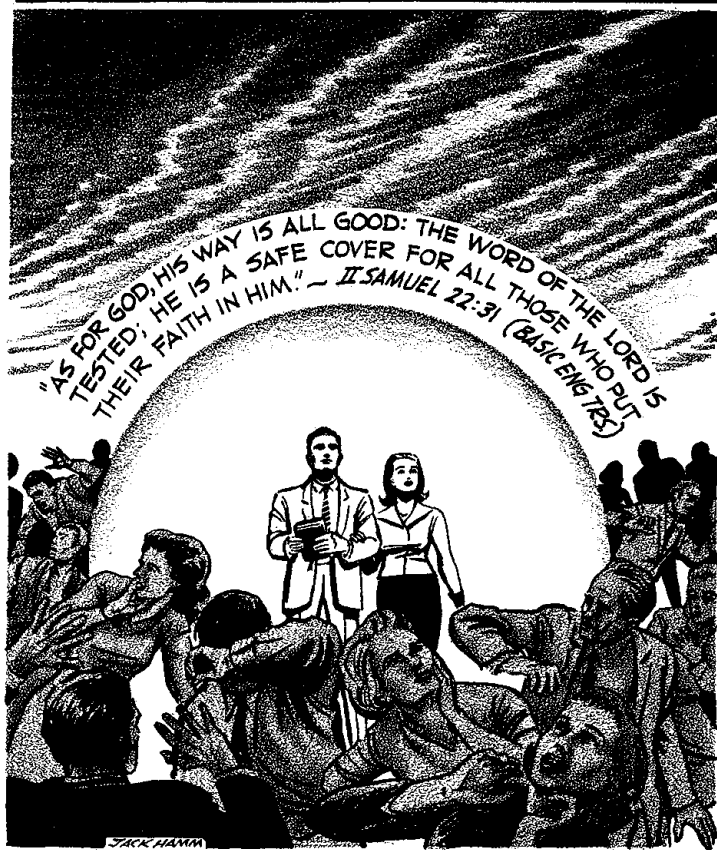


The Sword AND Staff

"Preach the Word" (II Timothy 4:2) • "Feed the Flock" (I Peter 5:2)

LEARNING TO WALK BY FAITH

■ *The first part of this article is put in outline form. Please look it over and then get into the heart of the message. It should prove to be very profitable reading.*



By JAMES E. GIBBONS—1535 Fairfield Drive
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GOD IS Almighty, and far above us, but at the same time He is very personal and wants to be personally involved in our lives. Believing and learning to walk by faith makes this possible.

I. BEING A CHRISTIAN IS A LIFE OF FAITH

1. Christianity is characterized as "THE FAITH."

- (1) Jude 3
- (2) II Corinthians 13:5
- (3) Hebrews 11:1—That which we respond to and as-

pire to is governed by that which we have not seen or do not see.

2. It involves faith in God.

- (1) Hebrews 11:6
- (2) God is Spirit (John 4:24)
- (3) God is invisible (I Timothy 1:17)—The word IDOL means that which is seen.
- (4) Romans 1:20 (Psalms 19:1)

3. It involves faith in the Son of God.

- (1) John 1:1-18 (Hebrews 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15; 2:9; John 14:6-9—Emmanuel)
- (2) Mark 16:15,16 (I Corinthians 15:1-4; II Corinthians 5:19,21)
- (3) Romans 10:6-17 (Acts 8:35-37)
- (4) Hebrews 10:22 (Colossians 2:12)
- (5) Yes, John 3:16

4. We are justified by faith (declared just or righteous).

- (1) Romans 5:1
- (2) Acts 13:39

5. The just shall live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4; Gal. 2:20).

- (1) Romans 1:17
- (2) Galatians 3:11
- (3) Hebrews 10:38

6. We walk by faith.

- (1) II Corinthians 5:7 (II Cor. 4:17,18)—Col. 3:1-4
- (2) The expression "WALK" in talking about our relationship to God is used extensively throughout the New Testament. Here are some examples: Romans 6:4; 8:1; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 4:1; 5:1,2,15; Colossians 1:10; I John 1:6,7; 2:6; etc.

(3) In fact, this expression is found throughout the Bible, including the Old Testament. Micah 6:8 is a classic example of its use in the Old Testament. It reads: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to WALK humbly with thy God?"

II. THE EXPRESSION "WALK" IN REFERENCE TO GOD

The expression "walk" in reference to God is highly
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Proverbially SPEAKING...

TO BE SUCCESSFUL, accept your lot in life—then dig it up, plant something in it, and watch it grow!

"Anytime the going gets too easy, you had better stop and consider whether you are perhaps going downhill."

Love and fear are the great motivating factors in serving God: love prompts us to do what pleases God, while fear prompts us to refrain from doing what displeases Him.

"The way that a person spends his time and his money is a pretty good indicator of his sense of values and of his relationship to God."

"*LIVE*" spelled backward is "*EVIL*," and "*LIVED*" spelled backward turns out to be "*DEVIL*" (let us live our lives as they should be lived—straight and forward).

"If God gave you as much time this week as you gave Him last week, how long would you be able to survive?"

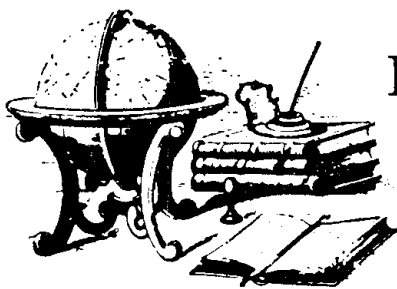
"*Christian unity*" comes as a by-product of being united with Christ and following His Word—not by artificially seeking after it as such.

"We must not approach the Scriptures to prove that we are right but rather to be made right."

When we draw near to God, sometimes we are made to realize how far away we really are.

A pagan has room in his heart for many gods, but a Christian only One.

It is always nice to be nice.



EDITORIAL

COMMENTS...

TOWARD A MORE SPIRITUAL CONCEPT IN REFERENCE TO SINGING

PLEASE NOTICE Colossians 3:16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Ephesians 5:18b,19, written about the same time as the Colossian reference, reads about the same way: "...be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

From these Scriptures let us point out at least three things: (1) This religious singing is to be done by those filled with the Spirit and having the word of Christ richly dwelling in them; (2) With the word of Christ richly dwelling in them, they are to teach and admonish one another by means of singing; (3) This singing is to come from the heart as worship to the Lord.

Therefore, it is plain then that singing in connection with the church is an act of spiritual worship to be engaged in and enjoyed by Christians, right? Ephesians 5:18 did say that it was to be done by those "filled with the Spirit"—these are Christians (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27; Romans 8:9). Colossians 3:16 makes it plain that singing is one way of teaching and admonishing one another. How can a non-Christian fit into the picture as such a teacher to edify the body of Christ? Furthermore, it is to be done with the heart as an act of worship to God. Again, how does the non-Christian fit in here (John 4:24)? Paul told the Corinthians that when "brethren" came together as the church, different ones of their number had a "psalm" (I Corinthians 14:26). The inspired writer James likewise said, "Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms" (James 5:13). Please take note, this admonition was for any "among you," i.e., among you Christians. James calls them "brethren" throughout his epistle (James 1:2,16,19; 2:1,5,14; 3:1; 5:7,9,10,12,19)—brothers in Christ (James 2:1).

What is the over-all significance of all of this? Obviously, there is a more spiritual concept that many are overlooking in reference to singing. If we are going to please the Lord, there is a more spiritual concept that must be taken into account. There have been and are situations where some have invited outsiders to sing "specials" with little or no consideration as to whether they were Christians or not. Even professional and semi-professional groups have been engaged to put on concerts. But if a person has not obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ in becoming a New Testament Christian (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27), how can he be "filled with the Spirit" and carry out the admonition of Ephesians 5:18,19? How can someone in religious error have the word of Christ dwelling in them richly so as to "teach and admonish" us? How in the world can such be called worship and be "in spirit and in truth"? A song service of this kind can contra-

dict in just a few minutes all that a church supposedly stands for.

(No, we don't mean that we should restrain non-Christians in congregational singing. This is between them and God. And, we might add, the little children already belong to God. We think what has been said is clear).

To have singing groups sing without any thought of their relationship to the Lord is to put the singing purely on an entertainment level (not the high and dignified level of proclaiming the gospel and worship). And, with a generation brought up on television, that seems to be the situation in which we find ourselves. The mind-set is in the direction of entertainment, and the "worship" has become man-centered and entertainment oriented. Religious singers dress like entertainers (with all the accompanying paraphernalia of entertainers as they put on their show), sing the popular generic "gospel" songs, and seek the recognition and applause of men (literally). "Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."

Let us recognize the spiritual concept of singing by believers for the purpose of worship and of teaching one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (not for the entertainment and applause of men).

—Adapted from a November, 1967 issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF.

★★★★★★

Woe Unto Them!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach much about the church in the NEW Testament but have little to say about the NEW life in Christ!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach the necessity of following the teachings of the Spirit but have nothing to say about the necessity of the Spirit (His personal indwelling)!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach that we must follow the Bible WHOLLY but do not preach following the Bible in HOLY living!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach much about being "doctrinally" RIGHT but have little to say about being personally RIGHT with God!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach that we must not ADD to the worship when they have yet to ADD worship (really worship in spirit and in truth)!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach that the doctrine must be PURE when their hearts and lives are not yet PURE.

WOE UNTO THEM who PROSELYTE when they themselves are not walking in the LIGHT!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach that we must walk in the LIGHT and then LIGHT up their cigarettes!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach against DENOMINATIONALISM and then DENOMINATE themselves with an exclusive DENOMINATIONAL label!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach against FALLING SHORT of following God's plan for the church and at the same time their women's clothing FALLS

SHORT several inches from being modest!

WOE UNTO THEM who present themselves as the only ones who can explain the Bible when there is much about their lives that needs explaining!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach that we must love the truth when they have not themselves learned the truth of love!

WOE UNTO THEM who preach much about the church of Christ but have little to say about the Christ of the church!

WOE UNTO THEM who baptize sinners but do not baptize them into Christ (for they have not been converted to Christ)!

WOE UNTO THEM who set themselves up to criticize everybody but will not tolerate anybody criticizing them!

(LET US always remember Matthew 7:1-5; Matthew 23; and II Peter 2:19).—J.E.G. □

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THE PRESSING INVITATION



We Have A Better Idea

WE NOTED in a May issue of a Christian Church journal that some of the brethren aspire to establish 5,000 new Christian Churches. We have a better idea, which we heartily recommend for energetic espousal and implementation.

It is that an effective crusade be launched to beget and nourish genuine spiritual life and vitality in the churches already existent. In our considered opinion, it would be highly advisable to declare a moratorium on the establishment of new churches of the nature of those now on the scene. Meanwhile, let us strive to impart some spiritual substance and vigor to the pro-

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LEARNING TO WALK BY FAITH

(Continued from Page 1)



interesting. As it is used extensively throughout the Bible, having to do with man's relationship to God, the question arises as to its origin. What is the origin of the expression? If we can find the first time it was used (or implied) in the Bible, it will throw much light on all subsequent usage thereafter. Certainly there is a decided mental picture that comes to mind when we hear this expression.

Back to the Garden of Eden

The book of Genesis is the book of beginnings, and much of the terminology and imagery of the Bible has its origin here. This is no less true in reference to "walk" in connection with God. Genesis 3:8 reads, "And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden."

In this translation here quoted (KJV), the scholars have translated "they heard the *voice* of the LORD God walking in the garden." While this word basically has reference to the voice as such, it is also translated "sound" and "noise" (among other things). The New King James version (as well as some other translations) renders it "sound" here in Genesis 3:8a. Having sinned, and hearing the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, they hid themselves. In reference to this word "walking" *Young's Analytical Concordance* gives this pithy bit of information: "To go on habitually or up and down."

So, in some sense, it seems that the LORD God was in the habit of walking at that time of the day (the cool of the day) in the garden with Adam and Eve in a very personal way. Evidently the old King James scholars couldn't conceive of God the Spirit walking in the garden as such, so they rendered this as "heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden." However, are we reading too much into this in thinking that God

revealed Himself to Adam and Eve in some tangible form (thus accommodating them) and in a very personal way walking with them? Later on in the Bible we will have the angel of the LORD directly representing God and the Shekinah presence of the LORD in the cloud, in the fire, and in the holy of holies.

Adam and Eve were God's favored creation, made in His very image. Is it reasonable to think that God created Adam without communicating with him? Was he left in the dark, having to muse over his origin and unique situation? What am I? Who am I? Where did I come from? What am I doing here? Or, did God the Spirit simply communicate directly to his mind? Or, did God speak audibly or even reveal Himself in some appropriate tangible manifestation? Is the language anthropomorphic in talking about God (the language accommodating man, speaking of God in human terms), or did God actually take some personal tangible manifestation in dealing with man? It speaks of God talking with man, the animals being brought for him to name, and the LORD God making a woman and bringing her to man. When Adam and Eve sinned, they "hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden." (The word

WE HAVE A BETTER IDEA

(Continued from Last Page)

fessed faith of present ones.

It is written of the first-century saints that they "went everywhere preaching the Word" (Acts 8:4), not establishing new churches. Those brethren were aflame with the burning news and agitative personal experience of the risen and glorified Christ, and the fervent expectation of His soon return. They were out to share that news, experience, and anticipation with whomever would listen to them.

It is quite true that new congregations sprang up in consequence of this living experience of Christ and its passionate sharing with others. Thus, we read, "Believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:14). Again, it is written that the brethren were "edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit," were "multiplied" (ch. 9:31, ASV).

The great need of today is to foster in the existing churches the living experience of Christ and the compelling love of and devotion to God's truth which those first-century brethren had. That done, the desired new churches will spontaneously spring up like mushrooms all over the place. And they will be effective as God's habitation through the Spirit, not mere religious clubs.

To seek more organizations without the life and power of God, or to concentrate on perpetuating the ones already here as for that, is the wrong undertaking. Let us endeavor to beget first-century faith and single-hearted devotion to Christ. That is the basic need of the time, and should be our principle objective.

—*The Banner of Truth*

(And there are other areas that need attention too: the last part of the Great Commission needs to be seriously implemented.—*Editor*)

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“presence” literally means the face or countenance). Adam and Eve were driven from the garden. When Cain killed his brother, and the curse was placed upon him, it says, “And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD. . .” (Genesis 4:16).

Perhaps few of us really realize what an exalted and favored position was held by Adam and Eve. Everything was created and waiting for them when they arrived on the scene. (Everything had its existence in relation to them). Then the Almighty God of Eternity created them in His own image (the spiritual image). In a sense they were the offspring of God. They were placed in this paradise upon earth, the Garden of Eden, which had especially been made for them. They were created by God for God, in the very image of God, and to be in communion with Him. (God is love, and love best expresses itself in relationship to others). The LORD God, their God, so honored them that He in some appropriate way accommodated them in walking and talking with them on the most personal basis. They were in communion with their benevolent Creator. (And man is like a fish out of water until he is right with his God—when he is out of communion with his Creator). With only one law to obey, so that they could at least exercise moral choice befitting human beings, they had everything going for them. When they sinned, it is hard for us to recognize the enormity of it because it seems such a simple thing that they did. Not fully realizing how highly exalted they were, few of us realize how far they fell. After such an exalted position and unparalleled favor, their disobedience was utterly treacherous (nothing short of rebellion against the God who made them). “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God. . .” (Isaiah 59:2a)—this is what Isaiah wrote years later. They could no longer stay in the Garden of Eden. They could no longer walk with God (in such a personal, favored, and exalted sense). They would finally have to die.

The Expression Retained

Paradise lost—it would never be forgotten. Man had lost so much. In the records that follow, the expressions used to tell of aspiring holy men’s relations to God are reminiscent of the Garden of Eden. There is the nostalgic remembrance of that which they had so senselessly lost (and, no doubt, wishfully would like to reclaim, and perhaps, in a measure at times, did reclaim). A few of the old patriarchs stand out as giants in the sinful world in which they lived. Enoch was sixty-five years old when he begat Methuselah. Then we read, “And Enoch *walked with God* after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty five years: And Enoch *walked with God*: and he was not, for God took him” (Genesis 5:22-24). “Enoch walked with God”—how descriptive, recalling a better day in the Garden of Eden. (Methuselah, the son of Enoch, evidently did not so walk, because, as someone has figured out, he died the year the flood came). Also in Genesis 6:9 we read, “Noah was a just man and perfect (upright) in his generations, and Noah *walked with God*.”

It is said of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that they

walked with God (or before God). On his deathbed down in the land of Egypt Jacob pronounced the patriarchal blessings on his various children. Here are some of his words: “And he blessed Joseph, and said, *God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk*, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day. The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads. . .” (Genesis 48:15,16a). They were in a sense walking with God, but this far removed from the Garden of Eden their experience with God seems more remote, and it is said that they walked before God—the same terminology of walking being retained. Earlier in Genesis 17:1 the LORD appeared unto Abraham (then Abram) (and evidently in a localized manner—verse 22) and said unto him, “I am the Almighty God: *walk before me*, and be thou perfect (upright).”

The Angel of the Lord

In this period of walking with the LORD, and before the LORD, the Angel of the LORD was the direct tangible representation of the LORD God Himself in communicating His message to man. The Angel of the LORD speaks in the first person as the voice of God. (Notice Genesis 16:7-14). In Genesis chapter 18 we are told that the LORD appeared unto Abraham in the “plains of Mamre.” Our attention is drawn to three “men” who approached the tent of Abraham and Sarah. As the account unfolds, we notice that one speaks, and it says that “the LORD said unto Abraham.” The LORD promises great things about the son who is to be born to Abraham and his wife. Reference is also made of the great sins of Sodom and Gomorrah. “And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD” (verse 22). In the next chapter the two men who went to Sodom are identified as “angels.” Years later when Abraham’s servant was sent to the East country to get a wife for Abraham’s son Isaac, the servant relates what Abraham had said to him before he left on his mission. “And he said unto me, The LORD, *before whom I walk*, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father’s house” (24:40). Then a generation later when Jacob (the son of Isaac) was returning from the East country, he wrestled with an angel at the ford of the brook Jabbok (32:24-32). In this most unusual happening, he understands that he has wrestled all night with God. (Years before as he was leaving Canaan, he had his “Jacob’s ladder” experience with God and angels; thereupon he seemed to get down to business in serving God—28:10-22).

The Shekinah Manifestations

Many years later we read of the experience of Moses and the descendants of Jacob (Israel) with the LORD God. In it we see their closeness to God (in particular, Moses) and at the same time their distance from God. The times were full for God to fulfill more in detail the far-reaching promises that had earlier been made to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:13-16). Things were now ready for the promised land of Canaan to be given to Abraham’s descendants. God called Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage to the prom-

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ised land, and the call was most unusual. The voice of God was heard from a burning bush in the desert. This was but preliminary to an unparalleled experience and close relationship this man would have with the eternal God. When they had finally made their exodus from Egypt, and were encamped at mount Sinai, we read, "And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever" (Exodus 19:9). As the mountain was fenced off so the people would not touch it lest they die, everything was set for God to speak. Then as the mountain was covered with a thick cloud that turned into smoke and fire, there was thunder and lightning, as they experienced an earthquake. At the same time in the midst of this unsettling and terrifying commotion the sound of the trumpet was heard, and it increasingly became louder and louder. Then the voice of Almighty God was heard. He spoke audibly and directly to these terrified people. Here the ten commandments were originally thundered directly into the ears of the Israelites. It produced the desired affect. We read, "And all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Exodus 20:18,19). Thereafter God spoke through Moses.

With the dealings with Moses and the children of Israel, the Shekinah manifestations of the presence of God become more in evidence. Shekinah is not a word that is found in the Scriptures, but was one adapted by the later rabbis in speaking of the presence of God. Christian writers have also taken up usage of this term. The use of this word refers to the pillar of cloud and fire through which God spoke and led the children of Israel (Exodus 13:21,22; 40:34,35; etc.). It speaks of His presence in the holy of holies and the mercy seat between the cherubims on the ark of the covenant. Through this cloudy pillar God asserted Himself more in a localized and tangible fashion and actually spoke to Moses, although God the Spirit was not seen in the cloud (Exodus 20:21; 33:9).

Exodus 33:10 reads, "And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." This is not to be understood literally in a physical sense, for God is Spirit and no man has ever seen God at any time (John 1:18; 1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16). But Moses desired to see a more personal manifestation of God than he had seen in the pillar of cloud from which the voice of God was heard. In Exodus 33 and 34 we read about this. God honored this sincere desire and request of Moses. We read, "And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee. . ." Moses was placed in the cleft of the rock, covered there, "And the LORD passed before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression of sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the in-

iquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the third and the fourth generation." From such a personal experience with God, Moses came down from the mountain with the commandments engraved in stone and the glory of God radiating from his face.

Walking in God's Statutes

The figure of man walking in reference to God is carried forward throughout the Mosaic Law and the Old Testament Scriptures. Among the commands, promises, and blessings God made to Israel, He said, "And I will set my tabernacle among you. . . And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people" (Leviticus 26:11,12). The potential of the presence of the LORD God with all of His promises and blessings was great, but this was all conditional. "If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase. . . And I will give peace in the land. . . For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you. . ." (Leviticus 26:3-13). But at the same time the possibility of the negative side of the picture was very sobering. Starting with Leviticus 26:14, this thought is continued on down through this chapter. "But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments. . . And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me" many awful things would be in store. God said, "And I will set my face against you. . ." Judgment and punishment would be forthcoming. "And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; Then will I walk contrary unto you," and then it was spelled out what they could expect. These very words were stated time and time again. Yes, Moses summed it up in many places, using the same figure: "Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him" (Deuteronomy 13:4).

Concluding Observations

The prophets of old more than once spoke of walking in connection with God. We again call your attention to that great Scripture, Micah 6:8, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Amos reminds us: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Jeremiah records this message: "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the way, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein" (Jeremiah 6:16). However, Isaiah looked forward to a time in the last days when "all nations" would be involved in walking with the LORD. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. . . O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD" (Isaiah 2:2-5).

Walking with God and walking in reference to God—what a captivating figure that portrays such a spiritual reality!



III. LEARNING TO WALK BY FAITH

All that has been written before in this article has been simply leading up to what we now wish to deal with, that is "learning to walk by faith." The apostle Paul said in II Corinthians 5:7, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." The faith of the Christian has to do with many things. Walking by faith has to do with the reality of God and the Son of God. It has to do with salvation, that Jesus actually died for our sins and was raised from the dead to die no more. It is walking by faith in actually believing that we are forgiven when we repent and are baptized (immersed) for the remission of our sins. Then it is a life of faith when we live by the Word of God. Walking by faith very much includes trusting God through all of our trials and troubles in life. It involves believing there is a hereafter and a place called Heaven. (So, in summary, walking by faith has reference to salvation, it involves following the Lord's teachings, and it involves living from day to day).

The Reality of Almighty God

The first step in learning to walk by faith is to come face to face with the reality of the Almighty God. Men who have done this have never been the same again. This is very elementary, but simply take a serious look at the world of nature. The evidence of awesome, Almighty Power is all about us. Some dark night look at the stars, the galaxies, the heavenly bodies. Out there time is measured in terms of light yers. Massive planets go reeling through space (and in clock-like precision). Whether looking through the telescope or the

microscope, whether taking note of the complimentary components of animal life and plant life, or whether simply observing the changing seasons, in the midst of all of this we are overwhelmingly impressed. Almighty Power is there. But this Almighty Power is not blind, erratic force (say, exploding in this way and that way, unpredictable). No, this Almighty Power is harnessed. It is governed by intelligence—systematic intelligence that can be depended upon. It can be described in no other terms than Supreme Intelligence. A careful study of this harnessed Almighty Power governed by Supreme Intelligence we call science. There are natural laws that can be defined and depended upon. Science, with all of its amazing discoveries, is simply recognizing and rethinking the thoughts of Higher Intelligence. There is no way of getting around it. Almighty Power coupled by systematic, Supreme Intelligence can mean only one thing—GOD, the reality of an Almighty Being. Psalms 19:1 reads, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." And the apostle Paul wrote, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead (i.e., Godhood, divinity). . ." (Romans 1:20).

The Personal God Made Manifest

Yes, Almighty Power governed by Supreme Intelligence is most impressive, awesome. But if that is all there is to God, God comes through as pretty heartless—about like a cold, calculating scientist bent on his undertakings without the consideration of morals or compassion.

But, thank God for Jesus Christ. He has showed us what God is really like. The prologue to the gospel of John is an important bridge in the gap of our understanding. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. . . No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:1, 14,18). When Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me," "Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and ye hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (John 14:6-9). Truly Jesus was Emmanuel, God with us—GOD INCARNATE! Paul called Jesus "the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15), then he said, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead (deity) bodily" (Colossians 2:9). Yes, through Jesus we get a concept of God that we would have to look long and hard to find in the Old Testament, and then not find it. The Old Testament presented God as Jehovah (God in His covenant relationship to man), but Jesus introduced us to God the Father (a personal, loving heavenly Father). If we have counted it right, God is called Father at least 256 times in the New Testament (114

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LEARNING TO WALK BY FAITH

(Continued from Last Page)

times alone in the gospel of John). What a wonderful revelation to know that God is our heavenly Father! (How tragic to read of the Methodist denomination, under pressure of feminists, trying to delete all masculine references to God from their hymnbook—replacing them by neuter references of gender and sometimes even portraying God as a feminine figure—*Winston-Salem Journal*, Associated Press news release, May 4, 1988. This cuts right at the heart of the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ as the only begotten Son of God, the Father, and the concept of God as our heavenly Father—also the new birth to be experienced by all in becoming children of God).

How wonderful to know that we are children of God and that God is personally involved in our lives as Christians. How wonderful to know that in a unique sense God is our God and we are his people. Jacob had used such terminology in Genesis 28:21 upon entering into a closer relationship with God. The same concept as found in Leviticus 26:12 is quoted in a modified form as applied to Christians in II Corinthians 6:16, “God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” Then Paul continued, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (6:17,18). Then in the concluding book of the Bible, we read, “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Revelation 21:2-4).

Taking God at His Word

All right, then, we walk by faith as Christians. We are put into a position to walk by faith when we come face to face with the reality of the Almighty God (and by the realization that He is personal, even our heavenly Father). Thereafter we will never be the same.

But walking by faith involves not only believing in the reality of the great God of eternity, but believing what He says, taking Him at His Word—obeying His commands. God cannot lie, so everything that He says is Truth. Read Genesis 3:1-5. The old tempter didn't try to get Eve to not believe in God. There was no way that she could deny God, for God had brought her into being. However, Satan tried (and succeeded) in getting Eve to not believe in what God had said to them (to doubt His word, His integrity). Adam and Eve had plainly been told to not eat of the tree in the midst of the Garden, lest they die. But Satan said, “Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods (*Elohim*, God, as in Genesis 1:1), knowing

good and evil.” The writer of Hebrews warns, “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God” (Hebrews 3:12), and this is just exactly what happened to Eve. II Timothy 2:13 says, “If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.”

As part of the Great Commission in Mark 16:16, the Lord Jesus said, “He that believeth and is baptized

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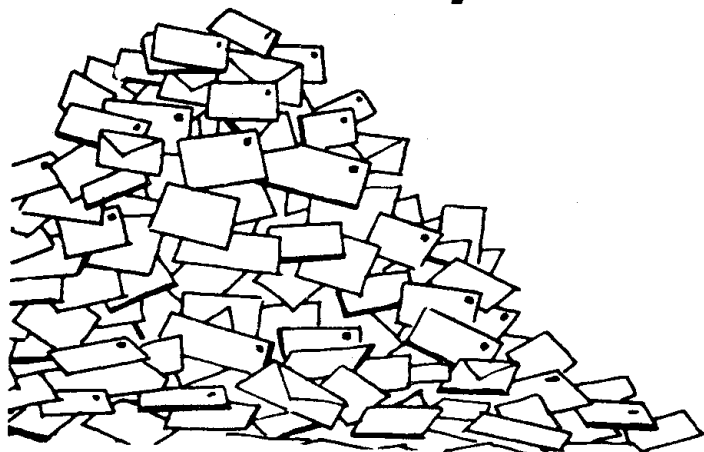
BIBLE QUESTIONS *(over first things in the Bible)*

1. What does the first verse in the Bible say? (Gen. 1:1)
2. What did God do on the first day of creation? (Genesis 1:3-5)
3. Who was the first man to take another person's life? (Genesis 4:1-8)
4. Who was the first man to have more than one wife? (Genesis 4:19)
5. Who was the firstborn of Jacob? (Gen. 29:32; 49:3)
6. What was the first plague God sent upon Egypt when Pharaoh refused to let Israel go? (Exodus 7:16-21)
7. Who were the first people to fight Israel in the wilderness after they came out of Egypt? (Exodus 17:8-13)
8. What people did God use as his priests in the Old Testament instead of the firstborn that He said were His? (Numbers 3:44-51)
9. Who was the first king of the original kingdom of Israel? (I Samuel 10)
10. Who did the Jews believe would first come before the Messiah? (Matthew 17:10,11; Mark 9:11,12)
11. What did Jesus say to seek first in life before material things? (Matthew 6:33)
12. What did Jesus say was the first and great commandment? (Matthew 22:38)
13. In the lists of the twelve apostles, who is always listed first? (Matthew 10:2-4; etc.)
14. When Jesus was arrested, to whom was he first taken? (John 18:13)
15. To whom did Jesus first appear after His resurrection? (Mark 16:9)
16. Who was the first person to give his life as a martyr in the early church? (Acts 7:54-60)
17. Who were the first Gentiles converted to Christ? (Acts 10 and 11)
18. Where were the disciples first called Christians? (Acts 11:26)
19. Who was the first apostle to be put to death? (Acts 12:1,2)
20. Who does Paul call the firstfruits of those who slept? (I Corinthians 15:20)
21. Whose household does Paul call the firstfruits of Achaia? (I Corinthians 16:15)
22. Which commandment did Paul say was the first commandment with promise (O.T.)? (Ephesians 6:2)
23. In the early church, what did Christians do on the first day of the week? (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:2; Acts 2:42)
24. Before men are set aside as elders and deacons, what does Paul say first is to be done? (I Timothy 3:10)
25. According to John, why do we love Jesus? (I John 4:19)

(NOTE: Check the Scriptural references that are given with each question to verify the answer).

READERS'

... Response



KENTUCKY:

■ "I enjoy *THE SWORD AND STAFF* very much. I really appreciate your zeal and convictions."

OHIO:

■ "I surely appreciate all your effort in keeping this fine publication alive. Thank you."

■ "Never in our life time has God's Word been more important. Liberalism is even working in the Lord's Church. Praise God for you and your staff. Our prayers are with you."

■ "Recently I have been added to your mailing list. This is about the third issue I have read. I must admit that I don't agree completely with you, but I do thoroughly enjoy your observations. Keep up the good work and God bless your continued work on His behalf."

■ Correspondence has been received from reader Gary Abernathy, 229 S. West St., Hillsboro, Ohio 45133 (who is also editor of a secular newspaper). He is very much concerned about the existing conditions among many professed New Testament churches. This concern has led him to write a small book, *Restoration II: Today's Need For A Second Restoration Movement Within Churches of Christ*, which sounds very provocative. No doubt, we are living in times of apostasy and much falling away. Somebody needs to get concerned. He says that the book is available from his Hillsboro address at \$1.00 per copy.

■ "I want to let you know how much I appreciate *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I wish it could be published more often. . . I always keep mine for further references on each subject. I would like to see an article on how to dress modest. We have people who come to church on Sunday evenings wearing shorts and they are short! In this day's culture people think it is all right. Last Sunday evening I met one lady who sings specials often in shorts and then I looked around and saw my elder in short shorts. . . I was mad, ashamed, and even felt I was in the wrong place. I couldn't listen to the lesson until it was half over because of it. . . I do believe there is a limit. I could understand an outsider or new converts, but leaders? . . ."

"Modest Apparel

With Shamefacedness and Sobriety"

Editor's Note: I appreciate your letter very much and can identify with your godly feelings. It seems like the pagan world has invaded the church. The question of modesty was somewhat dealt with in the first issue of *The Sword and Staff*

for 1988 under the caption of "A QUESTION ABOUT ADORNMENT" (page 9). However, let us make some other Scriptural observations and comments.

With the passing of innocence and the birth of conscience, "knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5), Adam and Eve "sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (3:7). God went a step further, as we read 3:21, "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make *coats* of skins, and clothed them" (then they were driven from the Garden of Eden). We gather from this that with sin in the world, and the beginning of human society, God wanted the nakedness of human beings covered. Nakedness is presented as an undesirable thing throughout the Bible.

Notice: God made "coats" of skins and clothed Adam and Eve. Of this Hebrew word translated "coats," *Wilson's O.T. Word Studies* says, "A tunic. . . generally with sleeves, to the knees, but seldom to the ankles, Gen. 3:21, etc." Other authorities say: "(kuttonet) tunic, a long shirt-like garment;" "a tunic, long coat." So, this should tell us something. God clothed Adam and Eve with garments that came at least to their knees (even longer). Their aprons of leaves garment was not sufficient. He put a longer garment on them.

Later on when the Law was given to Moses it covered all matters, including their worship. In reference to the subject of nakedness and being properly covered, Exodus 20:26 is interesting. "Neither shall thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon."

Skipping over much of the Bible, let us notice I Timothy 2:9,10 (and the context happens to be that of worship, but the application is general). Here Paul admonishes, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety. . ." We think of "modest apparel" from two different perspectives: (1) Having your nakedness decently covered; (2) Having your body conservatively covered (not bedecked in a showy, vainglorious manner).

Making a study of the words translated "shamefacedness" and "sobriety" (as found in I Timothy 2:9, KJV) is very interesting and enlightening.

The Greek word rendered "shamefacedness" (KJV) is *aidos*. It is found only one other time in the King James text, and that is Hebrews 12:28. Here it is brought over into English as "reverence." ("Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with *reverence* and godly fear"). Of this word *aidos* Thayer says: "*aidos* is prominently objective in its reference, having regard to others. . . It is often said that *aidos* precedes and prevents the shameful acts. . . *aidos* would always restrain a good man from an unworthy act. . ." Of *aidos* Donnegan writes: "shame; reverential awe; modesty; respect—also, compassion—a sense of virtuous shame, or honour, which withholds from committing a bad, dastardly, or reprehensible action. . ." And Trench, writing about *aidos*, ties it in with Hebrews 12:28, "Heb. 12:28. . . often connected with *eulabeia*. . . the reverence, before God, before His majesty, His holiness, which will induce a carefulness not to offend." Therefore in the light of all of this, and in view of how the word is translated in I Timothy 2:9 and Hebrews 12:28, in our own words here is a definition of *aidos*: A sense of virtuous shame which has a special regard and respect in reference to others. In coming before God, we are careful not to offend in any sense of the word. In the wearing of modest apparel, we are careful not to offend—that is involved in "shamefacedness." And in view of our fallen nature and that God properly covered the bodies of the first human beings, and in view of what our Lord said in Matthew 5:28-30, we need a little more "shamefacedness" today.

All right, the apostle Paul said they were to "adorn them-

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READERS' RESPONSE...

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selves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and *sobriety*." According to Green in his concise lexicon, this word translated "sobriety" (Greek: *sophrosune*) means "sanity, soundness of mind, a sane mind." When Paul was accused of being crazy in Acts 26:25, we read, "But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness (*sophrosune*, the same word used in I Timothy 2:9, i.e., "sobriety"—sanity)." An interesting (and quite revealing) use of this same root word is found in Mark 5:15, "And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid." ("In his right mind"—that is how it is translated!). So Paul is teaching that we should adorn (arrange) ourselves in what he calls modest apparel with a special regard for others and that we should use some sense about it ("sobriety"). The demoniac was now clothed and in his right mind. A variation of the same word is found in Titus 2:4,5 where the older women are instructed to teach the younger women. This word would mean, among other things (and in the light of I Timothy 2:9), they were to teach the younger women to have some sense about the way they dress. Is their nakedness properly covered? Are they vainly gloriously hooked in conforming to the standards and styles of this ungodly world? (The N.T. Scriptures do give some guidelines for Christian women: I Timothy 2:9,10; I Peter 3:1-5).

MICHIGAN:

■ "Please put us on your mailing list. . . A friend and co-worker brought your magazine into work. We read the article 'Divorce is Not the Solution.' It's a very good article. I found it helpful. Thanks a great deal! . . ."

■ "It's time again to send some help. We are thankful we can do this and we are thankful for your efforts. . . We thank you for your lifelong commitment to the Lord's business. We always look forward to THE SWORD AND STAFF to keep us 'thinking' and to lift our spirits."

INDIANA:

■ "Keep up the fine work spreading the truth. I appreciate your efforts."

ILLINOIS:

■ "Would you tell the differences between an evangelist, a pastor, and an elder?"

Editor's Reply:

THANK YOU for writing and your good question. You are commended in asking this (for many couldn't care less). Let's get right into trying to give the answer.

To start with, your question really boils down to two parts instead of three because an elder and a pastor refer to the same office in the church (at least that is the way it is taught in the New Testament). The word pastor simply means a shepherd, one who takes care of sheep. In I Peter 5:1 Peter addresses the elders (and in the New Testament there is always a plurality of them in each local church that has been set in order, Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23). He tells them to feed (tend: *poimaino*) the flock of God (5:2). He tells them to be examples to the flock (5:3). Then he wrote: "And when the chief Shepherd (*archi-poimen*) shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (5:4). The elders are shepherds under a chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. This word for shepherd (*poimen*) is the same word that is translated pastor in Ephesians 4:11. The elders are the pastors of the church. This is also boren out in Acts 20:28 where Paul is talking to the Ephesian elders (20:17ff). Acts 20:28 reads, "Take heed

therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost (Spirit) hath made you overseers, to feed (tend: *poimaino*) the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The elders' work is again spoken of in terms of taking care of the flock (being a pastor). Also, the same word is used in I Peter 5:2 and Acts 20:28 where it says they are to feed (or tend) the flock of God. That verb is *poimaino* which is of the same root as the word rendered pastor (*poimen*). There is no Scriptural question about it. The elders are the pastors of the Lord's church. Today in too many professing New Testament churches a falling away has taken place and the denominational pastor system has been adopted (and they love to have it so). The man who is called the preacher is also called the pastor (and he is that and more) while the eldership is defunct as far as what the New Testament has to say is concerned.

So, the question boils down to the difference between an evangelist and an elder.

The word evangelist is found three different places in the New Testament Scriptures: Acts 21:8; Ephesians 4:11; and II Timothy 4:5. Philip is called an evangelist (perhaps to distinguish him from Philip the apostle, as they had no last names back then, as well as to tell about his work). Ephesians 4:11 tells about various offices (positions, or works) which are spoken of as gifts from the Lord to His church (evangelist being one of them). Then when Paul wrote to Timothy from his final Roman imprisonment, he admonishes Timothy to fulfill his work as an evangelist. What he was doing was needed as never before (in view of Paul's impending death and the prospects of a falling away).

The word evangelist means messenger of the gospel (good news). We can tell more about this work by examining what men did who were called by this name. We have mentioned Philip and Timothy. In Acts 8 we find Philip preaching the gospel to individuals and to cities. We also find that he ended up living many years at Ceasarea as an evangelist. As an evangelist Timothy was a co-worker with the apostle Paul in the spread of the gospel, which resulted in the starting of churches, setting them in order, and strengthening and encouraging them (as well as training leaders, II Timothy 2:2); etc. Paul said that Timothy "worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do" (I Corinthians 15:10). So, there is reason to believe that Paul was an evangelist (as well as being an apostle in the sense of the twelve). In Paul and his co-workers we see the work of an evangelist.

Ephesians 4:11 makes a difference between an evangelist and an elder. As these various positions are listed as gifts for the ongoing and wellbeing of the church, we read that "he gave. . . some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." (Note in this reference, "pastors and teachers" refers back to the "some," meaning that these are two functions of the same office—and of course, as we have found, pastor has to do with the work of the elder). An evangelist and an elder are two distinct offices in the Lord's church. Elders have the responsibility of the local church, and evangelists were sent out from the local church to evangelize (whether locally or abroad). Today we have a big mess on our hands as far as the respective New Testament offices being recognized, let alone being put into practice.

Much more could be said in answering this question, but enough has been written to stir our minds (if we are really interested). A diagram, or chart, concerning the use of the word minister follows (page 15) which should prove interesting and helpful (we trust). If we are going to claim to be New Testament churches, let us get back on the New Testament. The way it is, denominationalism reigns today as men depart more and more from the simplicity of the Lord's church as found in the New Testament Scriptures.

MISSOURI:

■ *"I found the 1988 Volume 26 Number 2 in a pile of mail that was going into the junk heap. I had found one of these papers sometime ago, but let it get away. I do love the very truthful and very clear answers to seemingly difficult portions of the Scriptures and have determined that I will take advantage of this opportunity to secure for myself these very valuable articles. I am sending my contribution. . . for the pamphlets, books, leaflets and 4 bound volumes of THE SWORD AND STAFF listed on the back page. . . I can hardly wait to get into the study of these papers."*

■ *"Some one sent us your paper quite a few years ago. We don't know who. At that time we were kinda tired of some of the wrangling going on and felt like it was better to put our time in just studying the Bible. As time went on I've read your articles and find them very good. I believe you are trying to teach the Bible in its purity. So I would like to renew for us and for. . ."*

"Thanking you so much for all your labor of love. . ."

NEBRASKA:

■ *"Please remove me from your mailing list."*

ARIZONA:

■ *" . . . This article, 'Divorce is Not the Solution,' is more in agreement with God's Word than the stand of Born Again Marriage Ministry it seems to me."*

"I was blessed by all the other articles too."

WASHINGTON:

■ *"Please remove our name from your mailing list for your publication THE SWORD AND STAFF. I have absolutely no interest in receiving a publication with which I doctrinally disagree to the extent that I do with yours."* □

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LEARNING TO WALK BY FAITH

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shall be saved. . ." Some time before in anticipation of the kingdom, He had told Nicodemus that a person had to be born of the water and Spirit to enter the kingdom (John 3:5). The apostle Peter faithfully preached the message of the Great Commission in Acts 2:38 when he said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Spirit)." (Also notice Acts 22:16; Romans 6; Galatians 3:27; Titus 3:5; I Peter 3:21; etc.). However, Protestant denominationalism has spoken loud and long about "faith" (faith only), excluding baptism as part of the plan of salvation. But what would you think of a person who said that he believed in you, but then would put no confidence in what you said? People who accept what the Bible says about baptism for the remission of sins have more faith than the "faith only" people. The Lord said it, and that should settle it. The Lord also said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last days" (John 12:48). And the One who gave the Great Commission will be the One judging the world in that day (Acts 17:30,31). Following the doctrines, traditions, and commandments of men is not walking by faith. Yes, faith without works is dead (James 2:14-26). And, yes, John says that we know that we know Him if we keep His commandments (I John 2:3-5).

Looking to Almighty God

Let's get back to the consideration of walking by faith by trusting God's Almighty Power—trusting God to see us through life and its many problems. We need to walk by faith by actually looking to God, to the Lord Jesus Christ. Many small children have learned to walk by having a parent positioned before them with outstretched arms. They felt confidence and assurance as they looked to their father. Their trust was there. For purposes of illustration Matthew 14:22-31 is interesting along this line. The disciples left in their "ship" on the way back across the Sea of Galilee (and Jesus had gone up into the mountain to pray), "But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway, Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, If it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid: and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" How parallel to the troubles and storms of life (and looking to God). As long as Peter looked to Jesus, he could walk upon the water. But when he took his eyes off Jesus and noticed the storm about him, he began to sink. How true of us in life. How wonderful are the words of Isaiah in Isaiah 26:3 and 4, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength (the Rock of Ages)." That great chapter on faith in the Bible says that "By faith" we are "seeing him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27). Let us be "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:1,2).

All Things Work Together for Good

Romans 8:28 is a verse of Scripture which is good for all Christians to remember at all times. This great verse 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." Please notice, the apostle Paul didn't say that all things work together to indulge and pamper Christians, although God will certainly bless (Matthew 6:33), but that "all things work together for good. . ." Everything that happens to us should be accepted as a challenge in our development as a Christian. James, looking at the more unpleasant things that can work for good, said, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations (various trials); Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:2-4). (What a command and challenge! Are we obeying it?). In keeping the

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LEARNING TO WALK BY FAITH

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right attitude, the Christian should never look upon himself as the victim of any circumstance in life. Everything is his. Different Corinthian groups were trying to single out different individual preachers as their individual possession (calling themselves by the preacher's name). But Paul let them know that all of the preachers belonged to all of the church (not to just one faction), and that there was no reason for them to glory in them for they were simply servants of all. He wrote, "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (I Corinthians 3:21-23). Paul enlarged upon his original thought. Not only were the preachers the common possession and servants of all of them, he says, "All things are yours." "All things" were the servants of Christians. All things served them for their good and for God's glory (whether "the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come"). Even death itself is the servant of Christians to usher them into the very presence of the eternal God and the glory to come. So, let's be "on top" of every situation. We are never the victim, but always the victor. "Nay, in all things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37). There is no way that a Christian can lose short of apostasy itself. In the most trying times, with Job let us cry out, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him" (Job 13:15). With James let us commit all into the hands of God, realizing that He is personally involved in our lives, and say, "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" (Cf. James 4:13-16).

IN CONCLUSION, we would again remind you that holy men in all ages have walked by faith in a very close relationship to God. The 90th Psalm, said to have been written by Moses, declared: "LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place (hiding place) in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalms 90:1,2). Generations have come and generations have gone, but God goes on for ever (from everlasting to everlasting). Each passing generation has looked to the eternal ONE. God has been the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob (and all subsequent generations that have looked to Him). They have found in Him a refuge and help in the time of trouble. They have found Him to be real and personal.

David fittingly described his walk of faith with this God as that of a shepherd and his sheep. How refreshing to read the 23rd Psalm again (which anticipated the good shepherd of the New Testament—John 10:1-16; I Peter 2:25). It fits every circumstance of life. "THE LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table



before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."

Now with a full realization of the Almighty God, who personally is our heavenly Father, and with the utmost appreciation of Jesus Christ as our Lord and personal Saviour, let us walk by faith in the fullest sense of the word. Yes, God can be, wants to be, and is personally involved in our lives as Christians. □

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A 10-Step Parent Guideline to Preventing Drug/Alcohol Abuse

BEING a good parent is a difficult task, but one that is well worth the effort.

Use the following guidelines in your family's drug abuse prevention.

1. **GIVE YOUR CHILD A FEELING OF ACCEPTANCE AND A ROLE WITHIN THE FAMILY** even when the child's behavior disappoints you. Remember to criticize the behavior, not the child.
2. **TALK WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT DRUGS AND ALCOHOL AND LISTEN, REALLY LISTEN.** Children are more likely to communicate their feelings when they receive verbal and nonverbal cues that show you are listening.
3. **BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL.** Your habits may strongly influence your child's perceptions about drugs and alcohol.
4. **HELP YOUR CHILD DEVELOP STRONG PERSONAL VALUES.** A strong value system can give a child the courage to make decisions based on facts rather than on pressure from friends.
5. **ESTABLISH AND ENFORCE FAMILY POLICIES.** It is helpful to verbalize rules about the use of drugs and alcohol and the consequences for breaking those rules.
6. **WHEN DISCIPLINE IS NECESSARY, BE FAIR AND CONSISTENT.**

- 7. ENCOURAGE HEALTHY, CREATIVE ACTIVITIES. Hobbies, school events, religious activities, music, art, etc. may prevent your child from experimenting with drugs and alcohol.
- 8. TEAM UP WITH OTHER PARENTS. When parents join together in support groups, they can take steps that will reinforce the guidelines they provide at home.
- 9. KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT A PROBLEM. Learn to recognize the telltale signs of experimentation and abuse.
- 10. ABOVE ALL, PROVIDE LOVE AND AFFECTION AS YOUR CHILD GROWS.

*—Drug/Alcohol Awareness Task Force
Greater Mt. Airy Chamber of Commerce*

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**ADMONITIONS FROM
AN OLDER PREACHER TO
A YOUNGER PREACHER
(Paul to Timothy)**

- **“THIS CHARGE** I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage a good warfare, having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck” (I Timothy 1:18,19).
- **“These things I write to you. . .so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth”** (I Timothy 3:14,15).
- **“If you instruct the brethren in these things (4:1-5), you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and the good doctrine which you have carefully followed”** (I Timothy 4:6).
- **“Let no man despise your youth (look down on your youthfulness), but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine”** (I Timothy 4:12,13).
- **“Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you”** (I Timothy 4:15,16).
- **“Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, the younger men as brothers, the older women as mothers, the younger as sisters, with all purity”** (I Timothy 5:1,2).
- **“I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality”** (I Timothy 5:21).
- **“But you, O man of God, flee these things (6:3-10) and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness”** (I Timothy 6:11).
- **“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses”** (I Timothy 6:12).

- **“O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and vain babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge—by professing it, some have strayed concerning the faith”** (I Timothy 6:20,21).
- **“Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus”** (II Timothy 1:13).
- **“You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also”** (II Timothy 2:1,2).
- **“You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier”** (II Timothy 2:3,4).
- **“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness”** (II Timothy 2:15,16).
- **“Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart”** (II Timothy 2:22).
- **“But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will”** (II Tim. 2:23-26).
- **“But as for you, continue in the things you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work”** (II Timothy 3:14-17).
- **“I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry”** (II Timothy 4:1-5). □

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NOTE: The new feature “SOUND WORDS” is postponed because of the number of words studies in this issue—resumed later.—*Editor*

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“Christ, the AMEN”

HOW MANY universal words do you know? One word in Revelation 3:14 can truly be called a universal word. A few words mean the same in two or possibly three different languages. For example, English and German both have the word “student.” English and French both use the word “machine.” One language often borrows words from another, giving the two different languages a number of words that mean the same thing. But how many words do you know mean the same, are spelled the same, and are pronounced essentially the same in most languages of the world? Revelation 3:14 contains such a word: “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the Creation of God.”

The word “amen” is one of the world’s few universal words. It has entered more languages and is used in more countries than any other word known to man. Edward Horowitz, in his book *How the Hebrew Language Grew* (New York: Jewish Education Press, 1960, p.25), points out that the Bible has been translated into over one thousand different languages. All of these languages have kept the spelling, meaning, and pronunciation of “amen.”

This verse calls Christ the AMEN. What does this mean? Is there any significance in using this word as a name for Christ? The New Testament has many names and titles for Christ, and all of these reveal some aspect of his nature. To call Christ the Amen then, should suggest something of his true being.

“Amen” is a familiar word. It appears at the end of prayers. In the home or in public worship, whenever a prayer is offered, the last word uttered is “amen.” Children are even familiar with this word because it appears so often in prayers.

The position this word has in prayers might suggest to some that it means “finished” or “end.” There seems to be some early evidence that it was once used in this sense. It appears at the end of documents much as we use the word “end” or “finish.” The very last word of the Bible is “amen” (Revelation 22:21). If this is what the word means, to call Christ the Amen, then, would mean that he is the end of all things.

Such an idea of Christ is not foreign to the Bible. In fact, this very same book says that he is the beginning and the end. In the first chapter he is called the Alpha and the Omega (Revelation 1:8), the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet. We would say that he is the A and the Z. Also, in the second chapter, he is called “the first and the last” (Revelation 2:8). Perhaps, then “amen” is just another way of expressing this same idea.

This is the interpretation the Roman Catholic Encyclopedia takes. In the article on “amen” it says: “The Amen who is also the beginning would thus suggest

much the same idea as ‘I am Alpha and Omega’ of Apoc., i, 8, or ‘The first and the last’ of Apoc., ii, 8” (1907 edition, vol. 1, p. 407). It is true that Christ is the beginning and end of all things. In him all things find the meaning of existence. Without him existence has no meaning at all. In this very verse he is called “the beginning of God’s creation.” Perhaps the use of “Amen” merely refers to the fact that he is also the end of all things. But the word “amen” has a fuller, richer meaning than merely “end.” To call Christ the Amen, I believe, means much more than just saying he is the end.

This is a Hebrew word, and to appreciate its richness a few facts about the Hebrew language need to be understood. Most Hebrew words are triconsonantal. This means that words are formed from a basic three letter root, the three letters being consonants. New words are formed from the basic root by making vowel changes before, within, and after the word.

Perhaps an example in English will make this clearer. Take the three consonants wrd. By adding different vowels to these three letters, new words are formed—award, ward, weird, wired, word, wordy. This sort of thing is done much more often in Hebrew than in English.

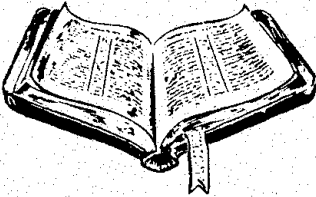
The three Hebrew consonants that appear in “amen” are *aleph*, *men*, and *num* (‘mm). This Hebrew root basically means “confirm,” “support,” “establish.” Many words are built on this root, but they all grow out of and can be related to the idea of support or confirmation. For example, the word *’omen* means a foster father, because he is the one who supports and nourishes the child. A feminine form of this word means a foster mother or a nurse. In II Kings 10:1,5 it is translated “them that brought up Ahab’s children” (KJV, ASV) or “guardians” (RSV). Another word, *’aman*, means a master-workman, one who is firm and sure in his workmanship. In modern Hebrew this same word means an artist. The right hand in Hebrew is *’amin*, referring to the stronger of the two hands. Another word based on this root means the pillars or supporters of the door. Many other words are formed from this one root, but they all relate to the basic idea of confirm or support.

This, then, is the root from which the word *amen* comes. Now, the word *amen* is really an adverb meaning “verily” or “truly,” and as an answer to a question it is equivalent to an emphatic *yes*. Certain standard uses appear in the Old Testament. In the first place, it is used to express full agreement with, or acceptance of, that which has just been spoken. Thus, when a wife takes the oath of the curse, she answers by saying: “Amen, Amen” (Numbers 5:22). When Moses lists a number of curses, all the people answer by saying: “Amen” (Deuteronomy 27:15-26). When Ezra read the law and blesses the Lord, all the people answer: “Amen, Amen” (Nehemiah 8:6).

Secondly, this word is used to express agreement with some plan or request. David declares that his son Solomon will be the next king of Israel. Benaiah answers by saying: “Amen: Jehovah, the God of my Lord the king, says so too” (I Kings 1:36). In other words, he says: “I accept and approve your plan.”

(Continued on Page 16)

DIAKONOS - *Deacon*

<div> <div>“deacon”</div> <div>(TECHNICAL USE)</div> </div>	<div> <div>“servant”</div> <div>(NON-TECHNICAL USE)</div> </div>	<div> <div>“minister”</div> <div>(NON-TECHNICAL USE)</div> </div>
<div> <div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ OFFICE in the church (I Tim. 3:8,12; Philip. 1:1). </div> <div>  </div> </div>	<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ King’s SERVANTS (<i>deacons</i>) in parable (Mt.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 (Mt. 23:11). ■ Phebe SERVANT (fem. of <i>deacon</i>) (Romans 16:1). </div>	<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “Great” among disciples to be MINISTER (<i>deacon</i>) (Mt. 20:26). ■ Officers of government called MINISTERS (<i>deacons</i>) (Romans 13:4). ■ Jesus himself called MINISTER (<i>deacon</i>) (Romans 15:8; Gal. 2:17). ■ Apostle called MINISTER (<i>deacon</i>) (Eph. 3:7). ■ Preachers called MINISTERS (<i>deacons</i>) (I Cor. 3:5; Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:7;4:7; I Thess. 3:2; I Tim. 4:6). ■ False teachers called Satan’s MINISTERS (<i>deacons</i>) (II Cor. 11:15). </div>
<div> <div>● By James E. Gibbons</div> </div>		

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. We have even seen 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 and 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 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* □

“Christ, the AMEN”

(Continued from Page 14)

Thirdly, “amen” is used to express acceptance of a task which has just been given. The Lord tells Jeremiah to go speak to the people. Jeremiah answers: “Amen, O Jehovah” (Jeremiah 11:5).

Fourthly, this word is used as a response of the worshipping people to show that they share in the prayer or praise which has just been offered.

*Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel,
From everlasting even to everlasting.
And let all the people say, Amen.*

(Psalms 106:48)

Similar uses appear in the New Testament (see Romans 1:25; 9:5; Revelation 1:6; 5:14), but its use as a title for Christ needs further clarification. Keeping in mind the meaning of the basic root and the different Old Testament uses, it’s easy to see how this word can very well describe our Lord and Saviour. In him can be found all the confirmation and support we need for our salvation. His promises are steadfast and unmovable because he himself is the Amen.

This word is used by Isaiah as a title or description of God (Isaiah 65:16). Literally the expression is “God of Amen.” In translation it becomes “God of truth” (KJV, ASV, RSV). Moffatt translates the expression as “the faithful God.” Isaiah says, then, that God is the God of truth and faithfulness. To call Jesus Amen in this sense would mean that he is faithful and true. “These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness.” This assures all people that Christ’s promises will be fulfilled and that his words will for ever remain true.

Christ often used the word amen when he addressed people. He would certify the truth of his statements by saying: “Verily, verily I say unto you.” Literally this is: “Amen, amen I say unto you.” The New English Bible renders this expression as: “In truth I tell you.” The RSV has: “Truly, truly I say to you.” To call Jesus Amen would imply that he not only speaks truth, but that he also is truth. He not only says amen, but also is Amen!

Paul says essentially the same thing in II Corinthians 1:20. Christ himself is the divine affirmation of God’s promises. In him is the eternal yes to the soul’s longing for peace. “He is the divine yes. Every promise of God finds its affirmation in him, and through him can be said the final Amen to the glory of God” (J.B.

Phillips’ rendering). “He is the yes pronounced upon God’s promises, every one of them. That is why, when we give glory to God, it is through Christ Jesus that we say Amen” (The New English Bible). We believe Christ’s promises because of Christ himself, because of what he is, because he is the eternal, the divine Amen.

Many things in this world are untrustworthy. The philosophies and ideologies of men are too unsteady. They come and go. They rise and fall. Men long for something firm, something steadfast they can trust. Christ is just that. He is the Amen, the unshakeable affirmation of God’s promises.—James O. Whitfield □

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CONFUSED about which way to go? Go back to the Bible and the local undenominational New Testament church and you will be right on course.

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