

The Sword AND Staff

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

“AND HE WENT A LITTLE FARTHER...”



■ BY JAMES E. GIBBONS—1535 Fairfield Drive—Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030 U.S.A.

READ Matthew 26:36-46. Here we find the Lord Jesus earnestly praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. His career on earth was fast drawing to a close; his hour had come. Jesus was much used to praying, but that night he prayed a lot.

Among the different prayers he prayed that night, we find John chapter 17. It began in this manner, “Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.” This “hour” had been a terrible weight upon the mind of Jesus from the beginning. He had lived his life under the shadow of the cross. His first miracle was performed in Cana of Galilee after he had said to his assertive mother, “Mine hour is not yet come” (John 2:4). Likewise, his unbelieving brothers prodded Jesus, trying to get him to prematurely present himself in Jerusalem, but Jesus re-

plied, “My time is not yet come” (John 7:2-8). Many other times under various circumstances Jesus had spoken of this “hour.” Now it had come! He faced the awful and dreadful prospects of the cross.

The prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane was a heart-rending, agonizing experience for Jesus (and for us who read it). Since their withdrawal of seclusion to Caesarea Philippi, Jesus had tried to condition his disciples for this fateful night (Matthew 16:21; 17:22,23; 20:18,19). The same disciples who had been privileged to witness the transfiguration, slept during the ordeal of the Garden experience. As Jesus penetrated more deeply into the Garden (and into his sorrow), leaving the three disciples supposedly stationed to watch behind, we read, “And he went a little farther, and fell on

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THE SWORD AND STAFF

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INFORMATION:

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Proverbially SPEAKING...

ANGER is but one letter short of DANGER—beware!

"Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel. . . to teach. . ." (Revelation 2:20)—God judges what we tolerate as well as what we practice.

If we do not accept the righteousness of God imputed to take away our sins, in our sins we will face the righteousness of God in judgment.

"Without justification there can be no life in Christ (Romans 5:18), and such life in turn confirms the reality of the justification."

Beware of those churches that call attention to themselves rather than to the Word of God.

"You cannot be cheerful until you forget yourself; you cannot forget yourself until you remember others."

Too many preachers know the art of controlling people through flattery rather than really changing their lives by straight gospel preaching.

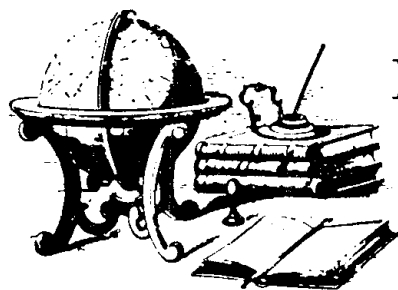
"Don't forget to pray; God would like to hear from you."

People all wrapped up in themselves make mighty small packages (and preachers even smaller ones).

"Sometimes God calms the storm; sometimes he lets the storm rage, and calms his child."

If God is not first in your life, he is not in your life.

"If you look back too much, you will soon be heading that way."



EDITORIAL COMMENTS...

IMBIBING OF THE SPIRIT OF THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

WHAT STANDS OUT about Christianity is God's grace. Grace means unmerited favor. Ephesians 2:8 reads, "For by **grace** are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." God is lavish and abundant in forgiving and accepting those who will accept what he has done through Christ. "For God **so loved** the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "But where sin abounded, **grace did much more abound**" (Romans 5:20b). "For he (God) hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Corinthians 5:21). Thus, Titus 3:5-7 reads, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his **mercy** he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost (Spirit); Which he shed on us **abundantly** through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his **grace**, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Yes, Acts 2:38 is a parallel to this). Then, Titus 2:11-14, "For the **grace** of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar (i.e., special, unique) people, zealous of good works."

Yes, it is a matter of God's grace from the beginning to the end, and the Lord expects us to respond in kind. The apostle John wrote, "We love him, because he first **loved us**" (I John 4:19). When we have really received the grace of God into our lives, grace will be in evidence in our lives at every turn. Jesus came that we might have life and have it "**more abundantly**" (John 10:10), and consequently our lives will be overflowing in relation to others as Christians. We will not be stingy and skimpy in our religion. We have freely received, and we will freely give. The apostle Paul declared, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). Also, in I Corinthians 15:10 he said, "But by **the grace** of God I am what I am: and his **grace** which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured **more abundantly** than they all: yet not I, but the **grace** of God which was with me." Then again he said, "For the **love** of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (II Corinthians 5:14,15). "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, **always abounding** in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

“Always abounding in the work of the Lord”—that is what it is all about. Thus, after admonishing his readers to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord, the apostle Peter wrote, “For if these things be in you and **abound**, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful. . . Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if you do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you **abundantly** into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (II Peter 1:8-11).

Drinking from the fountainhead of God’s grace, the original converts on the day of Pentecost exemplified this great truth. The boundless liberality of God in forgiving them prompted generous liberality in them in giving. We even read that they “sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need” (Acts 2:45). Someone has said that if the Jews under the bondage of the law gave a tenth, and we are now under grace, it is a disgrace to give less than a tenth. Our superior relationship to God should prompt a superior response. Freely we have received, and freely we will give. It’s called grace, and that’s what Paul called the giving in II Corinthians 8:1ff. The churches of Macedonia, although very poor, showed that they had imbibed the spirit of the essence of Christianity by first giving themselves to the Lord (8:5), drinking at the fountain of grace, then giving liberally (much like the people at Pentecost). Paul, leaving us an example, said that he would gladly spend and be spent in the things of the Lord (II Cor. 12:15).

And the brethren on the day of Pentecost had no problem with church attendance. It is even recorded that they met “daily” for a time (Acts 2:42,46,47). People today who find it hard to come to church have not drunk freely at the fountain of the water of life. It is not just a matter of church attendance once a week to fulfill our “duty” (and to “get” the Lord’s supper). Grace produces abundance and overflowing in doing the things of God.

Grace makes a difference in the way that we live. Lest he be misunderstood, Paul wrote (Romans 6:1,2), “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” God’s grace is full and free, and it should produce a full surrender (and it prohibits a skimpy obedience). We will not be just “borderline” Christians, trying to see how much we can get by with. We will “abstain from all appearance of evil” (I Thessalonians 5:22).

The apostle Paul admonished, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God (i.e., because of his mercies, or grace, and motivated by his mercies), that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

Yes, grace prompts us to go the second mile in every way (Matthew 5:41; etc.) As New Testament Christians our lives are lived in the context of the grace of God as our lives are moved and motivated by this same grace.

Let us truly imbibe of the spirit of the essence of Christianity. □

“AND HE WENT A LITTLE FARTHER. . .” *(Continued from Page 1)*



his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26:39).

Beloved, any way that we choose to look at it, this matter of going a “little farther” characterized the whole life of Jesus, and it likewise should characterize our lives as Christians. Using this theme, let us bring out several lessons on how Jesus “went a little farther.”

I. Jesus Went a Little Farther as Far as Sin is Concerned

The Biblical history of man (and any other history) is the history of sin. From Genesis onward the sorry story of fallen man is the same. Listen to the prophet Isaiah of old, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way. . .” (Isaiah 53:6a). “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away” (Isaiah 64:6). The apostle Paul in the epistle to the Romans shows that all men can be saved and justified by the gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16). However, his first main argument is to show that all are under the condemnation of sin, whether Jew or Gentile. Hear him, “. . . We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one” (Romans 3:9b,10). Then he summed it all up by saying, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). All men are hopelessly and helplessly lost because of their sins.

But this is not the end of the unhappy story. There was someone who “went a little farther.” Hebrews 4:15 relates, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” Yes, the Lord Jesus Christ was tempted following his bap-

(Continued on Next Page)

“AND HE WENT A LITTLE FARTHER. . .” (Continued from Last Page)

tism, but not only then. We read, “And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season” (Luke 4:13). What the apostle Peter has to say about Jesus is likewise wonderful. “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously” (I Peter 2:22,23).

Isn't that amazing! Isn't this wonderful! The Word became flesh (John 1), and as he identified with the human experience, the lot of this one was not the common lot of all. The Son of man, the Son of God, has gone a “little farther”! And, personally, what does this mean to us? “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6). Also, read Isaiah 53:10 and 11. Let us hear the conclusion of the apostle Peter's words in I Peter 2:24 where he speaks of the sinless Christ, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” The apostle Paul seems to reach the apex in expressing this truth in II Corinthians 5:21. Listen: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” How wonderful! Jesus “went a little farther. . .” We stand forgiven. Think of the eternal consequence for mankind.

II. Jesus Went a Little Farther as Far as Love is Concerned

The history of man is the history of violence and war. Man in his natural (unregenerate) state seems to be self-centered, selfish, and many times given over to hate in reference to others. The law of Moses even allowed men to hate their enemies (or at least this was the interpretation put on it by the old scribes and Pharisees), for Jesus said, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy” (Matthew 5:43). The “golden rule” was the best that the law of Moses had to offer. It reads, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matthew 7:12). This was (and is) a very good rule, but not without defect. One's standards of right and wrong would determine its worth. As *we would have men do to us* might leave the door open for sin with some people.

But, again, Jesus “went a little farther.” The Pharisees said to love your neighbours and to hate your enemies. What did Jesus say? “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. . . For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?” (Matthew 5:44,46). Then the Lord Jesus gave a new commandment concerning love. Listen: “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:

GOD'S GREAT ENCIRCLING LOVE



34,35). What made this commandment new? How did Jesus go a “little farther”? “Love one another, *as I have loved you.*” This puts it on a plain above every other command concerning love (and in a different category). Jesus loves us more than we love ourselves (in the right way). A slight insight into the dimension of this love is found in John 15:12 and 13 where this command is restated. This additional information is given, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Don't you agree that Jesus “went a little farther” by dying for us on the old rugged cross, than by simply commanding that we should love one another as he loved us (without showing us)? (I John 3:16).

This should make us want to go a “little farther” in every respect. In the first place, this goodness of God should lead us to repentance (Romans 2:4). Then John testified that “we love him, because he first loved us” (I John 4:19). This love should make us want to keep his commandments (John 14:15; I John 5:3), and by God's love and mercies we present our bodies a living sacrifice in his service (Romans 12:1). Can we do any less? This is our “reasonable (spiritual) service.”

III. Jesus Went a Little Farther as Far as His Teachings are Concerned

The ancient Greeks developed great systems of learning and philosophy, but in the midst of it were exceedingly depraved, wicked, and morally bankrupt. “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Romans 1:22). They were “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (II Timothy 3:7). The apostle Paul in writing to the Greeks at Corinth, summed it up well by saying, “The world by wisdom

knew not God” (cf. I Corinthians 1:18-31). The Jews thought of themselves as superior since God had given them the law of Moses, and they gloried in being teachers of the law. But by fleshly pride they converted the righteousness of the law into self-righteousness (Rom. 10:1-4). The teachings of the Old Testament were good up to a point, but were deficient and not permanent. The scribes and Pharisees took this law and taught a legalistic, traditional righteousness which they allowed to be dominated by pretense and materialism (Matthew 5:20- 6:33). The letter of the law was taught, but many times the very heart and spirit of the law was neglected.

THE CROSS WAS HIS OWN

They borrowed a bed to lay his head
When Christ the Lord came down;
They borrowed the ass in the mountain pass
for him to ride to town;
But the crown that he wore
and the cross that he bore
Were his own—the cross was his own.

He borrowed the bread when the crowd he fed
on the grassy mountain side;
He borrowed the dish of broken fish
with which he satisfied;
But the crown that he wore
and the cross that he bore
were his own—the cross was his own.

He borrowed a ship in which to sit
to teach the multitudes;
He borrowed a nest in which to rest,
He never had a home so crude;
But the crown that he wore
and the cross that he bore
Were his own—the cross was his own.

He borrowed a room on his way to the tomb
the Passover lamb to eat;
They borrowed a cave for him a grave;
They borrowed a winding sheet;
But the crown that he wore
and the cross that he bore
Were his own—the cross was his own.

—Anonymous

But, again, Jesus “went a little farther.” His teachings surpass anything this world has ever seen or heard. He was (and still is) THE MASTER. The Greek philosophers sought to define truth and the reality of being. The Lord Jesus introduced people to reality and truth, while at the same time being the perfect embodiment of what he taught. He claimed and declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). According to the apostle Paul, he is the Christian’s “wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (I Corinthians 1:30). In him are “hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3). All wisdom and knowledge, both spiritual and physical, are found and are ultimately to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Father through him made all things by the word of his power (Hebrews 1:1-3). Christ replaced the law

of Moses, it being nailed to the cross (Colossians 2:14), with a more spiritual system. As elsewhere pointed out, he “went a little farther” and solved the sin problem. Then the prophet Jeremiah envisioned that the law of Christ would not be merely external, but internal, being obeyed by changed hearts (Jeremiah 31:31-34). These teachings begin within and work outward, being not just external legalism. It is the law of the Spirit (Romans 8). It involves the total person. The Sermon on the Mount definitely shows that the Lord “went a little farther.” The very spirit and principle behind the law must be obeyed from the heart. Legalism is not enough.

Let us go a “little farther” with the teachings of the Lord Jesus. Let us humbly sit at the feet of the MASTER. We must be Scriptural in what we do and teach, but that is not enough if by this we mean legalism. Let us imbibe. Yes, rather, let us be imbued totally, unreservedly, with our whole person in the religion of our wonderful Master.

That night the Lord Jesus Christ “went a little farther” into the Garden of Gethsemane, “and fell on his face, and prayed.” Oh, what an awful and dreadful ordeal he had to endure! On the heels of his prayer came Judas with the mob and the betraying kiss. The humiliation, the mock trials followed. Jesus was now ready for it all. Calvary, the crucifixion, and death—he experienced it all (as he passed through the valley of the shadow of death). He drank that bitter cup; he tasted death in behalf of all men. Again, and from here, he “went a little farther.” “Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead” (I Corinthians 15:20,21). “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin. . . But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Corinthians 15:55-57).

Beloved, any way that we care to look at it, Jesus “went a little farther.” Yes, as far as sin is concerned, as far as love is concerned, and as far as his teachings are concerned—and these are only a few of the many things that we could list. May Jesus Christ really be the Lord of our lives. Let us go a “little farther” with him! Let us go all of the way! What a wonderful Saviour! Amen! □

**Don't Let the Strike-Outs
Defeat You**

BABE RUTH was the strike-out king at the same time he was the home-run king; but he never let being the strike-out king keep him from being the home-run king.

The game of life is not over until you have had your last turn at bat!

To hit a “home”-run is the greatest thing in your life, if heaven is your home!—WWW □

Anxious About Nothing

“THE WAY to be anxious about nothing is to be prayerful about everything.”

An Outline of the Epistle to the Romans

THE ROMAN EPISTLE is very much of a key document in understanding Christianity. It has been variously praised. Some have called it the greatest of Paul's epistles. Others have said that it was the most important book in the Bible, while another has said that it is the most profound work in existence.

There are various ways this epistle can be outlined. The following outline is presented as an aid to encourage you to study this great book.

Introduction (1:1-15)

1. Salutation (1:1-7)
2. The Roman Christians and Paul's desire to visit them (1:8-15)

I. THE MAIN DOCTRINAL SECTION (1:16-8:39)

*** THEME STATED:** The Gospel, Faith, and the Righteousness of God (1:16,17) (Justification by Faith)

A. The Universal Need for Salvation (1:18-3:20)

1. The Gentile Need (1:18-32)
2. The Jewish Need in Spite of Their Privileges (2:1-3:8)
3. There is None Righteous, No, Not one (3:9-20)

B. The Righteousness of God Through Faith in Jesus (3:21-5:21)

1. This Righteousness is for All for All have Sinned, Thus Excluding Boasting (3:21-27)
2. Abraham (and David) Declared Righteous and Inherited the Promises Through Faith (4:1-25)
3. The Blessings of the Believer in Being Justified by Faith (5:1-11)
4. This Acceptance in Christ as Universal as the Condemnation in Adam (5:12-21)

C. This Righteousness Must be in Evidence in Our Lives (6:1-8:39)

1. Being Dead to Sin, We Are to be Alive unto God (6:1-14)
2. No Longer Slaves to Sin But Now Servants of God (6:15-23)
3. Dead to the Law But Now in a Position to Serve in Newness of Spirit (7:1-6)
4. Struggles with the Law in Striving to be Righteous (7:7-25)
5. The Righteousness of God Realized Through the Spirit as Children of God (8:1-17)
6. The Great Hope That Sustains the Believer in Connection with the All Knowing and Loving God (8:18-39)

II. QUESTION OF ISRAEL'S REJECTION (9:1-11:36)

A. The Fact of Israel's Rejection (9:1-5)

B. The Justice of Israel's Rejection (9:6-29)

C. The Real Cause of Israel's Rejection (9:30-10:21)

D. The Rejection and Hope of Restoration (11:1-36)

III. PRACTICAL APPLICATION (12:1-15:13)

A. Various Duties (12:1-21)

1. Dedicated Living (12:1,2)
2. Serving According to One's Spiritual Gifts (12:3-8)
3. Various Christian Admonitions (12:9-21)

B. Civic Duties and Other Matters (13:1-14)

1. A Christian's Duty to Government (13:1-7)

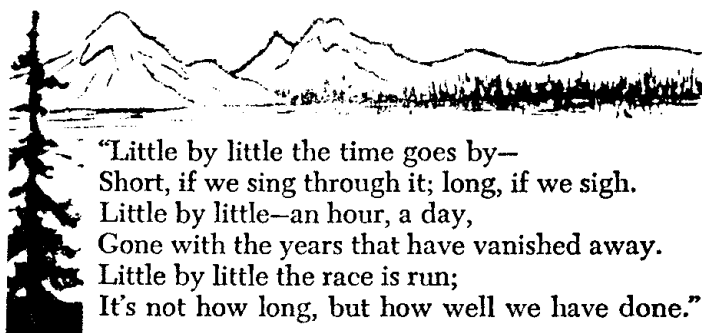
2. A Christian's Duty to His Neighbor Governed by Love (13:8-10)

3. Admonitions to Sober and Christ-Like Living (13:11-13)

C. Problems Involving Jewish and Gentile Christians (14:1-15:13)

Conclusion (15:14-16:27):

1. About Writing the Romans and His Upcoming Plans (15:14-33)
2. Phebe to be Received (16:1,2)
3. Various People Personally Greeted at Rome (16:3-16)
4. False Teachers to be Avoided (16:17-19)
5. Personal Greetings from Companions and the One Who Wrote the Letter for Paul (16:20-23)
6. Closing Benediction and Doxology (16:24-27)



A House Full of Junk—How Foolish!

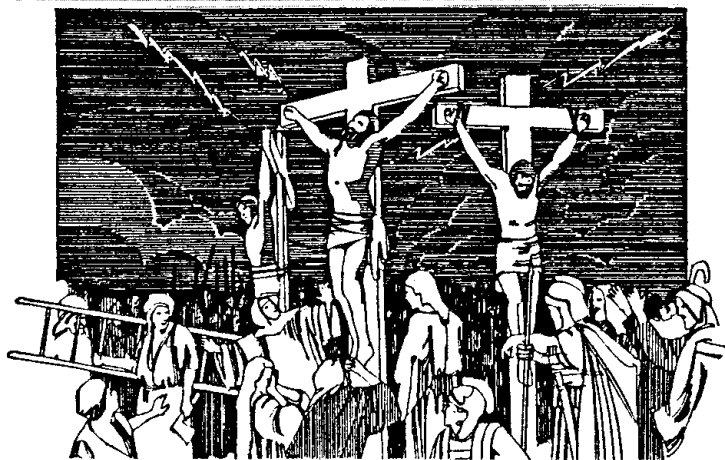
MANY YEARS AGO a newspaper described the death of an eccentric character who owned a large house, and every room in it was packed from floor to ceiling with junk.

When the neighbors discovered that the man was dead, they summoned policemen. The officers of the law had difficulty in getting to the body which lay on a rough pallet in a narrow space in one of these junk-filled rooms; they struggled to get to the man and struggled again to get him out.

The worldly-wise smiled in derision and lofty conceit at the folly of the man who had devoted his life to the collecting and housing of worthless rubbish, and yet many of those who scorned him as a fool had been, in the main, guilty of the same kind of folly. They had filled the days and months and years of life with the accumulations of gilded trash. They had wasted all the glorious passions and possibilities of life in this futile business. They had vied with their neighbors in packing the basement, the rooms upstairs, every nook and cubby hole of the great House of Life with the debris and rubbish of the street.

But at the end of their days they will be dismayed to find that they have bartered life, all its incalculable values and kingdoms, for junk. This mistake will be irretrievable. Jesus had often knocked at the door, but the house was so full of junk that there was no room for him. Life is almost ended now for many such as these, and they all have garnered in wood, hay, stubble and dust of the street.—*The Light* □

????????????????
??QUESTIONS??
????????????????



From Virginia:

- I have some questions: (1) What day of the week was Christ put to death? When was he buried? Please explain John 19:31. Also, Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:40. If he was taken off the cross on Saturday, how did he stay in the grave three days and three nights? So, what day was he put to death, and what day did he “raise”? Was he taken off the cross on Saturday and raised the next day? I am confused on this matter.
- (2) What is the “high” sabbath (John 19:31)? Are all sabbaths the same? If you can help me with this I sure would appreciate it very much.
- (3) If a Christian goes to a denomination, would that be spiritual adultery?
- (4) Is Christian Church and the Church of Christ the same?
- (5) Who brought in the term “Christian baptism” since it is not in the Bible?

Answers:

Please read each question again as an attempt is made to answer it.

(1) In trying to answer this multi-part question it is well for us to keep in mind the Jewish way of reckoning time. With them each new day began in the evening. Evidently it all goes back to the creation. After the first day of creation, we read, “And the evening and the morning were the first day” (Genesis 1:5). The same is said of the second day, “And the evening and the morning were the second day” (1:8), and of each subsequent day of creation. This concept is found throughout the Old Testament. The latter part of Leviticus 23:32 reads, “From evening unto evening, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.” Nehemiah wrote, “And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day” (Nehemiah 13:19).

(And as a visitor in present day Israel this present writer can personally testify to having seen the same thing happen, the doors and gates of the shops and places of business being slammed shut as the sun went down beginning the sabbath). Then the apostle Paul, used to this mode of thinking, continually speaks of “night and day” in reference to doing things (not “day and night” as we would say today) (Acts 20:31; I Thessalonians 2:9; 3:10; II Thessalonians 3:8; I Timothy 5:5; II Timothy 1:3).

Jesus was arrested and crucified on Friday (Jewish method of figuring time), was entombed, and arose from the grave on the third day, Sunday (the first day of the week). The way we figure time Jesus was arrested on Thursday night and crucified on Friday (but the Jewish Friday began with sunset on what we call Thursday night and continued through the next day; then their Saturday, or sabbath, began on our Friday night; and their Sunday, or first day of the week, began on our Saturday night, etc.).

Let us pinpoint what we have said a little more. John speaks of “the preparation of the Passover” when Jesus was tried and crucified. Mark 15:42, telling about what happened to the body of Jesus after his crucifixion, starts by saying, “And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath.” Matthew 27:62 speaks of the following day, referring back to “the day of the preparation.” Notice: “Now the first day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,” wanting the tomb sealed.

In the New Testament “the preparation” was the equivalent Jewish name to what we call Friday, just like “the sabbath” is the Jewish name for what we call Saturday. On Friday all necessary preparation was made for the sabbath so that they could fully and properly observe it the next day, not having to work, cook, etc. In the Mediterranean World this designation, the preparation, has so affixed itself to what we call Friday that today in Greece the word for Friday is this word, *paraskeue*. It is the same word that is found in the gospels of the Greek New Testament for the “preparation.” To verify this, before us we have *Divry’s New English-Greek and Greek-English Dictionary*. This is the kind of pocket dictionary that tourists use in traveling. Looking up the English word Friday, it gives the Greek for this as *paraskeue*. Then, looking up the Greek word *paraskeue*, it gives the English word Friday.

To speak of “the preparation of the Passover” is the same thing as saying the Friday of the Passover (week). The Scriptures point to Jesus being crucified on Friday (Mark 15:42; John 19:31,42; Matthew 27:62). The apostle Paul wrote about Jesus, “And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures” (I Corinthians 15:4). The gospel writers are clear in showing that the third day following the day of the preparation (Friday) was “the first day of the week” (or Sunday). Mark wrote, “Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils” (Mark 16:9).

(Continued on Next Page)

QUESTIONS

(Continued from Last Page)

What Jesus said in Matthew 12:40 is confusing to some. He said, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." What does he mean by "three days and three nights"? Let us enlist the services of brother J. W. McGarvey in explaining this Scripture. "Jesus was one full day, two full nights and parts of two other days in the grave. But, as the Jews reckoned a part of a day as a whole day when it occurred at the beginning or end of a series, he was correctly spoken of as being three days in the grave. The Jews had three phrases, viz.: 'on the third day,' 'after three days,' and 'three days and three nights,' which all meant the same thing; that is, three days, two of which might be fractional days. With them three full days and nights would be counted as four days unless the count began at sundown, the exact beginning of a day (Acts 10:1-30). For instances of Jewish computation of days see Genesis 42:17,18; I Kings 12:5,12; Esther 4:16; 5:1; Matthew 27:63,64." So, "three days and three nights" is a Jewish idiom, which can mean overlapping (or touching) three twenty-four hour periods (but not necessarily meaning the whole time). What we read in the Bible must mean to us what it meant to them.

(2) In answering question 2, involving the "high" sabbath, we will also explain John 19:31. "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies would not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for the sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away" (John 19:31). Jesus was crucified on Friday, the day of preparation for the sabbath. As a rule, the Romans usually left the executed bodies of criminals upon their crosses indefinitely, even to rot, as a warning to other potential offenders. However, the Jewish law said that a person who had been hanging upon a tree (or crucified in like manner) should not be left there over night, lest the land be defiled (Deuteronomy 21:22,23; Joshua 8:29). It would be more inappropriate and offensive to leave the body of a criminal on a cross leading into the solemn and holy sabbath day. And now is given another even more compelling reason why they wanted the bodies removed and taken away before the sabbath began—"for the sabbath day was an high day." Evidently this means that the sabbath of the Passover week was in a category of sacredness that lifted it above all other sabbath days (or at least in their thinking). The holy sabbath and the holy week (and holy day) overlapped, making the time doubly sacred to them. This seems to be the significance of "high day."

"The common view today seems to be that the breaking of the legs hastened death by asphyxiation. The weight of the body fixed the thoracic cage so that the lungs could not expell the air which was breathed in, but breathing by diaphragmatic action could continue for a long time so long as the legs, fastened to the cross, provided a point of leverage. When the legs were broken this leverage was no longer available and total as-

phyxia followed rapidly" (Lenski).

(3) **Question:** "If a Christian goes to a denomination, would that be spiritual adultery?"

First, let us say that there is such a thing as spiritual adultery. This was true with ancient Israel, and it is true in reference to the church of Jesus Christ. Time and time again in the Old Testament, the apostasy of Israel is spoken of as sexual immorality and marital infidelity when they went "whoring after other gods."

(Continued on Page 10)

BIBLE QUESTIONS

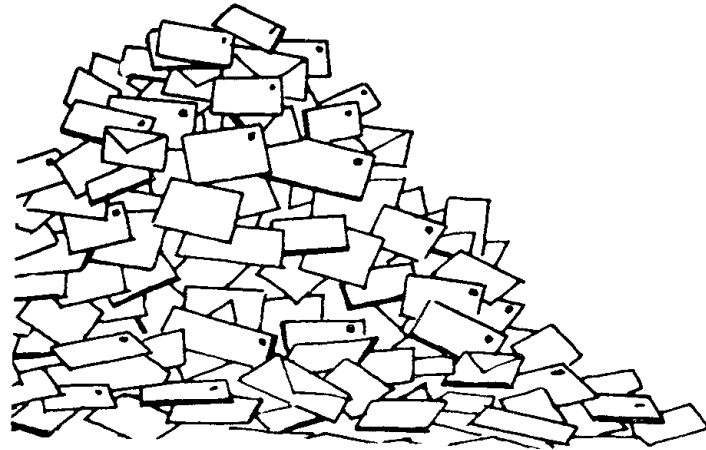
(in reference to cities in the Bible)

1. Who in the Bible do we find building the first city that is mentioned and naming it after his son?
2. Who is said to have built the city of Nineveh?
3. From what city in the ancient world did the patriarch Abraham come?
4. Where is the first reference made to the city of Damascus in the Bible?
5. Where is the first reference made to the city of Jerusalem in the Bible and under what circumstances?
6. What cities in the time of Abraham and Lot were destroyed by fire and brimstone from the LORD because of their homosexual perversion?
7. When the spies gave an evil report about the land of Canaan to Moses and the children of Israel, what was said about the cities?
8. What city in the Bible is called the city of palm trees?
9. What city was given to Caleb as his inheritance in the land of Canaan because he was one of the two spies who gave a good report?
10. What were the names of the six cities of refuge in Israel where the unintended killer might flee for safety?
11. What were the names of the five cities of the Philistines?
12. What city did David take from the Jebusites and make his capital?
13. Nebuchadnezzar was the king of what country identified in connection with what city?
14. What city did king Herod build for the Romans from which they controlled and occupied Palestine?
15. What city did Jesus make his headquarters (center of activity) during his ministry?
16. In the region of what two Gentile cities did Jesus visit during his ministry?
17. Of what city did Jesus say, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!"?
18. The church in what prominent Gentile city sent out Paul and Barnabas on their evangelistic journeys?
19. What outstanding city of the Gentiles did Paul have his mind set on visiting after taking the special benevolent offerings to the poor Christians in Jerusalem?
20. In the book of Revelation in the language of prophecy what two cities are mentioned much?

(NOTE: Answers found elsewhere in this issue of the paper).

READERS'

... Response



APOLOGY: Please accept our humble apology for slowness in getting correspondence answered. "We" have no staff of secretaries, etc. to handle such, and this is done by the "editor" as time allows. Be it known that you are appreciated.

NORTH CAROLINA:

- "Please continue to send me *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I enjoy reading all of them and have learned from them. I especially enjoyed the last one and the 'Thoughts on the Ten Commandments.' I also enjoy the questions and answers."
- "I want to let you know how much *THE SWORD AND STAFF* means to me. You are doing such a wonderful work for our Lord. Please continue the good work you are doing. Thanks again."

TENNESSEE:

- "Received *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. 'Thoughts on the Ten Commandments' article much needed to be observed in this day and time in our nation. Keep up the good work."
- "I want to try to tell you how much I appreciate your good paper. I also appreciate you and the effort involved in getting it out. I have just finished reading the issue I received last week on the Ten Commandments. Every word was read and meditated upon. I pray that you and your good paper will be around for years to come. . ."
- **Note:** For the benefit of readers in some circles it has been suggested that the following (reprinted) information appear in this paper. The article is abridged.

AND NOW IT HAS HAPPENED!

For sometime I have thought it was all but a foregone conclusion that it would happen. It was just that I didn't know the specifics of it—the who, when, and where. Now these details have been filled in, and I share them with you.

The Hopwood Memorial Christian Church in East Tennessee has recently chosen a woman as an elder. . .

Two significant factors need to be mentioned: (1) The person chosen as an elder is Dorothy Keister Walker, widow of the late Dr. Dean Walker. . . I am saying it is not some flighty, but ambitious, novice who has stumbled into this role, but a brotherhood figure who obviously is cognizant of the implications of her action.

(2) The congregation which chose Mrs. Walker, the Hopwood Memorial Christian Church. . . is located at the edge of the campus of Milligan College. . . Although the church is separate and distinct from Milligan College, naturally a

number of the college personnel are members of the church. Others, besides Mrs. Walker, have moved into this new area with eyes wide open.

It seems to me that in making this decision, the Hopwood Memorial Church has closed its ear to the voice of early church history, the plea of our movement, and the teaching of the Scriptures. . .

That one congregation has chosen a woman elder concerns me, but my deeper concern is for how many others will follow her example. . . Will Hopwood Memorial Christian Church be held up as a model for other churches to imitate, or condemned as a poor example to be avoided? We can only wait and see.

—*Restoration Herald*

WEST VIRGINIA:

- "We get *THE SWORD AND STAFF* and enjoy reading it very much. We appreciate the fine work you do in publishing this paper. We are sending a gift and hope that it will help in some small way."

KENTUCKY:

- "I certainly enjoy reading the truths in *THE SWORD AND STAFF*—a much needed publication. . . You certainly present truth in a manner that rational men will accept."
- "Please forgive us for being so slow in sending a check. We enjoy your paper so much. Keep up the good work. I know the Lord will bless you. Please keep us in your prayers."
- "Think of you all often. So few true to the Bible preachers left. We had to give up at. . . Please change our address and accept our check for *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. It means much and keeps our faith. . . in mankind."

MISSISSIPPI:

- "We appreciate very much your *SWORD AND STAFF*. Do you still have copies of the song, 'His Church Is Marching On' available on sheets to add to hymnals? If so please mail them to. . ."

IOWA:

- "I don't know how you got our name. But we have enjoyed *THE SWORD AND STAFF* for many years. And have neglected to send an offering. I'm sorry. I do read it from front to back. Keep up the good work. . ."

OKLAHOMA:

- "Just a quick note to say how much the study on the Ten Commandments has been appreciated. Even though one has read them again and again, your in-depth dealing of them was excellent. Thanks. . . God bless you for your hard work, the material in *THE SWORD AND STAFF* is a blessing."
- "Enclosed is \$ to help defray the cost of your fine publication. I really enjoy reading each issue. I appreciate the balanced contents. I enjoy its restoration stance and appeal. Thanks for all the effort you put into it."
- "We appreciate your paper. You're doing a good job. Keep it up. God bless."

CALIFORNIA:

- "Your paper is truly outstanding! Truthful and Stimulating to the Heart of Man! Your special edition of the Ten Commandments was Terrific! . . ."

CANADA:

- "My wife and I find your material very uplifting. Thank you."

NIGERIA:

- "I wish to ask to be included in the list of regular receivers of your Spirit-filled magazine *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. . . Thank you for your kindness."

QUESTIONS

(Continued from Page 8)

In the New Testament, the church is looked upon as the bride of Christ (Romans 7:2-4; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32). Consequently, all unfaithfulness (whether in reference to “morals” or “doctrine”) is looked upon as “spiritual adultery” (James 4:4; Revelation 2:2; etc.).

Regarding false teachers (and teaching), John wrote, “For he that biddeth them God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (cf. II John 9-11). We cannot participate religiously with people who are proponents of error (Matthew 15:4; Romans 16:17,18; I Timothy 6:3-5; etc.). However, the mere going into such a situation within itself alone does not mean that a person is guilty of participation. Didn’t the apostle Paul go into the synagogues and preach Christ to the Jews? But to dilly-dally around with false teachers and compromisers is another story.

(4) **Question:** “Is the Christian Church and the Church of Christ the same?”

In view of the next question we assume our inquirer has in mind these terms being used as names for the church. We make our appeal to the Scriptures, so it is good for us to turn there and see how such terms and expressions were initially used.

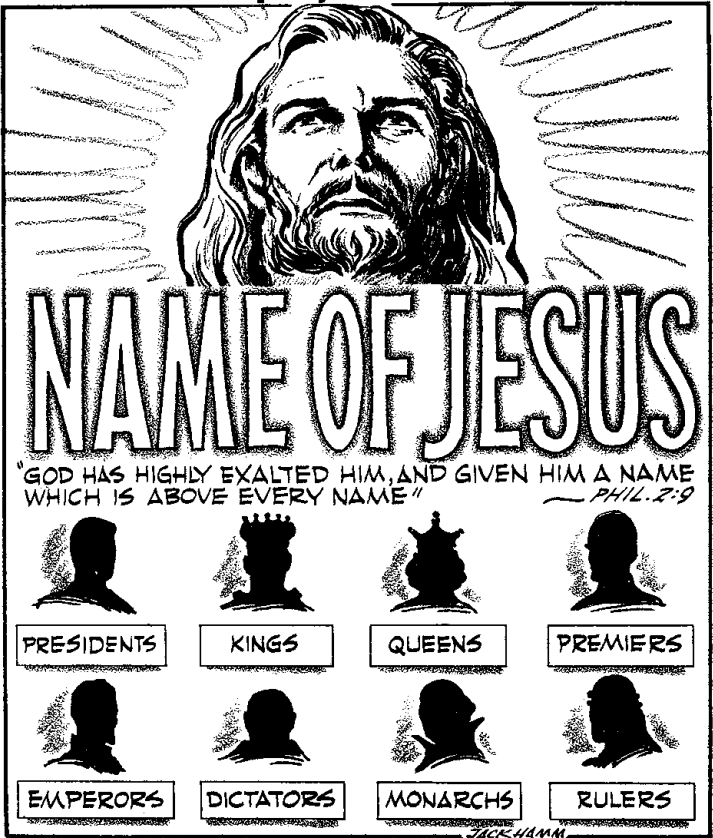
The word “Christian” is found three times in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; 26:28; I Peter 4:16). The name Christian came into being about ten years after the church was established as we read in Acts 11:26, “And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.” Every time that it is used in the New Testament, it refers to the individual member of the body of Christ (not to the collective body). If Christian Church is the name of the church, the church went about ten years without a name.

The expression “church of Christ” is implied many times throughout the New Testament Scriptures, beginning with the initial declaration of Christ when he said, “Upon this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:18). Romans 16:16b states, “The churches of Christ salute you.” The expressions are not used as a proper name (like John Doe) for the church, but as words showing ownership and relationship. Church as in “churches of Christ” is spelled with a little “c.” It is not a proper name.

The question again, Christian Church and Church of Christ—are they the same? According to the information at hand that we have just noticed, they are not. Christian refers to the individual member of the body of Christ, a person, whereas “church of Christ” points directly to the person of Christ.

But certain words in the process of their adaptation and usage in the English language have come to mean many things. The word “Christian” has come to be used as an adjective. In combination with other words it has also come to be used as the name of various things, as “Christian Church.” “Christian,” as used in conjunction with “Church,” i.e., “Christian Church,” is capable of various meanings (in modern usage). Some would say it means “of Christ,” the same as saying “church of Christ.” But, is it that simple? Consider:

Uniquely Above All



(1) Does the birth of Christ and the Christian birth mean the same? (2) Does the mother of Christ and the Christian mother mean the same? (3) Does suffering of Christ and Christian suffering mean the same? The alleged definition of Christian, meaning “of Christ,” is not that easily and readily seen. The picture is muddled. But when we say “church of Christ,” there is no question mark about what is said or meant (and “Christian,” as initially found in the Scriptures, points to the individual).

Then we are puzzled by some people who say that “Church of Christ” and “Christian Church” mean the same thing. They may call the church “Church of Christ,” but under these words in parenthesis they will put “Christian Church.” Others speak of Christian Churches and Churches of Christ, or simply designate the churches as Christian Churches/Churches of Christ. As a former Methodist who has unconditionally and simply identified himself with the undenominational church of the New Testament, this is confusing to this writer. It seems that some people who talk about a “Restoration Movement” need to do a little more moving and restoring (if indeed they are devoted to the “Restoration” concept).

But we are not advocating “CHURCH OF CHRIST” as *THE* name for the church because the church has no proper name (like John Doe), although “church of Christ” is more expressive and appropriate when talking about the Lord’s church. Many different expressions are found in the New Testament, including “church of God.” The expression “church of Christ” can be used in a wooden, artificial way (in essence, making it denominational). Various people, including preachers (who otherwise preach the truth), have been

heard doing this at times. They talk about Church of Christ doctrine, Church of Christ people, Church of Christ preachers—yes, Church of Christ this and Church of Christ that; etc. We are made to wonder, do they belong to the Church of Christ Church? (And in some publications reference is actually and commonly made to “Church of Christ congregations”). Somewhere along the way the undenominational way of thinking and talking has been lost. The denominational status has been unconsciously (or consciously?) accepted, it seems, although this may be denied.

These are our Scriptural thoughts on this question (and may our readers accept them in the spirit they are presented—in all honesty, kindness, and sincerity). The purpose of these words is not to condemn, nor is it to justify, but to search out, to understand, and to know the truth.

NOTE: To those not initiated in this line of thinking perhaps a comment or two is in order. The church in its inception (in the days of the apostles) was not a denomination. The church was one (Ephesians 4:46), and there were no denominations as we know them today. The word denomination signifies to divide off and name, i.e., *de-nominate*. All such division is condemned, along with the names that identify the division. Read I Corinthians 1:10-13, and then 3:4, “For while one saith, I am of Paul: and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?” Then after further dealing with this problem in this chapter, Paul said, “Therefore let no man glory in man. . .” (verse 21), and backing up to 1:31, “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” Denominational names detract from the glory of the Lord, perpetuate division, and hinder the cause of Christ. Are not names such as Lutheran and Wesleyan explicit modern day examples of this? And denominational names that point to doctrines and systems of church government likewise detract from Christ, foster and perpetuate division, not practicing the unity enjoined in the Scriptures. Anyone who has spent any time with the Bible knows that names are especially significant. Also, Colossians 1:18 reads, “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.” We are content to be a humble Christian simply identified with the one church that is found in the New Testament (stripped of all denominational reference).

(5) “Who brought in the term ‘Christian baptism’ since it is not in the Bible?”

We do not know the answer to this question. We do know how the term “Christian” is used in the New Testament, and, personally, it is this writer’s preference to not use this expression (“Christian baptism”).

From Indiana:

(1) A question about the purpose of baptism: Is baptism for the remission of sins, or is it just an act of obedience? What is the purpose of baptism?

Answer:

As we shall see, baptism is for the remission of sins, and it is an act of obedience (but not “just” an act of obedience—as if it were “just” something external or

superficial). As an act of faith God has tied in salvation with baptism (but not with baptism as an isolated act by itself). And consequently, although baptism involves salvation, it is not what belittling critics would call “baptismal regeneration.”

In the great commission the Lord Jesus commanded, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15,16). In the book of Acts when this great commission was being carried out (and the gospel was being initially preached), baptism was always part of man’s response to the gospel. After the preaching on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2, the day the church got under way), “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:41). Continuing the record of the spread of the gospel, we read in Acts 8:12 and 13, “But when they (the people of Samaria) believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized. . .” In this same chapter, before going on, let us notice verses 35 and 36 (Philip is speaking to the Ethiopian), “Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?” (How did this man know he needed to be baptized? It is obvious. Philip told him. Working under the great commission, and in preaching Christ, he preached baptism. The Ethiopian wanted to consummate his acceptance of Christ in this act of faith and obedience). In Acts 16:14 and 15, we read, “And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household. . .” NOTICE: “*When* she was baptized” (as in Acts 8:13, “*when* he was baptized”)—*WHEN* (just like everyone else who accepted Christ); this stands as a matter of public record as occurring with every conversion. Contrary to the practice of Billy Graham and the teaching of modern denominationalists, people accepting Christ without being baptized was something unheard of in early New Testament times. And, getting back to the great commission being carried out, the apostle Paul asked and declared in Romans 10:18, “Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” But in spite of that he said, “But they have not all obeyed the gospel. . .” (Romans 10:16).

“But they have not all *obeyed the gospel*”—this is an interesting expression. We come across this mode of expression elsewhere in the New Testament (and a similar, parallel one, “obedient to the faith,” Acts 6:7, and “obedience to the faith,” Romans 1:5). The apostle Peter wrote, “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that *obey not the*”
(Continued on Next Page)

QUESTIONS

(Continued from Last Page)

gospel of God?" (I Peter 4:17). In II Thessalonians 1:8, speaking of the second coming of Christ, the apostle Paul likewise wrote, "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that *obey not the gospel* of our Lord Jesus Christ." Obviously, they who obey the gospel are the saved and those who obey not are the unsaved.

But the expression seems to have more of a technical application in this respect. What is the gospel? How does one "obey the gospel" to enter the classification of the saved? In I Corinthians 15:1-4ff, Paul expounds the gospel. He said, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you. . ." Then he went on to say, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scripture; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scripture." Yes, the gospel is the good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (and how that forgiveness of sins and eternal life are possible because of this). But how does one obey the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (i.e., "obey the gospel")? It starts and is concluded through faith. In the 10th chapter of Romans, Paul makes it plain that Christ is not to be crucified, buried, and raised all over again—but, "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (10:9). The gospel is to be believed in the heart, which comes as a result of preaching (10:17). In spite of the extensive preaching, Paul points out, "But they have not all obeyed the gospel" (10:16). However, of the Christians at Rome, he said, "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you" (6:17). Yes, not only does he speak of believing in the heart, he speaks of obeying from the heart (and especially that "form of doctrine" which had been delivered unto them). Of course that "form of doctrine" is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. How do men obey this (obey the gospel)? Listen to Paul again: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we should be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. 6:3-6). It is even as Paul said in the Scripture of parallel thought, Colossians 2:12, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." And then Colossians 3:1, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." It is no wonder that in having Christ preached to him the Ethiopian wanted to be baptized (Acts 8:35,36).

Do we get the picture? It is very simple. In obeying

the gospel, we die with Christ (die to sin in repentance), we are buried with Christ by immersion in the watery grave of baptism (for the remission of sins as the "old man" of sin is put off), and then we are raised with him from the water to walk in newness of life. It is in being planted together in the likeness of his death that we will be found in the likeness of his resurrection (Romans 6:5). The plan of God calls for us to believe the gospel in our hearts and then to identify with the great cardinal truths of what we believe in obeying the gospel from our hearts in personal death to sin, burial in baptism, and the coming forth from the watery grave to a new life. It is an act of faith all the way: faith in Christ and faith in what Christ has said in commanding us to be baptized.

With these thoughts as a background, let us look more specifically to what the New Testament says is the purpose of New Testament baptism.

■ Baptism is for the remission of sins:

—What Peter said to the inquirers on the day of Pentecost: "Then Peter said unto them, 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). For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38,39).

—What Ananias told Saul of Tarsus who still had his sins although he had been praying three days (Acts 9:9,11): "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and *be baptized, and wash away thy sins*, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

—When Paul wrote to the Colossian Christians: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, *in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh* by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened (made alive) together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Colossians 2:11-13).

Of course it is the blood of Christ, spiritually speaking, tied in with the faith and obedience that takes away sins in baptism (Revelation 1:5; Romans 6:3; Hebrews 10:22; etc.).

■ **Baptism is part of being born of water and the Spirit, receiving the Spirit:** John 3:5; Acts 2:38; Acts 5:32; I Corinthians 6:11; I Peter 1:22,23.

■ **Baptism is necessary to enter the kingdom, the church, the body of Christ:** John 3:5; Acts 2:38-41,47; I Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27-29.

■ **Baptism is the point where it is said that we put on Christ, become Christians:** "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27).

■ **Baptism is said to save us, along with other things:** Mark 16:15,16; Titus 3:5; I Peter 3:21.

Other Scriptural thoughts could be pointed out as to the purpose of baptism, but these are sufficient to our understanding. Let it be remembered that baptism as an isolated act avails nothing. But as the consum-



mation of the surrender of the soul in faith and repentance, baptism is what puts us into Christ with the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38,39). It is the acceptance of God's grace. Amen!

(2) A question about how to handle the problem of unqualified elders and deacons in the church (how to go about correcting such a problem).

Answer:

First, let it be understood that there are certain qualifications laid down in the Scriptures for *men* entering these offices of service (I Timothy 3; Titus 1). They must be met. Paul begins by saying in I Timothy 3:2, "A bishop (elder) *must* be. . ." etc. The word "must" is *dei*, and it is the same word that is found in John 3:7 when Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye *must* be born again" (John 3:7). *Dei* comes from *deo*, which means to bind, to tie. Also, it seems that the word *doulos* (bondservant, slave) comes from this. So, *must* is a pretty strong word, indicating that the qualifications have to be met. They are binding.

The qualifications involve spiritual maturity, family, experience, ability, etc. Just because a man is a good person doesn't necessarily mean that he qualifies to be an elder. He is to be a bishop (overseer). Can he teach? Does he have executive, leadership ability? Not everyone does. Then just because he has such ability doesn't mean that he qualifies otherwise either. His personal and family life must be right too. Paul told Timothy, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partakers of other men's sins; keep thyself pure" (I Timothy 5:22). It is better to go without "officers" than to have unqualified men.

But there are too many situations today where the Bible has been neglected (even disregarded), and un-

qualified men have been put into these positions. The question involves how to deal with the problem, and it must be dealt with sooner or later. Men must be taught all things (Matthew 28:20; Acts 20:26-28). Churches must be set in order (Titus 1:5). Most of the New Testament epistles were written with that intention in mind. We have no ready-made answers. However, wisdom demands that we approach the problem with prayer and caution. Obviously, they were put into these positions out of a lack of knowledge and at a time when the spirituality of the church was not at a high level. Therefore, there is much patient teaching to be done, and the level of spirituality must be raised in the church. Trying to remedy such problems in the church outside of the context of spiritual growth (and knowledge) will only result in more problems of another nature. There will be resentment and rebellion. However, when people have grown spiritually, and are growing, they are ready to accept what the Bible says.

From California:

A question involving Saul of Tarsus and Ananias (in Acts 9:17-19): Was the Holy Spirit given to Saul by the laying on of Ananias' hands?

Answer:

The regular gift of the Holy Spirit to indwell in believers came about (and comes about) through repentance and baptism into Christ. Read Acts 2:38 and 39. They who repented and were baptized would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Verse 39 makes it plain that this promise is universal. However, there was in the early days of the church what we might call a charismatic gift of the Holy Spirit, having nothing to do with salvation, that was given through the laying on the apostles' hands. This charismatic impartation of the Holy Spirit brought about various supernatural gifts advantageous to the infant church that could be exercised by the one who received it (and them).

Let us notice various Scriptures to that effect that attest to this truth. Read Hebrews 2:3 and 4. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts (footnote: distributions) of the Holy Ghost (Spirit) according to his will?" NOTE: This great salvation was first spoken by the Lord, and then confirmed unto others by them that heard him (the apostles who heard Christ, Acts 1:1-8,21,22; 2:43; 4:33). They (the apostles) bore witness with signs and wonders, and by various kinds of miracles—also by means of distribution or gifts of the Holy Spirit to others (the kind of gift, or gifts, was determined in each individual by the will of God). This was accomplished through laying on of the apostles' hands. In reference to this charismatic phenomenon, we read in Acts 8:18, "And when Simon (the sorcerer) saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost (Spirit) was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power. . ." Later on in Acts 19:6 on another occasion, we further read, "And

(Continued on Next Page)

QUESTIONS

(Continued from Last Page)

when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost (Spirit) came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.”

Inasmuch as apostles were the personal, official eye-witnesses of the resurrection of Christ (and they have served their purpose), we no longer have living apostles in the church today. Therefore, this charismatic gift of the Spirit is not given today. It served its extraordinary purpose and is no longer needed.

Now looking back to the original question, there is no reason to think that Ananias imparted the charismatic gift of the Spirit upon Saul by the laying on his hands. He was not an apostle. Evidently, somewhere along the way Ananias himself had received the charismatic power of the Holy Spirit because when he came to Saul, Saul therewith received his eyesight (unless this was a miracle directly from God). And, upon being baptized, Saul would receive the regular gift of the Holy Spirit common to all believers (Acts 9:18; 22:16; 2:38,39). All believers receive and should be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18; 3:16,17). Of course we know that Saul (Paul) also as an especially chosen apostle to the Gentiles had the power of the Holy Spirit beyond regular believers in a charismatic way. □

HOW QUICKLY FALL THE LOVELY LEAVES

*How quickly falls the lovely leaf
From Autumn's once triumphant trees;
With rapture we beheld their beauty,
Till touched by Winter's chilling breeze
The colors that were once their glory
Have turned an earthy brown;
The trees once wrapped in royal raiment
Have lost their radiant crown.
... So it is with all of us
Who live and breathe by grace;
We think that we will leave our mark,
But in the end there's little trace.
We labor for so many things,
And hope for a long life span,
When even at its fullest limit,
Life is less than a flash in the pan.
As leaves once glorious fall to earth,
We, too, will find life's final worth;
It's the hereafter that matters more,
Than all earthly things we lay by and store.
As trees reborn in Heaven's Spring,
With the saved forever
We'll live and sing,
And without regret we'll be glad
That this world was a PASSING THING.*

By **BOB WICKLINE**

“TOO MUCH TELEVISION, TOO MUCH FAT”

THE 39,000-MEMBER American Academy of Pediatrics says too much TV-watching by your children can turn them violent, aggressive or overweight—

and possibly all three. . .

Data from the A.C. Nielsen Co. reveals that children aged 2 to 5 currently watch about 25 hours of TV a week; those 6 to 11 watch more than 22 hours a week; and those in the 12 to 17 bracket watch 23 hours a week.

The pediatricians maintain that by the time today's child reaches age 70, he or she will have spent approximately seven years in front of the tube.—*Parade* □

An Oft-stated Fact



THIS BOOK WILL KEEP YOU FROM SIN,
OR SIN WILL KEEP YOU FROM THIS BOOK.

The Word “Influence”

THE WORD “INFLUENCE” comes from two words meaning “to flow into.” The idea is that when something flows into something else, it puts itself into it, becomes part of it, affects it. And that is exactly what happens.

Water can be influenced by its environment and surroundings. The cold blast of winter turns it to ice so hard that people can skate on it. Then, the balmy days of spring come, and the ice is melted. When water is placed over heat, it will get hot, boil, and go off into the air as vapor. It is so easily influenced. If water flows through a channel of dirt banks, it becomes muddy and dirty, or if it flows over rocks, it becomes clear.

Friend, do you realize that we are much like water in our ability to be influenced? The water itself can do nothing about the matter, but we as individuals can, and that person who does not care what influences work upon him has indeed fallen to the lowest. Those who exercise no more personal decision about themselves than the water will behave when among good people, but will fall in with the wicked when among the wicked. They do not rise above their surroundings.

Timothy was told to “flee” youthful lusts and to “fol-

low” after righteousness, faith, charity, and peace with others who were calling upon the Lord out of pure hearts (II Timothy 2:22).

Oh, that all people would obey this double injunction to “flee” and to “follow”—fleeing from wrong things and following right things!—*Troy Allen* □

The Name “Christian”

HENRY Ward Beecher: “Let me speak in the language of heaven and call you Christians.”

Albert Barnes: “These divisions should be merged into the holy name Christian.”

Martin Luther: “I pray you leave my name alone. Do not call yourselves Lutherans, but Christians.”

John Wesley: “I wish the name Methodist might never be mentioned again, but lost in eternal oblivion.”

Charles Spurgeon: “I say of the Baptist name, let it perish, but let Christ’s name last forever. I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living.”

The apostle Peter: “Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name” (I Peter 4:16).

The writer Luke: “. . . And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” (Acts 11:26).

The So-Called “Living Bible”

MANY PEOPLE use Kenneth Taylor’s *Living Bible*. As a study tool, I doubt that any would object, but what too few realize is, Mr. Taylor’s book is not actually the Bible. In the preface of his own work he admits it is a *paraphrase*. This means it is not a translation of what the inspired writers said at all. It is a book where the author gives his own beliefs concerning what God actually said. His book is not the Word, but a sort of a commentary on it. Where his views are correct, all is well and good, but where incorrect, a man’s words become God’s in the mind of men. Striving to help others understand the Bible is not bad. It is only evil when a man’s commentary is referred to as (and is believed to be) the Word of God. It is more than dangerous; it is a sin to equate any work of man with the Book.—*Selected* □

What About Your Measuring Rule?

I RECALL the story of a little boy who once came running to his mother, exclaiming, “Mama, I’m seven and a half feet tall!”

Gently and lovingly the mother responded, “Are you sure? You don’t look that tall to me. What makes you think you are seven and a half feet tall?”

“I measured myself,” the little fellow replied confidently, “with this measuring ruler that I made, and I am seven and a half feet tall.”

The thought occurred to me that many people are doing religiously what the little boy did. They create their own measuring stick. The apostle Paul in the Roman letter, wrote of the Jewish people in that generation “going about to establish their own righteousness”

rather than “submitting themselves to the righteousness of God” (Romans 10:3). I think of Solomon’s warning that, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 16:25). And Jesus warned, “In vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:9).

How many people there must be who make their own measuring sticks and establish their own standards regarding religion! God has revealed his will for us through the Holy Scriptures. We would do well to measure our religious convictions and practices by what the Lord has said. When we stand before God in the Judgment Day, it will not be a measuring stick that man has made by which we shall be examined. We shall be judged by the Word of God.—*Selected* □

The Most Dangerous Place to Live in the United States

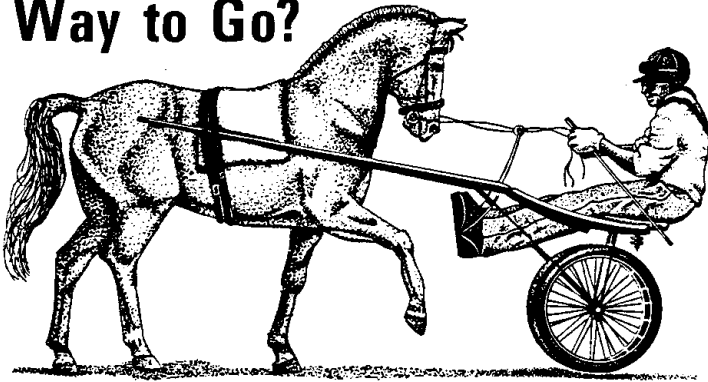
DO YOU KNOW where the most dangerous place to live in the United States is? Do you think it is in the East, West, North, or South? Do you think it is in the city or the country? Is it a major city like New York, Washington D.C., or Dallas? Is it in minority or ethnic neighborhoods? Just where is the most dangerous place to live in the United States?

According to some information heard recently on the radio, the most dangerous place to live in the United States is *in the mother’s womb*. —*Selected* □

Fifteen Nevers of Marriage

1. Never both be angry at once.
2. Never talk at one another, either alone or in company.
3. Never speak loud to each other unless the house is on fire.
4. Never find fault, unless it is perfectly certain that a fault has been committed, and always speak lovingly.
5. Never allow a request to be repeated.
6. Never make a remark at the expense of each other.
7. Never part for a day without loving words.
8. Never meet without loving welcome.
9. Never let the sun go down upon any anger or grievance.
10. Never let any fault you have committed go by until you have frankly confessed it, and in sincere repentance asked forgiveness.
11. Never forget that marriage is ordained of God, and that His blessing alone can make it what it should be.
12. Never forget the happy hours of early love.
13. Never sigh over what might have been, but make the best of what is.
14. Never be contented until you know you are both walking in the Lord’s way.
15. Never let your hopes stop short of the eternal home.—*Anonymous* □

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.

Is Your Child Involved in Drugs?

HERE are some “danger signs” to look for:

- 1. **Degeneration of relationships.** Your child begins ignoring or being abusive to other members of the family. Old friends are forsaken.
- 2. **Grades go down.** If your child becomes negligent in doing homework, begins cutting classes at school, and drops out of various social activities he/she may be having a problem with drugs.
- 3. **Personal appearance is neglected.** You can begin to be concerned when your child shows no interest at all in his or her personal appearance.
- 4. **Increased secrecy.** Your child may keep you out of his or her plans; never tell you who their friends are or where they spend their time when away from home and school.
- 5. **Altered behavior.** The child may not sleep as well or as long, or on the other hand, sleep longer, eat less and have less energy.
- 6. **Finally—“Tell tale” eyes.** The pupils of the eyes may be wide open or pinpoint in size and the whites of the eyes become bloodshot. Also, a youth engaged in drug usage will develop a dull, glazed stare.

Remember, children are in school, at play, at work, and in various other activities with the average youth of the community. Statistics show that some of our young people will be affected.—*Selected (Krantz)* □

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Answers to: BIBLE QUESTIONS

- 1. Genesis 4:17; 2. Genesis 10:8-11; 3. Genesis 11:27-12:1; 4. Genesis 14:13-16; 5. Genesis 14:17-24; 6. Genesis 19:24-29; Deuteronomy 29:23; 7. Numbers 13:25-28; Deuteronomy 1:28; 8. Deuteronomy 34:3; 9. Joshua 14:6-15; 15:13; 10. Joshua 20:1-9; 11. I Samuel 6:16-18; 12. II Samuel 5:3-10; I Chronicles 11:1-9; 13. Daniel 1:1; 14. Caesarea; 15. Matthew 4:13; 16. Mark 7:24-31; 17. Matthew 23:37; 18. Acts 13:1-3; 19. Acts 19:21; Acts 23:11; Romans 15:24-32; 20. Babylon and the new Jerusalem.

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