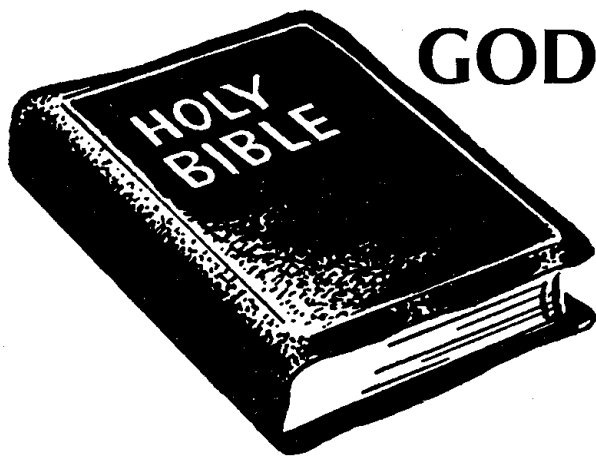


The Sword AND Staff

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

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



GOD'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE CHURCH

By JAMES E. GIBBONS — 1535 Fairfield Drive
Mount Airy, North Carolina 27030

SOME SAY that God has no set organization for the church. They say it just happened, coming about in an evolutionary way. The apostles preached, and men were selected to serve tables when the need arose. We are told that the organization of the church was simply copied from the synagogue as the need arose. They had a church council to consider problems when the need arose. Later on the strong organization of the Catholic church developed as the need arose for such an organization. Thus, we are told, whatever organization that is "needed" to get the job done is okay—there is no set plan.

We do not believe these statements. Yes, there is a sense in which the Holy Spirit led the early church into all truth step by step (John 16:13; I Corinthians 13:9, 10; and this would include the organization of the church, which also perhaps was prefigured in a sense in the set-up of the synagogue), but there is also such a thing as falling away from the truth after they had been led and established in it. The situation is not a matter of evolution, but of revelation. Once God's plan has been unfolded, that is the way He wants it, and that is the way we must carry it out if we are to be found faithful to Him.

It is unreasonable to think that God has no plan for the organization of the church and that it just happened. God is a God of order and precision. This can be seen by looking at the heavenly bodies and the exact movement of the earth and planets; by taking note of the times and

seasons. The organization of the human body is an amazing thing with its various interrelated and synchronized systems. Even the structure of a single living cell is a wonder. God is a God of order. Paul declared in I Corinthians 14:33 that "God is not the author of confusion," then he stated in verse 40, "Let all things be done decently and in order." It is unreasonable to think that God would plan the church from eternity and have no arrangement in the plan for its corporate function. It is unreasonable to think that Christ would give the great commission with no plan for its execution. This is not the way God works. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18).

The Scriptures claim for themselves that they will make us completely furnished unto all good works, and at the same time they tell us about God's organization for the church. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Timothy 3:16, 17). We are told that God "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Peter 1:3). Then amidst all the wonderful teachings of the Scriptures we also find teachings on the organization and function of the church. Ephesians 4:11 tells us that Christ "GAVE" these various offices of responsibility and leadership to the church. If he gave them they are divine in origin, and God has spoken on this subject. Acts 20:28 tells us that the Holy Spirit had "MADE" these men elders in the local church. That being the case, this office and the implied organization did not originate with man, but God. The inspired pen of Paul tells us more things about this organization in Philippians 1:1, and in other places we find the exact qualifications for officers in the church (I Timothy 3; Titus 1). All of this is of God. God has spoken.

I. THE NATURE OF GOD'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE CHURCH

The Church is a Kingdom

Jesus Christ is the seed of David who would reign upon

(Continued on Page 3)

THE SWORD AND STAFF

Post Office Box 147
Mount Airy, N. C. 27030 U. S. A.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

- Introductory—\$1.50 for the first year; • Regular—\$2.00 for renewals.

NOTE: The subscription is regarded as the minimum offering needed to help with the expense of printing and mailing this paper; the "payments" for booklets, tracts, and other material is regarded as offerings. Subsidizing gifts are also needed above this. Make your check out to **CHURCH IN MOUNT AIRY.**

This paper is supposed to be published bi-monthly, but the frequency is determined by financial backing.

James E. Gibbons is editor.

RENEW your subscription when it is due—no notice will be sent.

NOTE: This paper is sponsored by church of Christ, meeting now on U.S. 601 across from Northwestern Bank, Mt. Airy, N. C.

Proverbially SPEAKING...

IF WE KEEP God's Word, God will keep us.

"Knowledge fills a large brain; it merely inflates a small one."

Orthodoxy is not orthodox if it omits and excludes love and compassion.

"He who minds his own business will have a good one."

To the good and honest man much enjoyment is to be found in employment.

"The man who falls down gets up a lot quicker than the man who lies down."

When you have experienced & know God's grace, then grace will govern your relationships to others.

"Wise men are not always silent, but they sure know when to be."

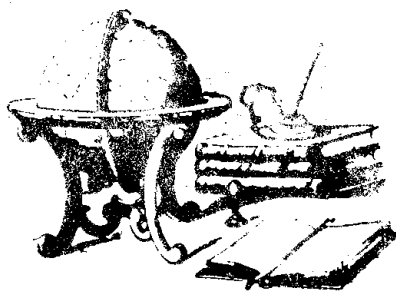
The most you can say for a lot of modern music is that it is noise pollution (as well as being moral pollution).

"Occasions do not make a man either strong or weak, but they show what he is."

Being a "part time" Christian will not even take you part of the way to heaven.

"If your foot slips, you may recover your balance; but if your tongue slips, you cannot recall your words."

The more we succeed at what we are doing the more we fail if we are doing the wrong thing (or the thing wrong).



EDITORIAL

COMMENTS...

FINALIZED PLANS FOR BIBLE LANDS TOUR

IN RECENT ISSUES of this publication we have mentioned tentative plans for another 11-day Bible lands tour scheduled for June, 1983 (with four extra days in Europe as an option). Working with brother Donald Hunt, the editor of this paper is helping get interested people together for the tour. In getting such a tour lined up there are always changes which must be made. But following are the finalized dates and plans for the tour (which should be a good one).

The Bible lands tour is scheduled for June 7-17, 1983. It will take in the very heartland of Bible lands—in particular Israel and Jordan (including Petra and Jerash). Flying K.L.M. (Royal Dutch Airlines) from New York to Amsterdam, we will change planes for Vienna (Austria) where we will spend the night and be able to engage in some sightseeing before our flight on to Tel Aviv, Israel. We plan to tour Israel quite extensively, the furthestmost point in the north being Caesarea Philippi and in the south, Hebron. Such places as Caesarea (on the Mediterranean), Capernaum (on the Sea of Galilee), Jericho (the city of palm trees), Masada (above the Dead Sea), Jerusalem (two days here), Bethlehem stand out. (For those who have been before and want something additional for an extra fee they can fly to Mt. Sinai where Moses got the Law). The brochure tells all the places which are scheduled to be visited. We are happy to have been promised our Israeli guide, Zvi, whom we have had before. We got our "money's worth" with him (even visiting places not scheduled). East of the Jordan River we will be visiting the area in the Bible known as Moab and Edom. We will be staying in Amman, and visiting such places as Jerash (extensive excavations are here), Mt. Nebo, and Petra (visiting Petra, the rose-tinted city carved out of the rocks in the desert, is really some experience). From Amman we will board our plane to fly to Amsterdam (and back to the U.S.) or to Zurich (depending on whether we are taking the option of four extra days in Europe at extra expense or not).

The four extra days in Europe include Switzerland and Germany. The brochure tells the exciting details.

There is nothing like taking a tour of Bible lands to give greater depth and dimension to your Bible study. It is a religious and an educational experience that will be meaningful to you the rest of your life. All who have gone on these tours have really been pleased that they went.

We are happy to say that this tour is not as expensive as the last one. Write today for detailed information, including expense. Write: James E. Gibbons, Tour Host; Post Office Box 147; Mt. Airy, N. C. 27030. □

"OUR GREAT AND GLORIOUS GOD" BOOKLET NOW READY

THE WELL RECEIVED long article by the above name is now in booklet form for handy use; a booklet to encourage and build faith in God. From us at 25¢ a copy.

GOD'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE CHURCH



(Continued from Page 1)

the throne of David (and the church is the kingdom). God said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations" (Ps. 89:3,4). With announcement of the coming birth of Jesus, the angel said, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32,33). John the Baptist came preaching, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2). Jesus took up the same message (Matthew 4:17). Upon Peter's great confession that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus made a statement: "...Upon this rock (this truth) I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven..." (Matthew 16:18,19). Here the word "church" and the expression "kingdom of heaven" are used interchangeably. They are the same. Jesus said in Mark 9:1, "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." On the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 this was realized. Referring to a prophecy of David, Peter said on that day that God "would raise up Christ to sit on his (David's) throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ" (Acts 2:30,31). Then he tells them that Jesus had ascended to heaven where he was seated with authority on the right hand of God. This great declaration follows: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (2:36). Yes, Jesus had been raised to sit on the throne of David with his resurrection and ascension to heaven and is now reigning over his kingdom, the church, with all power and authority (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20-23). Men are now in the kingdom (Colossians 1:13; John 3:5; Matthew 18:3). All Christians are the spiritual heirs and seed of Abraham (Romans 2:28,29; 9:6-8; Galatians 3:7,8; 6:16). The church is the kingdom.

We need to keep all of this in mind, or we are for ever doomed in understanding the nature of the organization and function of the church. That authority for the organization, and the authority exercised by those who govern in the organization of the church, is not derived from the governed (the people) but from the KING—the church is

a KINGDOM (not a democracy). The authority comes from above, not below. Authority is delegated by the ONE who has all authority (Matthew 28:18; Mark 13:34). However, we need to always remember exercising authority in the kingdom of Christ is very different from the world (Matthew 20:25,26). Since the authority is delegated, and since the kingdom is spiritual, the authority is not so much in the office as in the Word as it is lived and as it is used in exercising the office (Christ has all authority, and He governs His church by His Word). Also, the church is a kingdom of kings and priests unto God—the priesthood of believers must fit into the scheme and system of things (Revelation 1:6; I Peter 2:5,9).

The Principle of Simplicity

Keep in mind the teachings of Christ are characterized by simplicity (no flesh is to glory in His presence)—so we can expect the same in connection with the organization of the church. II Corinthians 11:3 speaks of "the simplicity that is in Christ." Paul wrote in I Corinthians 1:27-31, "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence... That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Whether it be the old rugged cross, his humble followers, or the organization of the church, all are governed by the same principles. So when we come to the organization of the church, it is found to be very simple (in fact, we will find that the local church is all there is to it). We do not find a vast organization where men may vaunt themselves and exercise human authority (Matthew 20:25,26).

The church is a spiritual kingdom, a simple but powerful force in the hearts and lives of men and women. We are a kingdom of "kings and priests" unto God. People who are strong people under the impact of the personal rule and government of KING JESUS need little human government. However, it seems that when the personal government of Christ is weak or not felt at all in religious circles, men seek a strong ecclesiastical organization to hold the people together and to accomplish their ends.

The Organization of the Church is Locally Based and Autonomous

Corporately speaking, the church has ITS BEING locally. When the New Testament makes reference to Christ's followers in an organized sense in the whole world, or in any given region, it is never THE CHURCH, but CHURCHES. There is no such thing as a universal church or a national church. There is no such thing as church organization in any sense of the word on a state, regional, or district basis (just the local, autonomous church is all that we find in the inspired Scriptures). Yes, Jesus said, "I will build my church," but he is speaking of the whole church in a general sense and did not have reference to a collective unit or organization. When we read the New Testament Scriptures about Christ's followers in an area, it was never THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, but CHURCHES OF CHRIST (Romans 16:16). It was never THE CHURCH OF MACEDONIA, but THE CHURCHES OF MACEDONIA (II Co-

(Continued on Next Page)

GOD'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE CHURCH

(Continued from Last Page)

Corinthians 8:1). It was never THE CHURCH OF ASIA, but THE CHURCHES OF ASIA (THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA) (I Corinthians 16:19; Revelation 1:4). It was never the CHURCH OF GALATIA, but THE CHURCHES OF GALATIA (Galatians 1:2). It was never the CHURCH OF JUDAEA, but THE CHURCHES OF JUDAEA (Galatians 1:22). And so we could go on!

Beloved, this is not without significance—in fact, it is very significant! This means the followers of Christ in the world or any given area were not welded together by an ecclesiastical organization on a universal scale, nor on the basis of some political region—but that each church was locally based, independent, and autonomous in its church life and government. Each was a complete entity within itself—the only entity. Therefore, we read the following: “The church which was in Jerusalem” (Acts 11:22); “The church of God which is at Corinth” (I Corinthians 1:2); “The church of the Thessalonians” (I Thessalonians 1:1); etc.

Colossians 4:16 and Philippians 4:15 are also significant references. Philippians 4:15 is especially significant. The latter part of this latter reference reads: “NO CHURCH communicated with me concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.” By CHURCH he means the local church, for he is saying this in contrast with the local Philippian church, and this implies that Paul was not expecting CHURCHES (as a group) to communicate as an organized singular unit to support him—for the extent of the government and organization of the church was only local. (Yes, this implies that he was not expecting help from an organized unit such as a district or national church, nor from local churches working through a crystalized district or other organization beyond their local boundaries: NO CHURCH communicated).

Thus, the only way we can speak of Christ's followers in the world in an organizational sense (when speaking of more than one congregation) is to speak of them as “CHURCHES OF CHRIST.” To think in terms of “THE CHURCH OF CHRIST” is to move in the direction of denominationalism.

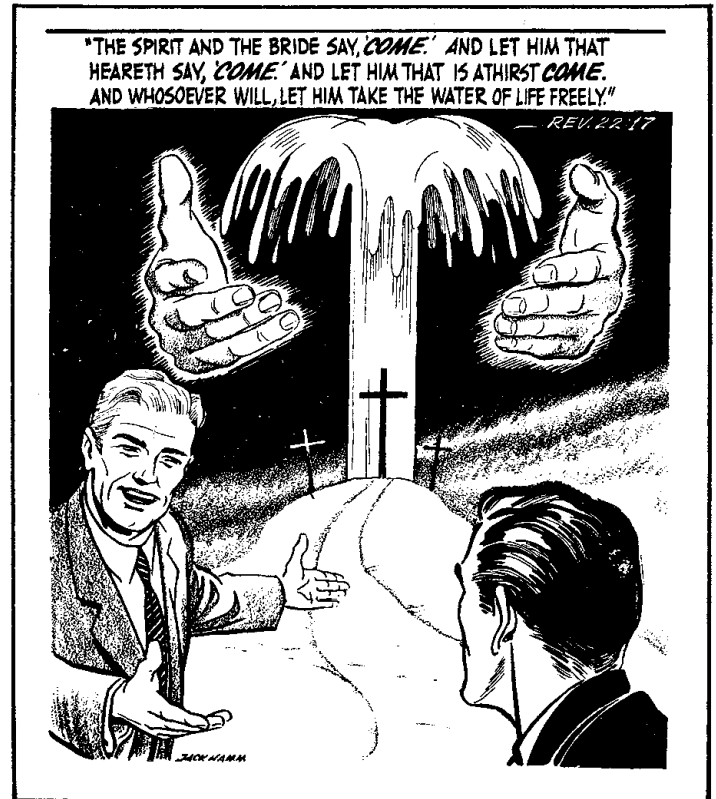
The Local, Autonomous Organization of the Church

A composite picture of the organization of the local church is seen in Philippians 1:1. Paul and Timothy, who had helped get the church started there, are writing a letter to this local church: “to ALL THE SAINTS in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the BISHOPS and DEACONS.” Paul was a preacher who had been sent out by the local church in Antioch of Syria (Acts 13). A local church in central Asia Minor had likewise sent Timothy out to be a preacher (evangelist) of the gospel with Paul (I Timothy 4:14; II Timothy 4:5). So these two preachers, assisted by Silas and Luke, had helped get the church going in Philippi. The church had now reached the point of maturity where it had leaders in an organizational sense, and they are identified as bishops and deacons.

Ephesians 4:11 is another revealing verse. “And he (CHRIST) gave some, APOSTLES; and some, PROPHETS; and some, EVANGELISTS: and some, PASTORS AND TEACHERS.” Of course, the first two mentioned, apostles and prophets, were extraordinary offices, have served their purposes, and passed away (Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; I

Corinthians 13:8; etc.). They are not filled by living men on earth today. However, inspired writings of these men guide the churches today. The other offices are permanent and enduring in nature.

He gave some, EVANGELISTS (Messengers of the local church sent out into the world to carry out the good news of the great commission: as Paul (who also was an apostle) and Timothy—Acts 13; Acts 16:1-3; I Corinthians 16:10; Ephesians 4:7-11; I Timothy 4:14; 1:18—II Timothy 4:5). As ambassadors of Christ, and the local churches, these men spearheaded the work of Christ in new areas. Souls were won, churches were started, and brought to a point of maturity where they could carry on with their own leadership. This work was repeated time and time again. Evangelists might even work for a while with established churches, but their work was not to be confused with the next office.

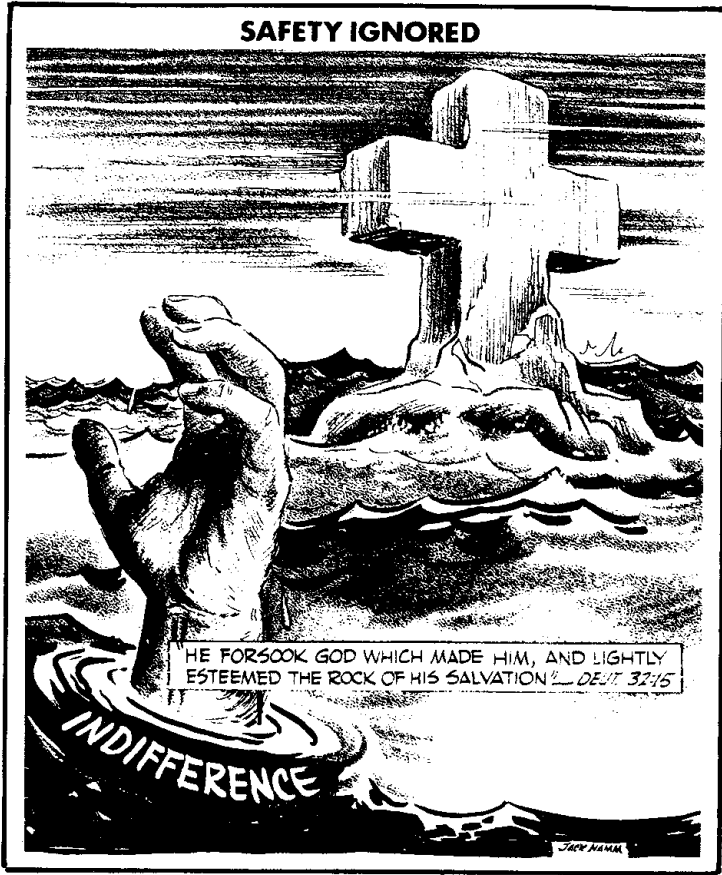


He gave some, PASTORS AND TEACHERS (these are two functions of the “some,” having reference to the one office). These men are likewise called ELDERS (Acts 14:23), BISHOPS (Titus 1:5-9), and PASTORS (I Peter 5:1-4)—all talking about the same office, but different aspects of its work. The extent of their governing is the local church (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:1-4). They are over all phases of the work of the church, both “spiritual” and “material” (Acts 20:28; Acts 11:29,30). The church is to submit to their mature leadership (Hebrews 13:17).

DEACONS were also mentioned in Philippians 1:1, and their qualifications (along with the elder) are given in I Timothy 3. They are not “rulers,” but servants (as their name suggests) to help the church and assist the elders as needed.

According to Ephesians 4:11,12,16, the leaders are to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. Check various translations on this. This involves the priesthood of be

(Continued on Page 6)



LOST...REAL CHRISTIANITY

DAILY in our great newspapers are tear-filled messages of something valuable...LOST. The world today has lost many precious things...but the greatest is "Christianity." Christianity has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found demanding more than the ordinary and not tried!

But you say, Christianity is all around us! This is not Christianity; it is too mild and easy. It is neither feared nor admired, hated nor loved. The greatest enemy of Christianity is "sub-Christianity." Mediocrity survives. The world rejects this weak, tepid Christianity. Being play-actors, the world "boos" our performance.

Brethren, Christianity is not the average. The average is not Christianity. Christ did not come to make men average; this is their trouble. Christianity does not need defense; it needs performance. We need men who will preach like Paul, work like Luke, do good like Dorcas, give like Barnabas, and die like Stephen. If Christianity is worth anything, it is worth everything. It is all or nothing, first or last.

Christianity is real; Christianity works! Men have heard, read and talked about Christianity for 2,000 years. It is time men saw it.

Take Christianity seriously. Study, pray and live like Christ. This is the best thing you can do for yourself, your country, your neighbor and your God.—Author Unknown □

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

WHAT IS A SCYTHIAN?

Barbarian, Scythian, slave—all are united with us in Christ Jesus (Colossians 3:11). Barbarians I know, and slaves I know, but what is a *Scythian*? (SITH ee un) If our

brothers in Christ include some *Scythians*, maybe we should learn more about this branch of the heavenly family tree.

Several centuries before Christ, the *Scythians* swept westward out of southern Russia. They plundered and killed, driving out even the barbaric Cimmerians. Herodotus tells us that the *Scythian* soldier would drink the blood of the first man he killed in battle. He would cut off the heads of all those he killed and present them to his king. (If he brought no heads, he forfeited his share of the plunder.) Afterwards the *Scythian* would remove the scalp from each skull, scrape the scalp clean, and soften it for use as a napkin-cloth. They liked to adorn themselves and their horses with the scalps and human hides of their enemies. The skulls of their most hated enemies were turned over, sawed off, and used as drinking cups. A great warrior among the *Scythians* could really host a fine banquet, boast of his exploits over each guest's goblet! It is little wonder that Josephus later wrote of them, "They delight in murdering people and differ very little from wild beasts."

So how did the early church handle the *Scythian* problem? Did they dare to be known as friends of the lowest of all barbarians? An early statement from Justin Martyr gives us the answer: "Even if someone is a *Scythian*...if he has knowledge of God and Christ...and keeps the eternal ordinances...he is God's friend."

Well, *Scythians*, welcome to the family!—By Kenny Boles

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

THE TROUBLE LIES DEEPER

A GOOD STORY is told of old Thomas K. Beecher, who could not bear deceit in any form. Finding that a clock in the church was habitually too fast or too slow, he hung a placard on the wall above it which read: "Don't blame the hands—the trouble lies deeper."

That is where the trouble lies with us when our hands do wrong, or our feet, or our lips, or even our thoughts. The trouble lies so deep that only God's power can deal with it. Sin.

"Repent ye, and be immersed every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38). —Selected □

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I have no yesterdays;
Time took them all away.
Tomorrow may not be,
But I have today (God willin').

—Submitted by RUTH CROISANT

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

PRAYER

PRAYER is the key of the morning and the bolt of the night. A coffee break may be good, but a prayer break is better. What cannot be told to human ears can be whispered to the sympathetic ear of our Heavenly Father. A short prayer will reach the throne if you don't live too far away from it. If prayer doesn't drive sin out of your heart, sin will drive prayer out. Prayer doesn't need proof—it needs practice. Life gets scorched and lumpy when we forget to stir it up with prayer. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world ever dreamed of." —Selected □

GOD'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE CHURCH

(Continued from Page 4)

lievers (I Peter 2:5, 9). In other words, Christ wants every Christian to get to work.

Because of the priesthood of believers the church can function as a church before it has ordained officers (Acts 14:23).

II. THE FAILURE OF MEN TO FOLLOW GOD'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE CHURCH

Tremendous Success and Failure

With this God-given organization the early church saw tremendous success. Our study of God's Word has made us conclude that the church's functions are in the areas of worship, evangelism, edification, and benevolence. It's main thrust was in evangelism and edification. The great commission said to "preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Read Colossians 1:23 and Romans 10:18 and see if we are matching their success and accomplishments today. They successfully accomplished all of these things through the simple, local, autonomous church. This was done through the local church with its elders and deacons. This was accomplished as evangelists were sent out from the local church. This was accomplished by means of the priesthood of all believers. They uprooted the pagan Roman Empire and in its place planted the seed of heaven. They turned the tide of corrupt humanity and world history.

They did this without the "HELP" of any man-made organization. All they had was the church as it came from God (Ephesians 3:10; I Timothy 3:15). They had no man-made missionary societies or evangelizing organizations—*just the church!* They had no Sunday School organizations or Bible Colleges—*just the church!* They had not a single one of the numerous religious organizations that keep appearing on the scene today—*just the church!*

Maybe *that* is our problem. We are told that such organizations are the servants of the church. There is something terribly wrong here. In the first century of Christianity *the church was the servant* and look what they got done! If we won't do what the Lord wants us personally to do, and try to put it off on a servant, we have missed the whole point. Therein lies the difference between the New Testament church and that which passes itself off as such today!

But men failed. They didn't continue to follow God's organization. If the early church was such a success with God's plan of church organization the only thing that could bring about a change would be apostasy, and that's exactly what happened. Paul warned the Ephesian elders that even of their own number men would arise speaking perverse things (Acts 20:28-31). Men like Diotrophes, who loved to have the pre-eminence, seized control of the church (III John 9,10). With a gradual apostasy II Thesalonians 2:1-8 was finally fulfilled with the pope at the head of the apostate organization, an organization modeled very much after the old Roman Empire. Now they had a different doctrine and a different organization for the church.

Failure to Follow God's Organization Today

We are made to ask why men fail to follow God's organization for the church today.

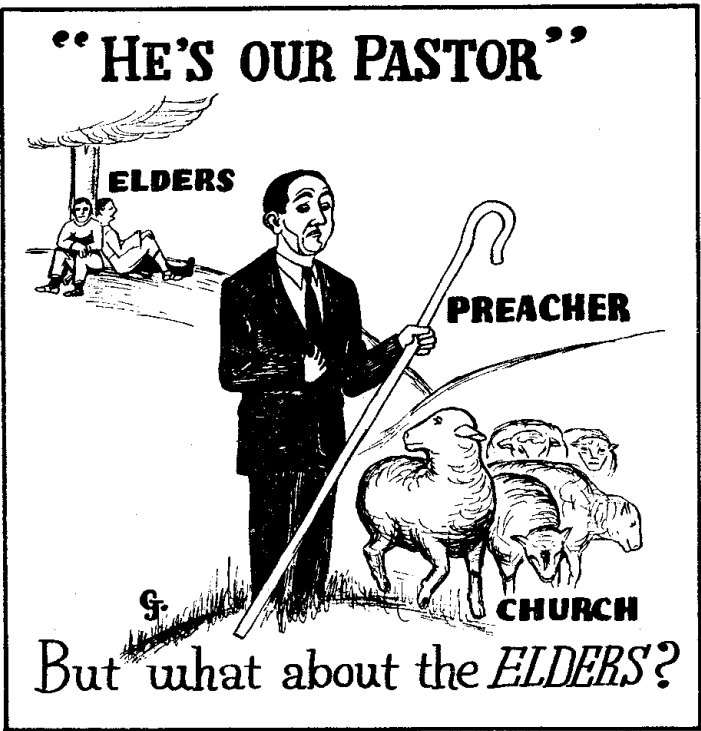
Modified versions of the Catholic system have been carried over into denominational churches by unthinking people. The clergy-laity concept still prevails among people who

their "RIGHT REVERENDS." People think that the kind of organization doesn't matter—just whatever we want (they don't respect or listen to the Bible). The original change in the organization of the church came about in connection with apostasy in areas of doctrine and this falling away continues. We can't expect people to want to have the organization right when they aren't concerned enough to get their doctrine right.

We take a look in so-called Restoration circles. The so-called RESTORATION MOVEMENT of the last century saw an effort of men to forsake man-made religious organizations for the church. Alexander Campbell spoke out against man-made religious organizations and societies to start with. But he later changed his position, and by the time of his death the foundation had been fully laid for the organizational structure of the Disciples denomination. A lot of people came out of denominationalism but it seems that denominationalism had not come out of a lot of them. Finding it rather hard to put God's organization into practice, they felt more secure having a denominational status to fall back onto. Erroneous practices still persist today in the full-fledged DISCIPLES DENOMINATION and in their reactionary counterpart, the INDEPENDENT CHRISTIAN CHURCHES (which aren't so reactionary anymore)—and it also can be seen among NON-INSTRUMENT CHURCHES OF CHRIST (and we are not "anti").

**Why Men Forsake God's Organization
(Who Have Once Followed It)**

Generally speaking, why would men forsake God's organization who have once known it? Here are some possibilities.



God's organization requires complete conversion, fully qualified leaders, and the priesthood of believers to work successfully. In these times of much worldly influence upon the church it is easier to forsake than it is to put God's organization into practice. Some preachers begin to com-

(Continued on Page 10)

A Timely Reprint from the Past...

(Which needs to be written and heard again today—Men forget so soon)

"A DISTORTED VOCABULARY"

By Donald G. Hunt

THE NEW TESTAMENT uses definite vocabulary of divinely selected terms when speaking of the various offices and works of the church. Where this vocabulary is not understood and properly used you can expect as much confusion to reign and as much perversion of the Lord's teaching to exist as when the sectarians talk about the church being one thing and the kingdom being something altogether different.

It is alarming to see so much ignorance and indefiniteness, even among preachers, on this subject. Therefore, it is our intention...to take a look at some of the terms employed in modern-day vocabulary. Let us consider the following terms: elders, deacons, pastors, ministers, evangelists, and missionaries.

What would the average church-goer give on a questionnaire concerning the above six terms? He would say that elders and deacons are local men in the congregation who serve the Lord's supper, take the offering, and meet in business meetings. If we would ask him what the difference is between the elders and deacons, we would be told that the elders returned thanks for the emblems and sat at the table while the deacons passed the emblems. We might also be told that the elders were usually more spiritual than the deacons and had probably been in the church longer. If asked, "What about the business meetings?" we would be told that there was no difference between the elders and the deacons in a business meeting, both meeting together on the same plane with equal "say-so."

As the questionnaire continued, he would say that "pastors" and "ministers" are the same class of men. Each pastor or minister has a church which is his responsibility to build up and keep going. They are not local men, but serve as long as the people think they are doing a good work or until they get a better offer somewhere else. He would tell you that the condition of the local church and its attendance depend largely upon the pastor or minister—how well he can preach and how well he is liked.

An evangelist, he would enter on his questionnaire, is a man who travels among the churches conducting revival meetings or evangelistic meetings of one, two, or three weeks' length. He may tell you, too, that sometimes local ministers exchange revival meetings with each other in which case the man conducting the meeting is referred to as the evangelist. Some who travel with evangelists in revival meetings to lead the song services and bring special numbers, he adds, are song evangelists.

A missionary is a person going to a foreign country with the gospel and is dependent upon offerings from the churches in the homeland for his support. A missionary may be a man or a woman, we are told, and may include not only those who do the teaching, but also those who serve in other capacities, such as nursing, doctoring, etc. He also adds on his questionnaire that if a preacher works among the slums of some city or devotes his time to preaching in out-of-the-way places so that he has to depend upon his support from established churches who will help him, even though he is working here in the homeland, this too is considered missionary work.

And thus the questionnaire goes. Many may be shocked to find that the above is a very distorted use of terms as far as the Bible is concerned. Why will they be shocked? Because this is the commonly accepted usage of these terms.

Where have people gotten these ideas concerning these terms? NOT FROM THE BIBLE for the most part! For the Bible's use of terms does not parallel the above usages. This we shall plainly see...They have gotten their concept of those terms from the language of preachers and journals, who borrowed them from the denominational world. The denominational world uses the above terms exactly as defined by the answers in the questionnaire.

Let us look at those terms individually. What about elders and deacons as far as the Bible is concerned? Yes, they are local men all right, but when that was said, about the last thing for which Scripture could be cited was given in the questionnaire. Having the elders return thanks for the emblems of the Lord's supper and having the deacons pass the emblems is possibly as good an arrangement as can be had for that part of the service, but we should realize that said arrangement is not something laid down within the Scripture. Therefore, no howl should arise as unscriptural if some Sunday morning a deacon returned thanks instead of an elder. But, churches have become so traditionalized that if anybody but an elder served at the Lord's table some Sunday morning, there would be those object, saying, "Why, he's not an elder. He doesn't have any business up there at the table."

In the questionnaire, it was mentioned that elders and deacons meet together in business meetings on equal footing. It was also stated that the elders were usually a little more spiritual than the deacons and had been in the church longer. In the average congregation, there are about two deacons for every elder. That would make twice as many deacons sitting in on the business meetings as elders. Now if they have equal "say-so," it all boils down to the fact that the deacons—not the elders—are actually controlling such churches, for they out-number the elders. Yet, it was said they were less spiritual and younger in the faith than the elders. But, according to the Scriptures, God has not made the deacons equal to the elders. The elders are the rulers or authorities in the congregation (I Timothy 5:17). No such statements are made concerning the deacons. The deacons have their work, but it is not ruling or exercising authority in the congregation. The elders have their work, and one of those tasks is to take the oversight. Therefore, any arrangement that destroys the Bible distinction between the elders and deacons is not right. The elders are the Scriptural overseers of the church. They should meet to care of the work of the church. If they wish to invite the deacons into a meeting some time that is their own business, but they do not have to and they surely should not make it a practice of shoving their work off onto somebody else. God will hold them responsible.

(Continued on Next Page)

"A DISTORTED VOCABULARY"

(Continued from Last Page)

The questionnaire followed the modern practice of making a distinction between the persons referred to as "elders" and "pastors." In the Bible, it can be shown that the term "pastors" refers to the elders and never to evangelists... Yet preachers put on their letterheads that they are the pastors of respective churches, and people often refer to a preacher as their pastor. This is not Bible. If a stranger would come to the building Sunday morning and say he wanted to see the pastor, the average man of the church wouldn't bring him an elder at all. That would be the Scriptural way to do it. In the Bible, elders are also referred to bishops. But, if you would ask the average church man if they had bishops in the church, he would say, "No, but other churches do." Here, then, is another case of non-use of some Biblical terms. If a man is an elder, by the Scriptures, he is likewise a bishop and a pastor, and the true church knows no bishop and no pastor except a man who is an elder. But, by calling a preacher a pastor, certain liberties have been given him of staying with the congregation as long as he wants to, and because he does so much of the work that belongs to the elders to do, most elders are doing very little of their God-ordained work. This one-man pastor system by a non-local man who should be working to get the congregation able to care for itself under Christ's pastors (the elders) is an outright substitute arrangement for the Lord's ordained plan, and it is being practiced almost universally across the land today... Furthermore, there has been the crystalizing use of the word "MINISTER"—a word that should describe every Christian—instead of "pastor" upon the part of many who have been forced to admit that "pastor" and "elder" apply to the same office. Several years ago, the *LOOKOUT* used to refer to P. H. Welshimer as "Pastor-Superintendent." In recent years, it has been changed to "Minister-Superintendent" of the largest Christian Church Bible School in the world. Ephesians 4:11 says He gave some to be apostles, prophets, evangelist, pastors and teachers. Which one was a minister? They all were. But, because of continuing in a practice of placing one man in charge of each church, even though each church may have elders who sit down and let somebody else feed the flock, the need of a specialized term has been felt, and so these located preachers are given the term "minister." But, that doesn't make it right.

...Some... have made an evangelist nothing but a meeting-holder—no more. Turn through the news section of the *CHRISTIAN STANDARD*, and you will see it. Listen to this news article from an issue of that paper: "L. C. Reece, minister of South Side Christian Church here, announces that he will enter full-time evangelistic work, May 1. Mr. Reece has held pastorates and served as minister-evangelist in Kentucky and adjoining states." Notice the distorted vocabulary: (1) The office of "minister" is accepted—a word found in the Scripture, but not as an office. (2) "Will enter full-time evangelistic work." Well, now what is the man—an elder or an evangelist? If he is an elder, was he set aside as an elder? If so, why is he going somewhere else? Is the South Side Christian Church in such a fine state of spiritual maturity that it can spare the man's services? No, for it will call in somebody else to take his place! If he is an evangelist, what was he doing when preaching to the South Side Christian Church? Wasn't he doing the work of an evangelist? If he wasn't, he should have been if he is an evangelist. The Scriptures show that an evangelist sometimes has work to do (or even evangel-

ists—plural) with a congregation. If that is what the man was doing, why say he is about to enter the evangelistic field if he is already in it? (3) Notice that it says he has held "pastorates" in Kentucky and adjoining states. A man cannot "hold" a pastorate unless he is a pastor, can he? And nobody is a pastor who is not an elder. Was the man an elder in those congregations? Obviously not. Well, how could he have held pastorates then? (4) While in Kentucky the news article observed that he had also served as minister-evangelist. What does that mean? A man taking the book of Acts and the epistles of the New Testament would never know. Are we in error when we charge that such is a distorted vocabulary?

"MISSIONARY" is another coined word in their vocabulary. There is no such office to be found in the New Testament. Yet, churches that chide the Methodists for having presiding elders, district superintendent, etc. not found in the Bible are found guilty of having an office of their own not found in the Bible. "Well," somebody says, "don't you believe in carrying the gospel to those across the sea?" Of course, we do, but let us let God's ordained office do it—evangelists. Why do we have to take a group of men separated in order to give all their time to teaching and preaching and call some who may be working for a time with a local congregation a "pastor" or a "minister" and those who travel among the churches here in the states "evangelists" and those who carry the gospel across the sea "missionaries"? If an evangelist is needed in a local church for a time, let him work with that church as an evangelist. If he is needed to strengthen or purify the church in various places through nightly preaching, let him do that work as an evangelist. If he goes abroad to carry the gospel to the other parts of the world, let him go and do that work as an evangelist. What is wrong with that arrangement? There is nothing wrong with it, for it is Bible, and anybody who has studied into these things at all knows that it is Bible.

Several years ago when we raised up our voice against the special office of "missionary," some reader took exception and stated to another reader that the terms "evangelist" and "missionary" mean the same thing. He argued that everywhere the word "evangelist" occurs in our translations the word "missionary" would have been an acceptable translation. I am not saying that it would, but if it could, where would that lead us? We would have to use the term "missionary" just exactly as we use the term "evangelist"... Are they using those terms the same? Far from it. They talk one thing, but do something altogether different.

Furthermore, by calling into use the term "missionary," they can send about anybody out. Women will go out and actually teach and preach over there, but because they are "missionaries," that is all right. But, a woman has no more right to do in China what she cannot Scripturally do right here in the United States, and many of these homeland churches would do well to see if they aren't supporting a practice in some other part of the world that they would not hear to here in the United States... Yet, people here in the states who wouldn't have a woman preacher will send their money to support a practice across the seas that they wouldn't condone it at home. This is one of the evils of adopting a word like "missionary" that is not found in the Bible. So many things can go on under such a name.

Let us seek to use a pure speech. Let us speak of those local men leading, overseeing, and teaching the local con-

(Continued on Page 10)

DIAKONOS - *Deacon*

"deacon" (TECHNICAL USE)	"servant" (NON-TECHNICAL USE)	"minister" (NON-TECHNICAL USE)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OFFICE in the church (I Timothy 3:8, 12; Philippians 1:1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King's SERVANTS (<i>deacons</i>) in parable (Matthew 22:13). Household SERVANTS (<i>deacons</i>) at wedding feast (John 2:5, 9). Any man SERVANT (<i>deacon</i>) of Christ (John 12:26). Greatest to be SERVANT (<i>deacon</i>) of all (Matthew 23:11). Phebe SERVANT (feminine of <i>deacon</i>) (Romans 16:1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Great" among disciples to be MINISTER (<i>deacon</i>) (Matthew 20:26). Officers of government called MINISTERS (<i>deacons</i>) (Romans 13:4). Jesus himself called MINISTER (<i>deacon</i>) (Romans 15:8; Galatians 2:17). Apostle called MINISTER (<i>deacon</i>) (Ephesians 3:7). Preachers called MINISTERS (<i>deacons</i>) (I Corinthians 3:5; Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 1:7; 4:7; I Thessalonians 3:2; I Timothy 4:6). False teachers called Satan's MINISTERS (<i>deacons</i>) (II Corinthians 11:15).



● By James E. Gibbons

THE WORD **diakonos** is rendered "deacon" in the King James Version of the Bible, having reference to an office in the church. What a lot of people don't know is that the same word is also translated "servant" and "minister." It is apparent that the translators used the word "deacon" to represent the Greek **diakonos** when the word was used in a technical sense, referring to an office in the church. In the other references when **diakonos** is used in a general sense, they simply represent it with "servant" or "minister." This little chart or diagram will illustrate this (a sampling).

Today in the religious world the term "MINISTER" is used in a special or technical sense. It is used as the name for an office (position) in the church. In particular, the person who is usually thought of as preacher is called "THE MINISTER" of the church. This practice is almost universal and is even common among those who claim to speak where the Bible speaks and who claim to call Bible things by Bible names. Recently we saw certificates advertized which were to be given when men were ordained to the office of "MINISTER" (that's what they called it).

In the light of what we know about the Bible (notice chart), this is confusing, and it brings several questions to mind. Using the term in a technical or official sense is inappropriate, unless it has reference to the "deacon" in the local church. To compound the confusion many churches who have "MINISTERS" also have deacons. Then if we profess to be using the term "minister" in a general sense when we speak of a preacher as "THE MINISTER" of the church, it is still inappropriate. The New Testament teaches the priesthood of believers, and every Christian is a minister in the general, non-technical sense. No one is "THE MINISTER."

Therefore, we conclude that the modern office of "THE MINISTER" is an unscriptural position not taught in the Word of God. In view of what we read in God's Word, the modern MINISTER is an EVANGELIST-ELDER-MEMBER hybrid (and some more). Too many times he is doing the job of a defunct eldership and an inactive membership (and he and they love to have it so). He is "paid" to do the job God intended others to do. If he is a preacher, he is supposed to be a New Testament evangelist—and that's another story.

These thoughts may be totally new to some of our readers, but they are the truth. *Think on them.* □

GOD'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE CHURCH

(Continued from Page 6)

promise on other things and no longer respect the Bible as they once did—so why bother and be so strict about the organization?

Some people simply want a denominational status. They talk about OUR conventions, OUR colleges, etc. But any organization beyond what God has given is denominationalism; any gathering or convention claiming to represent the churches or speak for them in any sense is ecclesiasticism and denominationalism. God has not given such authority and woe be to the person who is so presumptuous as to assume it. (Although it is not on a par with the Disciples conventions, this statement found in the North American Christian Convention publication of September, 1956 illustrates this point: It said: "...any man not in sympathy with the procedure of this gathering will be manifesting in no uncertain manner the fact that he is out of step with the great Restoration movement." The church, corporately speaking (and Scripturally speaking), does not exist beyond the bounds of the local church (as an organization). No man, or group of men, have the authority to claim to speak for those local churches, set up a rally or convention, and make such statements. It is pure ecclesiasticism for anyone to prefix the name of a gathering, convention, or anything beyond reference to the local church (in other words, prefix it with an area, regional, or national name). It gives the impression that they have the authority to speak for or represent the churches in such a capacity. It is usurpation. If not an official, there is a quasi-official position assumed in the eyes of the brethren and certainly such an impression is made on the world. It would appear that a person was out of step with the brotherhood if he did not support such gatherings. It is our conviction that if we are ever to be successful in our efforts at restoration, we must divest ourselves of all such terminology (as well as practice). It all represents a move away from the local church, which is wrong).

Some supposedly well-meaning people, seeing the local church is not getting the job done, try to get it done some other way. Some churches, which have elders who are not qualified and functioning (and don't know any better), have the denominational PREACHER-PASTOR-CLERGY system. Then among some people because the local church and it's leadership have not accepted their God-given responsibility of evangelism, missionary societies have been started within and beyond the local church. And some churches have really wanted qualified elders and have held off ordaining unqualified men, but in the meantime, having never practiced the priesthood of believers so that leadership could develop, have in *de facto* made the preacher THE PASTOR...and he seems happy with the situation and is doing nothing to work toward the Scriptural eldership becoming a reality.

A final reason that we would like to suggest as to why some people have forsaken God's simple organization for the church (although they once stood for it) is that they are ambitious and God's organization will not fit into their scheme of things. Perhaps they want to do things and want the church to do things the Lord never intended for the church as an organization to do, so they have to form a more expansive organization (or corrupt the Lord's simple organization) to go where their ambitions lead them. To

some vainglorious people the local church is not a big enough platform for them to vaunt themselves. Their EGO TRIP needs something larger, something bigger, something more expansive. Then some people (preachers) want money for their projects. They many times find they can get it from these man-made religious organizations when the church won't give it to them (they can by-pass the elders). And some people become missionaries (instead of evangelists) and start missions (instead of starting churches). Besides by-passing the Scriptures, perhaps this is more conducive to bringing in and holding on to the money.

IN CONCLUSION, let us admonish you to always remember God's organization for the church. It seems that men forget so soon. God has spoken on this subject, and when God speaks it is always to our best interests (as well as His) for us to listen. The simple, local, autonomous church is all that we find in the Scriptures as far as organization is concerned. The early church successfully accomplished its purpose in the world working within the framework of this organization. When our aims and aspirations are the same as God's for us we will be able to do the same thing. Let us be found faithful in that which has been committed to us. □

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LEG OF A THREE-LEGGED STOOL?

SILLY QUESTION? NO! Read on.

Over and over I have taught "the whole counsel of God" on the plan of salvation. I found that these people would usually accept faith and repentance as essential to salvation, but question baptism. So I would prop three fingers of one hand on my Bible and ask the above question. I was trying to get the person to say, "All three are of equal importance." However, one summer afternoon as I was teaching in a home, their young daughter was going in and out of the house. She was back in just as I made the "tripod" of my three fingers on my Bible and asked:

"Which is the most important leg of a three-legged stool?"

The girl's mother sat with a puzzled look, and groped for an answer. Suddenly the child spoke up and said, "Oh mother, I know—the one that is missing!" How true. No one could sit on a three-legged stool if one leg was gone. Incidentally, I thought that child's answer was a good one, and I have used it since that time. —Harold Buckles □

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"A DISTORTED VOCABULARY"

(Continued from Page 8)

gregations as elders, bishops, and pastors as the Bible does, and let us not apply any of those terms to any other office in the church. Let us not say that an evangelist merely conducts so-called revival meetings from church to church, that those who preach across the seas are missionaries, and that those who are seeking to strengthen a weak church are pastors or ministers. A distorted vocabulary invariably results in distorted labor. If a man doesn't know whether he is an elder or an evangelist, how will he know from the Scripture what he is to do? And if they have pinned some new term on him like "minister" or "missionary," how will he know from the Bible what God would have him do? —Reprinted from the January 14, 1956 issue of THE VOICE OF EVANGELISM. □

A Brief Consideration of the Question of Modesty

MODESTY OF DRESS is a subject that is taught in the Bible. Of course in our modern times when people know little about the Bible, and could care less, this subject is not respected. Among non-Christians this is to be expected, but when God's Word speaks those who love the Lord will listen. Real Christians are out to please God and not do as they please.

The inspired apostle Paul said that Christian women should "adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamed-facedness..." (I Timothy 2:9,10; also notice I Peter 3:1-5). This "modest apparel" is twofold in its application, having to do with (1) having ones body properly covered and (2) not dressing in a vainglorious manner.

In the beginning God made human beings male and female (Genesis 1:27), and looking upon all His creation He said that it was "very good" (1:31). The intimate male and female relations were to be expressed only in the bounds of marriage (2:24)—this was proper and fitting. All such relations outside of marriage are sinful and wicked (with God's judgment to come upon it) (Hebrews 13:4; Galatians 5:19-21). Jesus even said, "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:28), and he goes on to say that such thoughts would cause a person to have his "whole body cast into hell" (next verse).

But God has so made the male that he responds sexually to what he sees more than the woman (perhaps this is because he is to take the leadership in such matters in the marriage relationship). (Hence, the great bulk of the pornography printed today is for the male). Therefore, the male is to be spiritual and reserve his thoughts only for his wife. Job said, "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?" (Job 31:1).

Although the Christian woman may not fully understand the psychology of the male, she has a responsibility too. She is to dress modestly. It is not enough to say that the man has an evil mind, and she is not responsible. All men are subject to temptation (thinking thoughts they shouldn't), and if they are honest, most (if not all) will say they have experienced this sin at one time or another (the sin of improper thoughts). David was a man after God's own heart, but seeing Bathsheba in an immodest situation produced the wrong thoughts and led to his fall. Paul says (in another context) if you cause a weak brother to stumble, you sin against Christ (Romans 14:13; I Corinthians 8:12,13).

Originally God placed Adam and Eve, a man and his wife (the only people), in the Garden of Eden, and they were not clothed. But when they ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they immediately tried to cover themselves with leaves. God finished the job as they were driven from the Garden, going out into the world to form human society. We read, "Unto Adam and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21). This Hebrew word (KETHONETH) translated "coats" means a tunic, long coat; generally with sleeves, and its length varies from the knees to the ankles.

That being the case, and God doing the clothing, we know we are on the right track when we dress with garments that will cover our bodies accordingly (not necessarily all having robes, but being covered accordingly). God covered male and female. Therefore, God wants both to dress modestly—not just the woman.

There are other Scriptures we could bring out to illustrate the point, but this should make it clear enough. For those who love God, they will be open to the Bible (God does not give idle revelations)—and what the world does (or does not do) should not sway them (Romans 12:2). God made us, and He knows what's best for us. We are His.

—By JAMES E. GIBBONS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

TWO COMPROMISERS OF A KIND

AS REGARDS the obligation for discrimination, we have observed two classes of "church" people, both of whom are an offense to the Lord and to those who have His Mind.

One of these seems never to perceive anything offensive in the continual stream of antigodliness that is spewed from the entertainment and communication media. Whether it be the blatant suggestiveness of the comedians (at which they laugh delightedly right along with the unprofessing world), or the heathenish astrology and sorcery, the outright atheism of Darwinian evolution, or other forms of opposition to God, these persons appear to take it all in stride, with never a word of remonstrance to indicate that it vexes their souls in the least.

The other class of reference is made up of the religious teachers who, in the very popular positivist attitude of the day, never seem to get around to a solid denouncement of anything religious. All around them is gross perversion and blasphemy of God's Word by other religious teachers, but they choose to sweetly ignore it, which giving themselves to preaching the "universals"—the doctrines most widely accepted by the conglomerate of diverse groups which is loosely known as "the church." When they seek to expound the Scriptures, it is unfailingly done with this deliberate ignominy of current religious error—a practice diametrically opposed to that of Christ and the apostles. If these teachers are offended at the corruption of God's Word, they do a splendid job of keeping it to themselves, while their hearers continue to be exposed to it, with no trumpet note of warning from them. In other words, they attempt the absurd procedure of using only the trowel, while rejecting the sword, though they are encompassed with the enemies of the faith and of men's souls (Nehemiah 4:16-21).

As we have said, these two groups are actually one in kind. They are both betrayers of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, since that truth cannot brook error in any form. We must be on the Lord's side in all relationships and at all times, or He cares not for our profession of allegiance to Him at any time. Men-pleasers simply cannot be God-pleasers, and we had better learn that, and seek to conform to its demands upon us. —The Banner of Truth □

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

WHO IS the most to be pitied—a child afraid of the dark, or an adult afraid of the light?

"IT JUST MAKES ME WANT TO PUKE!"

(If these words are offensive to you, just remember that our Lord said something almost like this—Revelation 3:16).

By Rick Breidenbaugh
P. O. Box 1934
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601

I DON'T WANT to offend anyone by the word "puke" but I don't know how else to emphasize the absolute sickness I feel towards what some congregations have done and are doing to the beauty of and the fulfillment one can receive in *just* coming together as an assembly of the household of God to do nothing else except to be fed the pure Word of God. This is the day of entertainment I guess and I'm not against being entertained. I would be a liar if I were to say I didn't like to be entertained because I do. I just don't think the church is the place for it! The simple, uncomplicated, sole mission of the church is to make people disciples, baptize them, and teach them more (Matthew 28:19,20). Why is it necessary to do anything else? Hell has convinced many Christians and most preachers that unless there is a "program" of some sort, the church isn't doing anything or can't "pull them in." The "churches" I read about in church papers and bulletins who are performing programs and pulling them in are doing *just* that: performing by pulling them in! This past summer I received a local church paper that said: "Next Sunday night we are having a potluck supper and ballgame. This will probably be the last ball game of the season so you better not miss it." How about that, ladies and gentlemen?" "You better not miss it"! Miss what? Miss a mess? Can you imagine the apostle Paul writing to the church of Christ in Antioch, Troas, Colossae, Philippi or anywhere else exhorting them to be sure not to miss the final ballgame of the season and bribe them with a potluck dinner? The only thing I know the apostle Paul warned the Christians in those churches of Christ to not "miss" was the assembling of themselves together to eat the Lord's supper. I know I am not the only evangelist who is "fed up" on being fed the garbage emanating from the minds of men who seemingly have either forgotten or forsaken good, old-fashioned, New Testament Christianity. There is 7000 of us out here. And I'm writing this just to let you 6,999 know that you are not "up-chuckin" by yourself! —The Gospel Defender Journal □

One Solitary Life

HERE IS A MAN who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He worked in a carpenter shop until he was 30, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put his foot inside a big city. He never traveled 200 miles from the place where he was born. He never did one of the things which usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

While he was a young man, the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth, and that was his coat. When he was dead, he was laid in a private grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today

he is the central figure of the human race and the leader of the column of progress.

I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth, as that One Solitary Life. —James A. Francis □

NOT BELIEVING THE BIBLE

DWIGHT L. MOODY was, at one time, in a southern city preaching about the value of the Word of God in a person's life. Suddenly he was interrupted by the loud voice of a man in the audience.

"Mr. Moody, I do not believe a single word in that collection of old wives' tales you call your Bible!"

"My dear man," said Mr. Moody, "there is one verse in this Bible that you're forced to believe. 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' If a man sows wheat, he does not reap potatoes or peanuts. Take the saloonkeeper, for example. He sows drunkards, and he will reap drunkards."

The man sat down as the audience broke into loud applause. Mr. Moody, of course, did not know the man, but the audience did. He was a notorious, longtime, atheistic saloonkeeper, and all his children, both sons and daughters, were drunkards.—Selected □



"THE FATHER FAVORS FALL"

Of all the seasons the Father has fashioned
His favor finds fullness in Fall;
For though the rest proclaim His praises,
Fall's finale shines fairest of all.

Springtime sings the song of salvation,
Reminding of our soul's new-birth;
Summer speaks of life maturing;
Winter warns this life's end and earth's.

O, but Fall foretells His sweet Heaven,
It's color and splendor so complete,
With all His fields ready for harvest;
His Church anxious the Savior to greet.

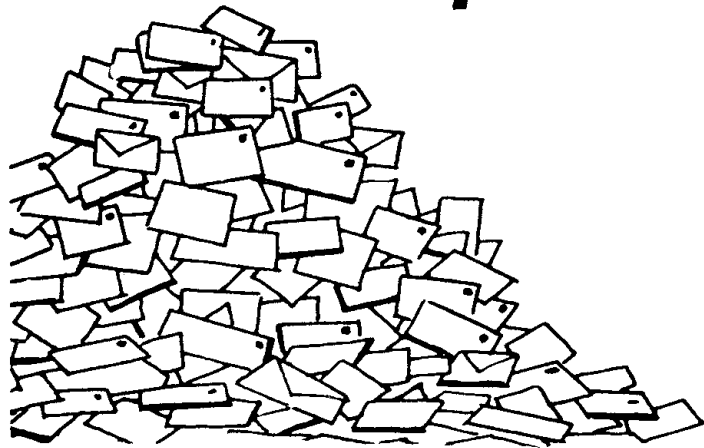
How my heart yearns throughout the year
for the wonder and climax of Fall;
My garden gathered, my labors gifted,
and God's artistry praised by all.

Yea, how my soul looks ever forward
to the finish of God's perfect plan,
That by His Word we will live forever,
as good fruit harvested by the Father's hand.

—By BOB WICKLINE
5204 U. S. 50
Hillsboro, Ohio 45133

READERS'

... Response



WE PRESENT some of the letters received along, not to "pat ourselves on the back," but to show we have people in sympathy with what is written. We have our constant set of critics, and it is refreshing to know there are those who love and appreciate the Word of God in its fullness.

MICHIGAN:

■ "I enjoy the paper and pamphlets that you write, put together, and print very much. I also appreciate the meekness and humility that the paper displays in preaching the pure Word of God..."

OHIO:

■ "I really like the paper you put out. You do a good job explaining the Bible, and I wish everyone could just read your paper. If anyone can't understand the Bible, they should if they use an open mind and lay aside all of the creeds and false doctrines..."

INDIANA:

■ "I appreciate your publication very much. I equate it with Campbell's *HARBINGER* or Scott's *EVANGELIST*. Keep up the excellent work.

MISSOURI:

■ "I received your paper yesterday and I read your paper through this morning. It just really speaks to me. I want to do just as your reading material says because I searched the Scriptures along with it and it makes the Scriptures come alive..."

TEXAS:

■ "Thank you for your time and effort you put in printing the material you do. I enjoy reading and utilizing it. Please renew my subscription to *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. Thank you for not removing my name from your mailing list..."

COLORADO:

■ "We appreciate your efforts in helping to strengthen and plant new knowledge and conviction in our lives..."

WYOMING:

■ "We have received *THE SWORD AND STAFF* for five years and we have to admit—it is the "best" paper a Christian could ever want to have. All the articles are Bible based and loaded with truths, unlike other so-called Christian papers in which you have to sort through to find what little truths are there. *THE SWORD AND STAFF* keeps the fact of Christianity pure and simple, the way the Bible explains it to be..."

CALIFORNIA:

■ "I have read Volume 20, Number 2 of your publication. I am a new Christian and have been studying the Word of God for 1½ years (since March 81). If this is a sample of your ministry, I want more! The Word of God is not to be compromised. God will surely bless the brother who passed a copy of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* to me, and may He continue to bless your service."

ADVICE TO THE AGED

SO MUCH ADVICE is given to young people, it seems fair that a little might be given to the older folks—in view of the fact that people are old so much longer than they are young.

1. Guard against sensitiveness. It is mostly an affliction of age. Refuse to be slighted.
2. Do not bewail the fact that you are old. If you were not old, you'd be dead.
3. Do as much for your appearance as you can (within Scriptural bounds of good grooming). Well-kept antiques are considered beautiful.
4. Morals never change, but customs and habits do. Cheerfully scrap a bushel of your customs to conform to the present, so long as it does not affect morals.
5. Remember you were once young.
6. No one is ever useless so long as he retains his mental vigor, though he may be physically handicapped. Try not to complain of physical ailments.
7. Learn to be self-sufficient. There may come a time you will be left all alone.
8. Don't live in the past. Memories are precious to you, but unless solicited, keep them to yourself. Laugh at your mistakes.
9. Believe and live your religion. An old person without faith is pathetic. There is no situation you and God cannot handle.
10. Be as cheerful as sunshine, as firm as the right of gravitation, and as willing to change, when convinced, as the weather.—Adapted

THE CHURCH

THE CHURCH is not a refrigerator for the preserving of perishable piety. It is a dynamo for charging human wills with power. The object of the church is not to tell men how to dodge difficulties, but to furnish strength and courage to meet them. The business of the church isn't to furnish hammocks for the lazy; it is rather to offer well-fitting yokes for drawing life's loads. The man who does not support the church practically casts a vote for its abolition.—Selected

A WISE ANSWER

A LITTLE GIRL, age 3, was riding in a taxi with her mother when she pointed to the driver and asked, "Mommie, why is he so black?"

The mother noticed that the man's shoulders stiffened at the question. She hastily searched for the right words that would satisfy both the driver and her daughter. "God makes people as he makes flowers in the garden, so the world will be more colorful. Some are white, some brown, some black, some yellow—and there are all shades in between. That makes us all the more interesting to look at, don't you think?" The little girl nodded, for this made sense.

As they left the cab the black driver said to the mother, "Ma'am, when my little girl gets big enough to ask why some people are white, I'll know what to tell her now. Thank you."

Oh, what a wise mother that woman was! She created light instead of darkness...trust instead of suspicion. She thought too much of her daughter's soul, the black man's soul, and her own soul to traffic in hate. "If you show partiality, you are committing sin" (James 2:9).

—From *TRUE DISCIPLESHIP*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

GOING BACK TO FIND HOW

ALL OF US who have been branches on the Vine for some years know the Old Testament is our schoolmaster. We learn how the Jews were blessed when they obeyed and how they were punished when they disobeyed. The Old Testament also makes plain some of the words in the New Testament.

We read in the New Testament we are to use the fruit of the vine for communion—we go to the Old Testament to find it is the grape vine.

We read in the New Testament a woman must dress modestly and also of the man naked and "out of his mind"—the opposite meaning a man "in his right mind" is dressed. We go to the Old Testament to find Yahweh (Jehovah) dressed Adam and Eve "from the shoulders to the knees." We also find the woman who exposed her thigh (the thigh bone connects the hip to the knee) was called naked.

We read in the New Testament to train up a child—we go to the Old Testament to find *how* to train the child: He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently (Proverbs 13:24). (The word translated in the English word "rod" is actually something to spank with. It has no other meaning.) Foolishness is bound up in the heart of the child; the rod of discipline will remove it far from him (Proverbs 22:15). Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you beat him with the rod, he will not die (Proverbs 23:13). You shall beat him with the rod, and deliver his soul from Sheol (Proverbs 23:14). The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother (Proverbs 29:15).

Many, many books are on the market today, telling the parents how to train the child. After reading a few, the parents are more confused than ever, each book telling of a different method of training. We who are older have seen methods come and go and none work too well. We must

search the Bible to find the RIGHT method of training children. Proverbs 3:5 tells parents to "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding." There are many other Scriptures about spanking and many about loving. The spankings MUST be done in love and the Scriptures must be told to the child so that he will know it is a command, and if Mother and Father do not spank him, they are not obeying God's command and can not go to Heaven. If the child does not obey his parents he is not obeying God's command either, and he can not go to Heaven.

My prayer is that these few Scriptures will build a desire in you to do your own searching in the Bible and find all the Scriptures about training the child.

A special note to those who have adopted children or those who see undesirable traits in their natural children "inherited" from the parents—the Bible does say the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children. That need not cause despair. It only means the special inherited sin (weakness) must be pointed out to the child as he grows, and the child must understand he must work harder to overcome and control the situation. A child is not born doomed to Hell, against his will. He CAN overcome all things in his life, with Yahweh's (Jehovah's) help. Peace comes to child and adult, alike, when they study and pray enough to reach the ability to let God tend to all details of their lives. —Emmett Baldwin □

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

DEAD WEIGHT

A FLIPPANT YOUTH asked a preacher, "You say that unsaved people carry a weight of sin. I feel nothing. How heavy is sin? Is it ten pounds? Eighty pounds?"

The preacher replied by asking the youth, "If you laid a four hundred pound weight on a corpse, would it feel the load?"

The youth replied, "It would feel nothing, because it is dead."

The preacher concluded, "That spirit, too, is indeed dead which feels no load of sin or is indifferent to its burden and flippant about its presence." The youth was silenced!

"And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). —Christian Newsletter □

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

TEEN COMMANDMENTS

DON'T LET your parents down; they brought you up. Choose your companions with care; you become what they are.

Be master of your habits or they will master you. Treasure your time: don't spend it; invest it. Stand for something or you'll fall for anything. Select only a date who would make a good mate. See what you can do for others; not what they can do for you.

Guard your thoughts; what you think you are. Don't fill up on this world's crumbs; feed your soul on the Living Bread.

Give your all to Christ; He gave His all for you. —SELECTED

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I Saw Him Standing There

(Or, The Old Gospel Preacher)

*I saw him standing there, this man of God,
Erect and firm, although his hair was gray.
The passing years had come and they had gone
To leave the weaker men along the way.*

*I saw him standing there, his face was fixed,
And he was unafraid to preach the Word.
Although the times had changed so many things,
His message was the same for those who heard.*

*I saw him standing straight and heard him preach
That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
He preached against men's sins with force and might,
Then called to lost men with a pleading nod.*

*I heard him preach salvation through the blood,
The message many need to hear today;
How sinners must believe, and then repent
To turn and be baptized the Bible way.*

*I heard him preach about the church of Christ,
The precious bride for which our Saviour died.
He then condemned the sects of men as sin,
And called on all to give up party pride.*

*I thank the Lord for this, a stalwart man,
Whose message had that old familiar ring
Of the apostles' doctrine through and through,
And this to me was such a noble thing.*

*I saw him standing there, this man of God,
His life as faithful as the day is long.
It gave me courage that I needed most,
And I felt inspiration to be strong.*

By JAMES E. GIBBONS

The Sword and Staff, P.O. Box 147, Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030

RESPECT FOR GOD'S NAME

THE EXACT pronunciation of the Hebrew word translated "LORD" has been lost. It was the unspeakable personal name of God. After the Jews returned from Babylonian Captivity, having learned their lesson well in reference to idolatry, they so respected God that the time came when they refused to utter His Name lest they take it in vain. When they came to this word for the name of God (which is frequent in the Old Testament), they wouldn't

say it. Instead they said another word, *Adonai*. Since there were no vowel markings on the original written Hebrew words (just consonant stems), and since they refused to utter the verbal vowel sounds, over the years the ancient pronunciation has been lost. By taking the vowel sounds (which were put in written form later) from *Adonai*, the replacement word, and putting them with the consonant stems of the original name of God, scholars and translators have come up with such names as Jehovah, Yahweh,

and other variations of these spellings. Cloverdale was the first one to use LORD in English to represent the name of God and that always spelled with capital letters. Therefore, every time you see LORD in the Scriptures that represents the personal name of God which we really don't know how to say.—From the booklet, *OUR GREAT AND GLORIOUS GOD*, available from *The Sword and Staff* at 25¢ a copy. □

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

WHO WILL YOU LISTEN TO?

*If you want to go to heaven
You must obey the Lord.
There's something you must do.
He tells you in His Word.*

*Some people will contradict
And change the words around.
But listen closely, friend;
I'll show you where it's found.*

*He that believes and is baptized:
That person shall be saved.
Read it in Mark 16:16.
It's what Jesus said.*

*Now don't you be led astray
By listening to some lies.
Study the Word of God,
And let it be your guide.*

*Now it tells us to believe
And to repent of all our sins;
To confess His Holy Name,
But that is not the end.*

*Read about the 3000 found
In Acts chapter 2.
What was Peter's answer
To their "What shall we do?"*

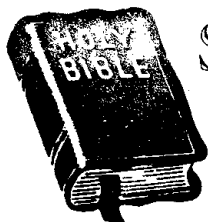
*Did he tell them "only believe"
As many say today?
"Raise your hand, pray this prayer,
And he'll take your sins away?"*

*"Sign here this book,
And join our denomination?"
Is that what Peter said
By the Spirit's inspiration?*

*Read it for yourself, my friend,
For your soul is at stake.
What was Peter's answer
In Acts 2:38?*

—By RAPHAEL MORENO
238 E. 14th Street
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003

Count your obligations,
Name them one by one,
And it will surprise you
What the Lord wants done.



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 the back issues in more of a permanent form this way. More and more people are seeing the value and wisdom of doing this.

- ☐ **What Must I Do to Be Saved?**—6¢ each.
- ☐ **The Subject of the Holy Spirit Made Simple**—1 copy, 35¢; 1 to 99 copies, 25¢ each; 100 and above, 20¢ ea.
- ☐ **Obedying the Gospel Chart**—small size, 3¢ each; 11 by 17 size, 8¢ each.
- ☐ **Are Visions, Dreams, and Religious Experiences Proof of Salvation?**—7¢ each.
- ☐ **The Letter That Was Never Answered**—6¢ each.
- ☐ **Once in Grace, Always in Grace?**—4¢ each.
- ☐ **Are You Sanctified?**—3¢ each.
- ☐ **Every Sunday?** (on observing the Lord's supper every Sunday)—3¢ each.
- ☐ **Sequel to Lord's Supper "Every Sunday"** (answers objections)—3¢ each.
- ☐ **Objections to the Necessity of Baptism Answered**—8¢.
- ☐ **Origin of Religious Misunderstanding and False Teaching**—5¢ each.
- ☐ **The Meaning of Suffering in the Life of the Christian**—10¢ each.
- ☐ **Is It Wrong for a Christian to Use Tobacco?**—3¢ each.
- ☐ **Lessons in Happiness from the Garden of Eden**—3¢ ea.
- ☐ **A Question About the Sabbath?**—2¢ each.
- ☐ **His Church is Marching On** (song to tune of "Battle Hymn of the Republic" on sheet with glue on back to stick in back of hymnbooks)—6¢ each.
- ☐ **I Saw Him Standing There** (or the Old Gospel Preacher)—no charge when available.
- ☐ **Christianity Without Denominations**—no charge w. a.
- ☐ **How to Be Saved from Sin**—no charge when available.

• SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER •

Gentlemen:
I wish to take advantage of your special introductory subscription offer of only \$1.50 for the first year.

Name.....
Address.....
.....Zip.....

BOUND VOLUMES OF THE SWORD AND STAFF
(Check for bound volumes order)

- ☐ 1971-72 bound vol. of *The Sword and Staff*—\$4.25
- ☐ 1973-74 bound vol. of *The Sword and Staff*—\$4.00
- ☐ 1975-76 bound vol. of *The Sword and Staff*—\$4.25
- ☐ 77-78-79 bound vol. of *The Sword and Staff*—\$4.50

COMFORTABLE WITH THIS PAPER

IF YOU ARE a traditional, timid soul (trying to justify the *status quo*), you will be ill at ease with **THE SWORD AND STAFF**. If you are among the number who have become so preoccupied with numbers that you have forgotten about truth and purity of doctrine (or you intentionally de-emphasize this), this paper will be just a little "too much" for you. But, if you are one who has unconditionally committed himself to searching out and knowing God's eternal truths (irrespective of what men may think, or where this may lead you), you will feel comfortable and very much at home with us. Welcome aboard as we are steering in that direction. □

THE DATE BY YOUR ADDRESS BELOW

SOME HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD what the date means which appears with their name and address on **THE SWORD AND STAFF** they receive. The date means the time you originally subscribed to the paper. Or, if we have lost your original date, we arbitrarily put the date you see when the address plate was made. We do not change the date every time a "renewal" offering is sent in. This would involve time (and expense) which we do not have. However, that date on your plate can serve as a point of reference (that time each year) about sending a "renewal" offering to help us stay in the mail (if you are disposed to do so). We are not a commercial endeavor (otherwise we would have closed "shop" a long time ago). We do not send renewal notices. Time would not allow it if we wanted to. We are simply trying to get out the gospel in printed form. What money you send is regarded as an offering (we have not had the problem of people sending too much). Without your "fellowship" with us in this matter we could not continue printing. Thank you, and I hope this is clear (especially about the meaning of the date).—Editor □

(See page 2 for latest tour information)



THE SWORD AND STAFF
Post Office Box 147
Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030-0147
U.S.A.
Telephone: 1 (919) 789-1044

Non-Profit Organ.
U.S. POSTAGE
49¢ PAID
Mt. Airy, N.C.
Permit No. 25