the gospel, and these he predetermined to constitute the saved. Their salvation is not determined by an eternal fatalistic decree that a certain number have been picked out to go to heaven and a certain number to go to hell (as Calvinism would advocate), but by God's foreknowledge of their voluntary act in accepting and following the Saviour. Consequently, God has predetermined that they be conformed to the image of Jesus (be like Christ as Christians).

In view of this, God's permitted and personal will in reference to an individual's prayers may enter in before he has fully accepted God's revealed will (even before he becomes a Christian). God knows who have good and honest hearts, knows if they are moving in the direction of accepting His revealed will, and knows if they will actually accept it or not. That being the case, He may be attentive to their prayers before they become Christians. That was true in reference to the Gentile Cornelius. He was not a Christian yet (Acts 11:14), but he prayed to God always

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**PRAYERS ANSWERED ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL**  
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(Acts 10:2). When Peter came with God's message, Peter said, "Thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God" (Acts 19:31). Here was a man moving toward God. God honored his search (so, having prayer answered doesn't always mean that a person is a Christian, but the possibility and potential of his becoming a Christian is imminent or great. This writer can speak from personal experience on this).

Then having accepted salvation, the Christian life is a walk of faith. In addition to God's revealed will, His personal and permitted will enters into our lives. What we do, we do "if the Lord will." What we ask in prayer is answered if it be "according to His will." And, what God's will is for our lives at a particular stage will determine how He answers. It may be at one stage God will not give an affirmative answer to a certain prayer, yet at a more advanced stage He will. It may be that God will not answer one person's prayer, but the identical prayer may be answered in another person's life. Although all concerned may be within the apparent scope of God's revealed will, His permitted will withholds the answer. It doesn't necessarily mean that one has less or more faith than the other.

Let us illustrate. Suppose that in your family you have a very young boy. He sees you with your pocket knife, which very much fascinates him. He would like very much to have one, but you say "no." In your wisdom you know that he is not ready for a pocket knife. He couldn't handle it. It would only bring injury. But, let a few years go by. The son is much older. Again he asks you for a pocket knife. It is altogether possible, and even likely, that you will give him one now. He can handle the situation at this stage. So it is in our prayer-life. God knows what is best for us at any given point in our physical life or spiritual development. Some things we would very much like to have. But God, Who looks from the vantage point of foreknowledge and eternity, knows that such would not be the best for us at that particular time. He may be working out some special things in our lives. Later on our requests may be honored. Therefore when we pray, we should be patient, calmly resigning ourselves to God's will. God may say "yes." God may say "no." He may say, "Wait a while." It could be that He has something special in mind, which He is working out for our good and His glory.

Although God had answered Paul's prayer many times in reference to the health of others, in Paul's personal case God chose to give a negative reply. This involved God's personal will in Paul's life. To be specific, Paul had a "thorn in the flesh" (some physical infirmity or health problem which is not identified). God said "NO" each time in response to Paul's prayer for healing. Pertaining to this, Paul wrote, "And he (God) said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (II Corinthians 12:9). The "thorn in the flesh" was not removed, but left, that Paul might be humble. This was God's personal will for Paul.

IN CONCLUSION, we would say that if you are really concerned about getting your prayers answered, take into consideration the will of God. Our study has showed the two-fold nature of the will of God: (1) His revealed will (His eternal plan and purpose as found in the Bible); (2) His permitted will (His personal plan and purpose in reference

to our individual lives). When we pray, we should thoroughly consider the prayer that we are offering that it is in keeping with God's revealed will, His Word. If everything is okay here, then our next consideration is God's permitted will. We cannot always know what this is (but over-all we know that it will harmonize with His revealed will). However, in humbleness we can make our requests known, then wait in expectancy. Regardless of the outcome, we must be resigned to God's will and press on. Rest assured that God "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20). And "all the promises of God in him (Christ) are yea, and in him Amen" (II Corinthians 1:20). It is amazing the number of prayers God sees fit to answer in the affirmative.



As in everything else, the Lord Jesus Christ is our example. Listen to Him as He prayed in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39). Then again he prayed, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, THY WILL BE DONE" (26:42). May this attitude be ours.

Let us pray within the realm of God's will. □

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**"TODAY, SIR, TODAY!"**

A TOURIST, while visiting the Villa Areconati in the Italian Alps, was conducted through the beautiful gardens by the long-time gardner.

"How long have you been here?" asked the American.

"Twenty-five years," was the reply.

"And how often does the owner come here to the estate?" asked the visitor.

"He's been here four times."

"When did he last come?" asked the curious tourist.

The gardener's reply, "Twelve years ago."

Then the visitor learned that the owner never writes, nor has anyone been sent to announce his next visit. There were very few visitors to this villa and the old man was pretty much alone.

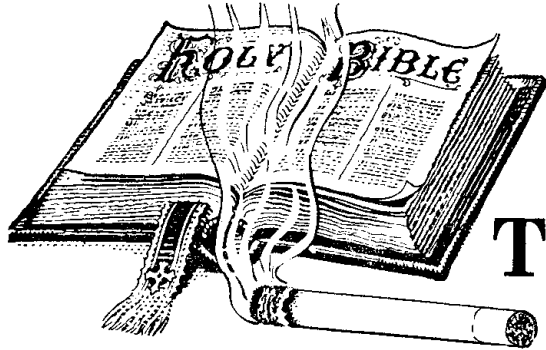
The amazed American said, "You keep this garden so 'spic and span' and so orderly that one would think you were expecting the owner tomorrow."

"Today, sir, today!" was the gardener's reply.

(And isn't there a lesson here for the Christian in reference to the second coming of Christ?) □

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# Is It Wrong for A Christian to Use



## Tobacco?

IS IT WRONG for a Christian to use tobacco in any form? Does the Bible by direct command or principle have anything to say upon this neglected subject? These questions seem to have never entered the minds of some religious people, but a real Christian will be concerned about this. He wants to please His Lord in every way in all things (Colossians 3:17,23).

The medical world has said much about smoking and the use of tobacco in recent years. Their indictment and verdict against tobacco is clear. It is a primary cause of lung cancer, and it is a great factor in heart diseases. There are many maladies caused by the use of tobacco, not to mention that it aggravates almost any sickness that one may have. It has even been figured out statistically how many years a person's life is shortened by the use of tobacco. The evidence is so overwhelming that the U.S. government requires this warning to appear with cigarette advertizing (and similar information on the pack of cigarettes): "WARNING: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health." The medical information concerning the harmfulness of tobacco is such common knowledge that we will not attempt to try to prove anything we have said. Only tobacco companies and such special interest groups would try to deny them.

The "Christian world" for the most part has been silent on the subject of tobacco. Even in the face of the terrible truth of its danger to health and life, most enslaved souls (it seems) will try to justify its use—and still claim to be faithful Christians. One man said that when his conscience bothered him, he would quit. A brother who was more spiritually inclined,

said, "If I committed adultery as often as you smoke, I wouldn't think that adultery was wrong either!" Yes, there is such a thing as having your "conscience seared with a hot iron" (I Timothy 4:2), or, would it be better in this case to say a hot cigarette?

But, what we are concerned with is the Bible. Do the Scriptures say anything that would throw any light upon this issue one way or the other? Is there a more spiritual concept governed by New Testament principles that we need to consider?

FIRST, we would like to say that the use of tobacco is tempting God.

Jesus was tempted of the devil to cast himself from the pinnacle of the temple. After all, God would take care of him lest he "dash his foot against a stone" (Matthew 4:5-7). The immediate reply of Jesus was, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Matthew 4:7).

In other words, it would be the same thing if a person threw himself in front of an oncoming car, then asked the Lord to save him. It likewise would be tempting God. We are commanded NOT to tempt God.

How does this apply to smoking? the use of tobacco?

The Christian's life is one of trust and commitment, committing his all unto the Lord (I Peter 5:7; Philippians 4:6). We look to the Lord for His watch-care and our well-being in everything. This we are commanded to do, as well as it being our special privilege.

Now, in view of the serious hazards to one's life involved in smoking, and the definite prospects of a premature death, we would be tempting God by continued use of tobacco. To ask the Lord to look out for us and to take care of us, then use tobacco would be really presumptuous in the sight of

God. It is the same thing as jumping in front of the car, then asking the Lord to take care of us. It is the same principle that is involved in the temptation of Jesus to leap from the pinnacle of the temple (although, perhaps not as dramatic). Jesus said in no uncertain terms, and may we listen, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

SECOND, there are several other Scriptural reasons we could list against smoking. We will not take the time to examine them in detail, but simply give them.

Paul says in I Corinthians 3:17, "If any man defile (or destroy—footnote) the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." He has reference to the collective body (the church) being the temple of God, but you will also notice that individually we are the temple of God, i.e. of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:19,20). Our bodies belong to God. The warning here is that if we destroy the temple of God, He will destroy us. What does tobacco do to the body?

Listen again to Paul: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from ALL FILTHINESS of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Corinthians 7:1). The promise of God being our Father and our being His children (and Him living



in us) should make us clean up our lives in every way. Besides the other factors involved, at its best we must admit that tobacco is a filthy habit. We are commanded to cleanse ourselves from ALL FILTHINESS of the flesh and spirit.

Let us ask this question: Can you visualize Jesus using tobacco? a cigar-

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## IS IT WRONG FOR A CHRISTIAN TO USE TOBACCO?

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ette hanging out of his mouth? Be honest now! He is our example in every way (I Peter 2:21). John says that every Christian must "purify himself, even as he (Jesus) is pure" (I John 3:3). O beloved, look to Jesus. He is our example. You can't go wrong here.

Then in addition to its destructive nature, tobacco is habit-forming. There is no question about the drug element in it. We have heard people in tears say that they would like to quit, but they just couldn't (they said). They were under control by tobacco. Even if it were just a matter of opinion, from this perspective it would be wrong for a Christian. Listen to Paul: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I WILL NOT BE BROUGHT UNDER THE POWER OF ANY" (I Corinthians 6:12). Then again: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). Beloved, if you profess to belong to King Jesus, and have been enslaved by king tobacco, you better take steps to get your life straightened out right away. Let God help you break the bonds that bind you.

Finally, all will have to admit, whether they accept all that has been said here or not, that there is a BIG QUESTION MARK surrounding tobacco. Just from a surface examination there is room for much doubt. Paul, stressing a principle, declared, "He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: FOR WHATSOEVER IS NOT OF FAITH IS SIN" (Romans 14:23).



THEREFORE, any way you look at it we must conclude that the use of tobacco is not for the Christian. The only way we can sum it up is: IT IS WRONG! That's all you can make out of it. If you profess to be a child

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## EDITORIAL BY-WAYS *(Continued from Page 2)*

and the mess they have made out of their lives. When they finally do face up to it, it is hard to tell what will happen. Many, like the robin, become very unhappy with themselves and their response is about as rational. Some have even committed suicide. The sorrow of the world works death, but there is a better side. When the prodigal son "came to himself" it was the turning point in his life (Luke 15:17, 18). Better days were in store. So, each of us sooner or later needs to do the same. As "he arose, and came to his father," likewise let us return to the God Who made us. He can remake us into what we should be. Then when we come face to face with ourselves we can see the likeness of Christ reflected in us. It will not be an unpleasant experience. □

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### LEARNING THE HARD WAY

THERE I WAS sitting at my typewriter in my "office" (workroom), which is next to my printshop, very much pre-occupied and involved with things relating to THE SWORD AND STAFF. The light from a beautiful morning of early spring warmly radiated over my shoulders through the large sliding glass doors, which serve as the entrance to the workroom from the outside. Then suddenly the tranquility of the morning was interrupted by a loud "THUD!" In surprise I looked up. There laying on the asphalt outside my door was a baby bird...out cold! He was just learning to fly and had failed this flight lesson. In his inexperience and ignorance he had assumed that the transparent door was an opening. He came flying, swooping in full speed ahead, only to be rudely stopped by the hard glass of a solid door. Now ungraciously he was sprawled out on the pavement in inaction with his feathers unbecomingly rearranged. However, in a few moments life returned, he perked up and flew away.

As I sat there with intense attention, witnessing these sudden and unceremonious happenings involving the little bird, my mind was drawn to parallel thoughts. How like the young of human beings. Too many must learn things the hard way, instead of taking the word of their elders. Too many think they "know it all" (Even more than parents or spiritual leaders who have been around two or three times as long as they have). Some youth learn from unnecessary traumatic experience, but others never make it. Their poor judgment and heart-rending experiences have made shipwreck of their lives. It is hard for them, like the little bird, to flutter their youthful wings and soar into the air again. Enslaving habits may crush the bud of youth, and a mis-spent youth breeds a loathsome old age (accelerating its arrival).

Young person, be wise and consider the book of Proverbs. Much of it is timely and timeless advice for young people. Follow the right way: "For length of days and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee" (Proverbs 3:2). It is better to do that which is right because it is right than by sad and crippling experience learn, and then try to get back on the right way. It is better to listen to the man in the "know" who says the bridge is out than to drive head-on, and to your hurtful consequence find out on a very personal basis.

Remember the little bird. □



# “Advice I Would Give Young Preachers, If Asked”



• By ARCHIE WORD, Box 192, Gering, Nebr. 69341

I WOULD ADVISE a young preacher to read I Timothy 4:1-16 and remind him to place great emphasis upon SELF DISCIPLINE, because, besides saving others, the preacher must be right in there and working at saving himself. There were certain conditions upon which salvation was promised in the text, and they must be attained by preachers too.

First, I would say, “Young man, you try to be as constrained to PREACH the gospel, as Jesus Christ was to GIVE it to us to preach.” II Corinthians 5:14. Examine yourself often to see what is FIRST in your life.

Second, I would say, pray for help from God, special endowment of power from on high, being filled with the Holy Spirit. Read Ephesians 3:14-19 and make special application to your life in the ministry. Many a self-confident, talented young man fails simply because he thinks he can run the whole “show” on his own. Remember, without the power of God you are nothing.

Third, I would say, have a “HEART” and not merely a “HEAD” call to preach the gospel. The spiritual heart is

made up of your intellect, conscience, will and emotions—and none of these can be lacking if you would succeed for the Lord: brains are not enough! If you are in this preaching business with all your heart you will be intensely inclined to seek the salvation of souls around you, and it will be the GREAT work of your life. Do not undertake a work you have no heart to do! Luke 14:16-23. One of my young men companions in our freshman class let it be known that he was there because he thought it was a nice respectable white collar job, with not too much pressure on it. He soon quit, went out to make money, and ended up a suicide, hanging himself on one of his own butcher shop meat hooks. Get genuinely converted to Christ, and then be His representative with all your heart, if you would save others and yourself.

Fourth, I would advise, keep a close walk with God, constantly. Others may wander, but you must never go astray. I Timothy 1:18-20; 3:14-15; 4:11-16; 5:19-22; 6:11-16 and II Timothy 2:14-19. Paul was interested in this young man who was growing up as a preacher. He had Christian character, and he needed further instruction. Paul gave it.

Fifth, I would say, “STUDY your Bible!” Make it the book of books in your life. Make its teaching a veritable part of you. Study it on your knees, while you are praying and waiting for God to lead you in the right way. A preacher can never know it too well, and keep in mind it is the ONLY guide we have from earth to heaven. It is final! It is trustworthy, and it is to be your judge at last. II Timothy 2:15 is of inestimable value to the preacher who would succeed.

Sixth, I would say, “Keep yourself PURE in thoughts, feelings, speech, will and action.” You will be accused because the Devil is the accuser of the brethren. But make your life one that will make a liar out of the accusers, and those who bear false witness against you. It is said that Spurgeon received a card from a man who threatened to spread a story he had heard about Spurgeon if he did not receive so much money by a certain time. Spurgeon wrote back, “Write everything you know about me and publish it across the heavens. I have no fear.” Keep your life so straight that you will never fear what any accuser has to say about you. Truth will out! A young ministerial student working one summer in Anchorage, visited our meetings practically every night. He was very sour at first, but after about two weeks he invited me to his house for dinner, and while there he said, “Brother Word, I have heard all kinds of derogatory stories about you, but after meeting you and listening to you preach, watching your actions, I am convinced that THEY are liars.” Thank God, my life changed his mind about what the accusers had said. Keep yourself pure.

Seventh, I would say, cultivate a Bible attitude in your life toward the lost all around you. Remind yourself often, “They are guilty before God and lost forever if I can not get them to accept my Saviour.” This will help your zeal to be intensified and drive you to greater effort for the Lord who died for them. I am afraid many preachers do not believe in damnation in Hell, so they do not press for salvation very hard. Realizing their lost condition will make you

(Continued on Next Page)

(We have asked this 79-year old preaching brother to write this article. May we profit from it. — EDITOR)

**“ADVICE I WOULD GIVE YOUNG PREACHERS, IF ASKED”** (Continued from Last Page)

preach like the prophets, like John the Baptizer, like Peter and Paul.

Have a genuine love for the lost that will drive you to make any sacrifice necessary to get them to the Saviour. Remember Jesus gave up heaven and being on an equality with God to save the lost, and that included both you and me. Philippians 2:5-8.

Eighth, I would tell the young preacher, “Give your most earnest thought to ways and means of winning them.” Make your ministry revolve around this during your entire life. Do not let anything else turn you aside. Temptations will come to take you off of your main line, but be on the alert and say, “This one thing I do.” Do not start building a “play program,” or any compromise side issue. Remember, it is either REPENT or perish, and your voice may be the only one the sinner will ever hear, warning him to flee. Refuse to be diverted from your calling. Meet head on and in open combat any temptation that would cause you to let up in your drive for saving the lost. The devil will be there with clubs, lodges, PTA, ministerial associations, golf, politics and sports. Do not listen to the seductive sirens that entice.

Remember always, “He that winneth souls, is wise!” “Be diligent in season and out of season.” Watch out for “part time jobs” because they often become full time life wasters as far as your ministry is concerned. Those extra dollars will look mighty small at judgment. Keep your priorities in the proper perspective. Jesus said GO and if we love Him, we will, and go full speed ahead.

Ninth, I would say, “Nothing takes the place of experience.” Talk with all classes of people about their relationship with the Lord. It will help you to understand their problems, opinions, ideas, whims, errors and wants. It will show you their prejudices, ignorance and habits; and it will teach you to make your messages adaptable to the needs of the people the Lord has sent you to, to preach. If you KNOW people, you can help people. Jesus mingled with the multitude and He is our example—but remember, it must be always with an eye to their salvation.

Tenth, I would say, “See that your life is lived daily above reproach.” Be temperate in all things. Abstain from even the appearance of that which is evil. Never let any doubtful thing, or action, bring a smear upon your image in the community. Never think about tobacco, alcohol or drugs. Keep away from pool games, even at the YMCA. It leads to playing in other places. To the successful soul-winning preacher the theater and TV are both out of bounds. Be mindful of the fact that someone is watching you almost all of the time and if you cause stumbling, you will answer to God for it.

In the eleventh place, do not be of a frivolous nature, light-minded and for ever and always telling some funny joke and playing practical jokes on some unsuspecting person. Your standards should be at least as high as those demanded for an elder. I Timothy 3:2-3 and Titus 1:8. I do not mean that a preacher is to be an old “sour puss” either. We may be light-hearted, but not foolish. Oftentimes in jest things are said that should never have been said. Big jokers often lose control of their tongues and do damage that is irreparable. Ephesians 5:4.

Let the people always see that you have a solemn earnestness, both in the pulpit and out. Do not let your daily conversation nullify your pulpit preaching. I Peter 1:13; Titus 2:11-12 and Philippians 2:15.

And for number twelve, I would like this parting admonition. Always remember you are an ambassador for the King of Kings, Christ Jesus. You are on the King’s business!

That business is the salvation of every lost soul on this earth. Tend to HIS business and make it YOUR business. II Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20; Hosea 4:8 and Hebrews 12:15.

Do not be turned aside by either man or woman. Be especially careful in your relationship to the women in the congregation. Do not give any person any grounds for suspicion as you deal with the ladies of the church, or any where else, for that matter. You know your weak points and if it involves women, LEAVE THEM ALONE. Better to be charged with being austere than to be frivolous.

There are many other things that will come up in a young preacher’s life, but for now, let this get into your heart and make it live in your daily walk before God and man. □

**IS IT WRONG FOR A CHRISTIAN TO USE TOBACCO?**

(Continued from Page 6)

of God (or are thinking about becoming one), quit the stinking habit right away and that without delay. God will help you get the victory, and you will be pleased with yourself for what you have done. The medical and Scriptural evidence are too overwhelming to do otherwise. Let us do nothing to impair our promise of everlasting life. Let us be a spiritual church, one that the Lord Jesus can accept.

(AFTERTHOUGHT: Some have asked why God made the tobacco plant if we can’t use it. After He had made everything, He said that His creation was good. But we ask: Why did God make rattlesnakes? Why did God make poison ivy? Why did God make a lot of other things? We don’t see many people wanting to “use” these things. The truth is that everything seemingly has its place. We don’t know all that God had in mind when he made the tobacco plant, but the tobacco worm thrives very well on it...and it doesn’t shorten his life either. Also, we have seen the tobacco plant in a dried, crumbly and powdered form used as an insecticide).

—By JAMES E. GIBBONS

**“BELONGING”**

A MINISTER was approached by a man who expressed a desire to become a member of the congregation. The man said, however, that he was rather busy. “I don’t want to be called on for any service, such as committee work, teaching in the church school, or singing. I would like to be spared from anything that would take my time. Then, too, don’t expect me for worship too often.”

The minister thought for a moment and then replied, “I believe you are at the wrong church. The church you are looking for is three blocks down the street.”

The man followed the preacher’s directions and soon came to an abandoned, boarded up, closed church building. It was a dead church, gone out of business.

The kind of a church without active members is a dead church, and the kind of religion that doesn’t cost anything in time and money is a dead religion.—Selected □



# Social Drinking



SOME PEOPLE feel that becoming excessively drunk ("out of your mind") is the only thing to fear and consider when using alcoholic beverages. However, social moderate drinking also has social and moral implications that should make it the concern of every human being. Consider some reasons why this should be given more serious consideration:

(1) Moderate drinking is the introduction to heavy drinking. No one ever became a heavy drinker who did not first begin by drinking "a little." Present data is that about 1 in 10 of all who begin to drink becomes a problem drinker to himself and others. Such passages as Luke 6:31 and Romans 12:1-2 are violated.

(2) Light drinking provides the environment for extreme drunkenness. Were it not for the vast number of moderate drinkers, the liquor traffic would not exist. It is they who keep the problem active. "Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling!...but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh" (Matthew 18:7).

(3) Moderate drinkers are the major influence in recruiting new drinkers. Nobody is ever persuaded to drink by watching a drunkard. Advertisements always depict a beautiful girl or a muscle man, both the pictures of health, drinking socially. In fact, the liquor industry recently sponsored the Olympics on television. But it should be obvious that liquor was not responsible for the success achieved by the athletes. The terrific social pressures which are such a factor in present-day drinking can be blamed almost totally on the "moderate" drinkers.

(4) But is "moderate" drinking as harmless as its advocates say? Consider some statements from a *Reader's Digest* article (June, 1970), entitled: "Alcohol and Your Brain—Some News for Social Drinkers." "Now...strong evidence indicates that there is no guarantee of a 'safe' level of drinking, no absolute threshold below which alcohol fails to damage or destroy groups of cells in the brain and other vital organs." "Our bodies are incapable of creating new brain cells." "It is so soluble, in fact, that a part of every sip of alcohol you take is absorbed right through your tongue and gums before you have time to swallow it!" "But what of the occasional drinker? He too...might incur some loss of brain cells every time he drinks...the cells he loses are

irreplaceable. The only real difference between his loss of brain tissue and that of the heavy drinker is one of degree." "Dr. Knixely's work has also implied that liquor... may actually damage heart-muscle tissues by the same capillary-clogging action it evokes in the brain. Cardiologists, therefore, no longer prescribe drinking as a means of improving circulation."

(5) What does the Bible say? "Banqueting" (Greek, *potos*) is condemned in I Peter 3:3-4. *Berry's Interlinear* translates it simply "drinkings." In both the KJV and ASV it is translated "surfeiting" in Luke 21:34 and is distinguished from drunkenness. It is "drinking, especially a drinking party, carousal," *Arndt & Gingrich Lexicon*, page 702. "A drinking; a drinking together, drinking-bout, comotation," *Bagister's Lexicon*, page 325. A comotator is "a person who drinks with another; fellow tippler," *Webster's New World Dictionary*, page 300. For some reason, social drinkers are usually not interested in such word studies.

—By DICK BLACKFORD □

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## THE PARABLE OF THE RESCUE SQUAD

ONCE THERE WAS a town too small to afford a professional rescue squad. People who suffered accidents had to endure agonizing delays while units from other communities responded. Finally, some of the townsfolk decided to form a volunteer rescue squad. An old building was found for a meeting center. Workers were recruited and trained. Money was raised for equipment. Soon, the squad was saving many lives.

As the organization became more popular, its membership swelled. The old building became obsolete, and a lavish new meeting hall was erected. Fund raising became the most popular form of entertainment in town. Training meetings were turned into parties to encourage people to join the squad. Eventually, most of the squad members lost interest in saving lives. "It's a dangerous and dirty job," some said. "We might get hurt."

"Yes," others chimed in. "And why should we get involved with those people? We don't even know them." And so, the squad became a private social club.

Now some of the members didn't approve of this, so they formed a new rescue squad. They found a new meeting hall, raised money, recruited new members and bought the old rescue equipment from the first squad. Soon, lives were saved once more. But in time, the new squad members began to like the social functions better than the squad duty. Eventually they too lost interest in saving lives.

Compare this parable with our modern churches. Why do churches lose their zeal for evangelism? For helping people in need? —SELECTED □

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## A CONTRIBUTION OR A SACRIFICE?

THE "STORY" goes that a chicken and a pig were walking down a country road together, when they saw a sign advertising a social. Ham and eggs were to be a feature at the affair. A discussion followed as to what they could do to help. "I know," said the chicken, "I'll donate a dozen eggs, and you can donate a ham." "E-e-ek!" said the pig. "For you that's just a contribution, but for me it's a complete sacrifice!"

Christians are to be LIVING sacrifices for Jesus (Romans 12:1, 2). But a lot of people would rather donate a few minutes of their time or a few dollars than to be crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20).

Are you totally committed to Christ, or did you just let out a grunt or an "E-e-ek"? —Harold Buckles □

## IF JESUS CAME TO YOUR HOUSE

*If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two—  
If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you'd do.  
Oh, I know you'd give your nicest room to such an honored  
Guest,  
And all the food you'd serve to Him would be the very best,  
And you would keep assuring Him you're glad to have Him  
there—  
That serving Him in your home is joy beyond compare.  
But, when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the  
door  
With arms outstretched in welcome to your heav'nly Visitor?  
Or would you have to change your clothes before you let  
Him in?  
Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they'd  
been?  
Would you turn off the TV set and hope he hadn't heard,  
And wish you hadn't uttered that last, loud hasty word?  
Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymnbooks  
out?  
Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?  
And I wonder—if the Saviour spent a day or two with you,  
Would you go right on doing the things you always do?  
Would you keep right on saying the things you always say?  
Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?  
Would your family conversation keep up its usual pace,  
And would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace?  
Would you sing the songs you always sing and read the  
books you read,  
And let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit  
feed?  
Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you'd planned  
to go,  
Or would you maybe change your plans for just a day or so?  
Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends?  
Or would you hope they'd stay away until His visit ends?  
Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on,  
Or would you sigh in great relief when He at last was gone?  
It might be interesting to know the things that you would do  
If Jesus really came to spend some time with you.*

—COPIED/ADAPTED

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## NO MORE FALSEHOODS

A YOUNG MOTHER was shocked to learn her little boy had told a falsehood. Taking the boy on her knee, she vividly explained what happened to little boys who told falsehoods. "A big mean demon with fiery red eyes and two sharp horns grabs little boys who tell falsehoods and carries them off at night. They have to work in a dark canyon for 50 years. Now, you won't tell another falsehood, will you?"

"No ma'am," came the prompt reply, "You can tell them much better than I can!" —Selected □

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## TEN DIFFERENT PREACHERS

IF TEN DIFFERENT PREACHERS can preach ten different doctrines in ten different church buildings in a given town and please the Lord, why can't ONE preacher preach ten different doctrines in ONE building and please the Lord? If it is right for ten men to preach ten different doctrines, then it is right for one man to preach ten different doctrines. You know, they say, that they all come from the same book! How long would one preacher last who would undertake to

preach ten different doctrines? People just don't use the same reasoning in religion they use in other things.

When we are sick (something that at the most can take our lives) we want the truth. Suppose we were sick and consulted ten different doctors who graduated from the same school of medicine and each one told us something different and contradictory to the other. Would we overlook the differences and contradictions just because they all graduated from the same school? Certainly not! Our lives are at stake and we want to know the truth. Why, then, are we so careless with the eternal destiny of our souls?—Selected □

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## EVERY CONGREGATION

Every congregation of Christians is really an evangelical society, divinely ordained and authorized to send out missionaries of the Cross whenever and wherever she may have the means and the opportunity to do so.—Robert Milligan

It is the duty of the preacher not only to comfort the distressed, but to distress the comfortable.—Copied.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## PUBLISHING NEWS



● **THE MEANING OF SUFFERING IN THE LIFE OF A CHRISTIAN** is now back in print. This booklet dealing with just exactly what it says is ideal to leave with the sick and in hospitals (whether the people are Christians or not). The plan of salvation is on the last page. People are brought to think more about God during suffering and this booklet is appropriate to give them. Some have been asking about this booklet, and it is now in print again at 10¢ a copy. Order a supply today.

● **IS IT WRONG FOR A CHRISTIAN TO USE TOBACCO?** This article which appears in this issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF is being prepared in tract form and will be available shortly.

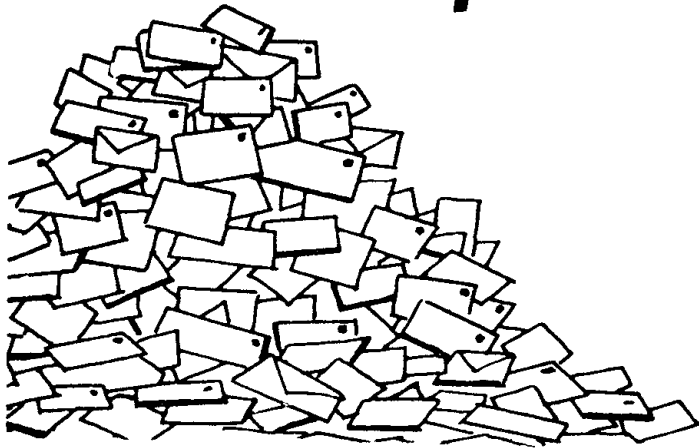
● **ALMOST ALL GONE!** The 1969-70 bound volume of THE SWORD AND STAFF is about sold out. If you don't have this one, you better hurry with your order or they will all be gone (price: \$3.95).

● **GOING GREAT!** The 1977-78/79 edition of the bound volumes is selling well (\$4.25). Many are seeing the value of having this vital material in more of a permanent form (especially preachers, elders, and teachers).

● **FAILURE** with some of our printing equipment (and the need of getting it repaired) made us a little later than normal this time in getting the paper ready for the mail.

# READERS'

## ... Response



### PENNSYLVANIA:

■ "In an effort to save you time and money, also reduce our incoming mail, please remove our name from your mailing list promptly."

### GEORGIA:

■ "We have really appreciated every single issue. We feel they are sound, Biblically based and provide us with many thought provoking articles. We search our Scriptures for answers and find you do an amazing job of staying close to them. We really enjoy them. So send them on!"

### KENTUCKY:

■ "I would like to renew my subscription of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. It is one of the best Christian papers around. Keep up the work."

■ "As an adult Sunday School teacher, I have found *THE SWORD AND STAFF* most informative. You folks have my vote of confidence."

### OHIO:

■ "Enclosed is a check...to cover the costs of renewing *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. We have enjoyed your paper immensely. It helps us to learn and grow in our daily Christian lives. May God richly bless you in all that you do."

### ARKANSAS:

■ "Enclosed is a check to keep *THE SWORD AND STAFF* coming my way and hopefully will help to defer some of the great time, expense and effort that goes into your publication. I find it enlightening, doctrinally sound and filled with some real meat of the Scriptures as well as the milk."

### INDIANA:

■ "I need *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. It is a useful tool in my ministry."

■ "I read your sample copy and was well pleased—excited. I'm anxious to read more—especially the second article written by Archie Word."

■ "Thanks, brother, for remaining 'steadfast and sure'; Thank for not sacrificing the Truth for support; Thanks for keeping your paper so filled with Christ that it offends the erring; Thanks for making me eager to 'search the Scriptures'; Thanks for being a born again, blood bought Christian."

### TEXAS:

■ "I enjoy your *SWORD AND STAFF* very much. Agree so far with what I have read. The article by L.A. Williamson, 'Will Camality Develop Christian Growth,' was very timely. One church in this town is spending \$500,000.00 for a recreation center. They send out letters, far and near, begging for money."

■ "Brother Word's article was very timely. We need to combat the idea that 'numbers' are our main concern. We should want to win everyone as it is God's desire that 'all' should come to repentance. However, our job isn't to gain an increase. Paul said, 'I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gives the increase.' Paul went on to say that who the planters and waterers were mattered little, but God giving the increase was all important. We also tend to forget that seeing an increase is resultant from the kind of ground the seed is planted in. Nothing ever grew from the wayside. So often the brethren are told that if they don't have a lot of conversions, they are failures. How sad this is. If they preached the Word they were a success. Noah preached at least 100 years and the ark still had only seven others. The ground was bad. Of the adults Moses brought out of Egypt, only two entered the promised land. The ground was bad. We need to remember our task—plant and water—and let God do His task."

### NEBRASKA:

■ "We really enjoy your work that you put into *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. It is a good paper to read. May the Lord bless you for your work. It is good to read articles about the truth of the Bible. Bible verses are a 'must' so people can look up for themselves what the Bible says. I enjoyed the article by Archie Word on 'church leaders.'"

"We do not have a TV and we have a much better family unity. Also the children read a lot, so they become better students in school."

"Keep up the good work."

### COLORADO:

■ "I have enjoyed *THE SWORD AND STAFF* so much that I would like to subscribe again...I read every word and enjoy it so much that I read it over and over. Would be wonderful to get the paper of God's Word each month. The teaching is so uplifting."

### CALIFORNIA:

■ "I thought brother Word's message on 'God's Plan for Church Growth' was a bell ringer."

■ "Please don't send *THE SWORD AND STAFF* any longer. When you refuse to say that my LORD is not able to keep eternally, then you are denying his deity, and according to Scripture I'm to no longer have fellowship with you."

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Here is an example of the extreme and reactionary doctrine of Calvinism, this particular facet being called, "once in grace always in grace." All of us know that the LORD will do his part to keep, but we are still free-moral agents. To teach that it is impossible to fall is to invalidate the Scriptures (Galatians 5:4; etc.) and human experience, which teach us otherwise. To say that we are denying the deity of Christ because we do not blindly accept Calvinism is to be recklessly presumptuous).

### PHILIPPINES:

■ "I received the last issue of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* (1979)...and many appreciated your 'SALVATION' in outline form..."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## "PRAY WITHOUT CEASING"



# SOLID

## BIBLE-RELATED MATERIAL:

BELOW IS a listing of booklets, tracts, and materials published by and currently available from THE SWORD and STAFF. If something is not listed, that means it is now out of print. This literature has been 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 SWORD AND STAFF. You have the timeless material of back issues in more of a permanent form this way. More and more people are seeing the value of doing this.

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- ☐ Once in Grace, Always in Grace?—5¢ each; 100 for \$4.
- ☐ Every Sunday? (Shows the Scripturalness of having the Lord's Supper every Lord's day)—3¢ each.
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(NOTE: Since postage is so high, any help along that line will be appreciated).



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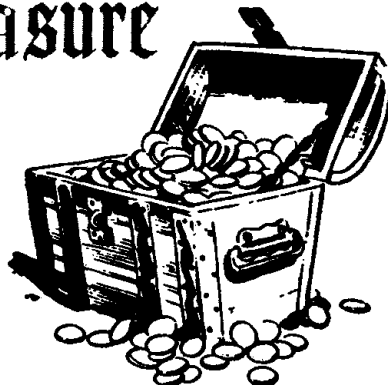
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DATE OF SUBSCRIPTION: No renewal notices are sent, but you will notice with your address there a month and year. This signifies the month and year you originally subscribed (or when you were re-entered). Use this date each year as a clue and cue to know when to renew your subscription.

THANK YOU—The Editor.

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