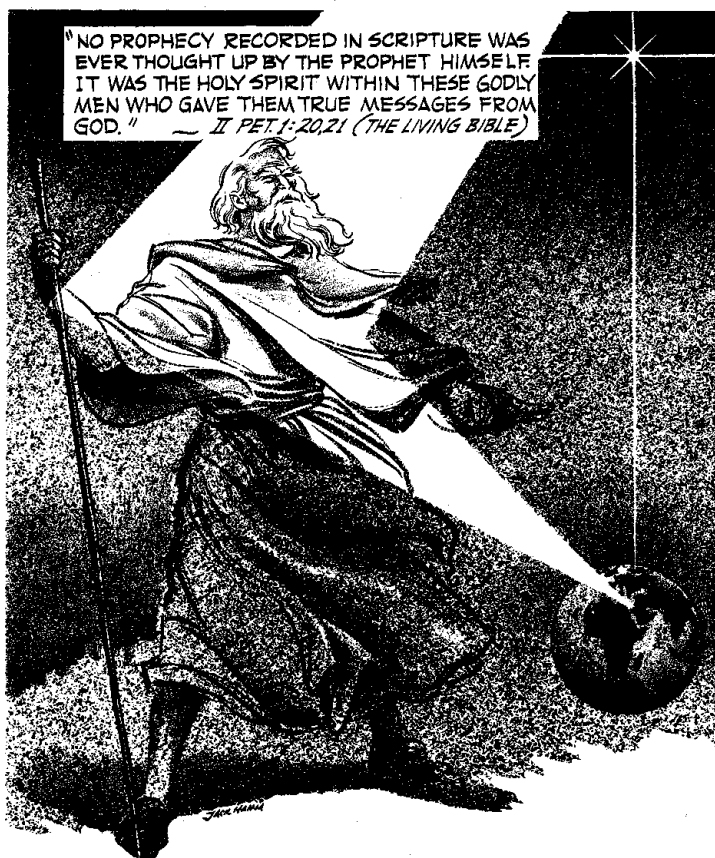


# The Sword AND Staff

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

## False Prophets, False Teachers, and False Teaching



● By JAMES E. GIBBONS

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IN ANCIENT TIMES God spoke His message to His people Israel through the prophets. The apostle Peter tells us also that there were false prophets among them who misrepresented things and that there would be false teachers in the context of the church in the days ahead. First, poised on the outside perimeter of Israel, Balaam appears as a false prophet confronting Israel. In the history that follows there were actually false prophets "among the people." At different times, God's prophets and the false prophets clashed. Jesus said that false Christs and

● *"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not"* (II Peter 2:1-3).

false prophets would come in the New Testament age. Specifically in Matthew 24:11-13 he said, "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." The early church had to deal with the problem of Judaizers (Galatians), the budding Gnostic heresy (I and II John), and diverse pagan philosophies (Colossians 2:4-23; etc.). As pointed out (II Peter 2 and 3), the apostle Peter warned his readers in Asia Minor and points to the time when false teachers would come. Jude, in his short epistle, tells his readers that the time Peter had spoken of had arrived. The false teachers were in their midst. Paul warned the Ephesian elders of apostasy to come from their own number (Acts 20:28-35). Then Paul, in his epistles, prophesies of a great apostasy and general falling away from the truth (II Thessalonians 2:1-12; I Timothy 4:1-6). This came with the Dark Ages and the development of Catholicism (and its denominational offspring). Among many other related matters, the last book of the Bible tells of the "false prophet" that was cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20; 20:10).

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—Thank you—

## Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

*THE PURSUIT of righteousness, aside from humility, only results in self-righteousness.*

"We have seen pictures of great men astride horses but none astride a fence."

*It is indeed strange that in these modern times with the increase in the knowledge of the laws of God (physical laws as discovered in science) there has come a decrease in the knowledge of God (and scientists vaunt themselves in their discoveries).*

"A pessimist is someone who complains about the noise when opportunity knocks."

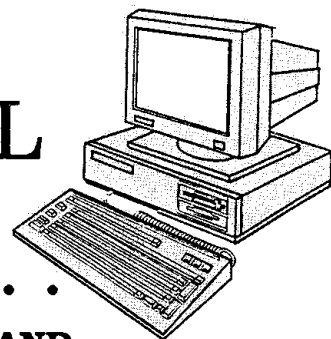
*In our later years in confronting the realism of life (which is not necessarily truth), beware lest we lose the idealism of youth, giving way to compromise and conformity.*

"The evil tongue slays three, the slanderer, the slandered, and the listener."

*From a high elevation, things look very small; as Christians we are now in "heavenly places" in Christ Jesus, and consequently problems on earth should appear as small.*

"You are not what you think you are, but what you think, you are."

# EDITORIAL COMMENTS...



## FULFILLMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENT IN LIFE

**A PERSON** should not despair if he feels unfulfilled in his accomplishments at any given point in life. Life is not over until the last breath has been taken and the last chapter has been written. Even then it is not over as far as the Christian is concerned. Following a life filled with purpose, the best is yet to come.

Moses was in his prime, forty years old, and at the threshold of accomplishment as far as worldly renown is concerned when unfolding circumstances radically reversed his situation. Forced to flee Egypt as a fugitive, the next forty years were spent in relative obscurity tending sheep in rugged and remote desert country. But all of this was not without significance. God was getting him ready for his mission in life. His great life's work was yet to come and was accomplished as a "senior citizen" passed the age of eighty (and continuing until he died at the age of 120). God used him as Israel's great emancipator, lawgiver, and leader to the Promised Land.

Saul of Tarsus, as a persecutor of Christians, looked like a failure in a bad sort of way. He was an unbeliever and had brought much harm to the church through his Jewish sectarian zeal. But God had mercy on him, and he was forgiven of his sins as he was brought unto faith. He was especially called of Christ to be the great apostle to the Gentiles. There was great promise for his life, but at first it seemed nothing of a moving nature happened. His first three years after his conversion were spent in unknown obscurity in Arabia (Galatians 1:17,18). Then add the time away from public view in Syria and Cilicia (Acts 9:30; Galatians 1:21), and we have seven or eight years. The life of the apostle Paul seems to have been on "hold." It was left to the good man Barnabas to find him, bring him to Antioch, and actively launch him into his great apostolic work for the Lord (Acts 11:21-25; 13:1ff). At any given point in a person's life we should not be over-critical. Great things may still be ahead. God, in His good time, may be preparing one for that which is yet to come. And, as Gentiles, we can forever be grateful for the work of the apostle Paul.

Little is known about the early life of Christ on earth. Yes, we know about his glorious birth and some things that happened right after his birth. We read of what happened once

## WARNING!

**IS IT LATER** than we think? There is a bill in the United States Senate, Number 574 [sponsored by Sen. Edward Kennedy], and a House companion bill, H.R. 1430 [sponsored by Rep. Barney Frank] that, if passed, would amend the Civil Rights Acts of 1964. This bill would prohibit discrimination on the basis of affectional or sexual orientation.

This means, among other things, that:

- A man who "marries" another man, or any same sex affiliation parading as a marriage, will have the identical marital rights as you and your spouse, including the right to adopt children (The proposed new law requires full recognition of same-sex "marriages.")

- Children would be taught in schools that homosexuality is a constitutional civil right and a valid life-style.

- It would be unlawful to oppose homosexuality on radio, television, newspapers, and magazines, or any medium coming under federal license and regulation or using the post office for distribution.

- Under some circumstances the church may be forced to hire homosexuals.

- Federal housing laws would protect homosexuals.

- Homosexuals would have the protection of federal employment regulations and, under some circumstances, employers may be forced to hire a certain number of admitted homosexuals (those in the closet would not count).

- The Attorney General of the United States would be forced to prosecute at tax payers' expense any person accused of violating the civil rights of homosexuals.

We need to act now! We need to be sure that state and national leaders understand the gravity of the situation and are postured to vigorously oppose this legislation on moral grounds. We need to write letters to editors and newspapers and magazines. We need to call elected officials and demand they vote against the passage of this amendment to the Civil Rights Statute. We need to write congressmen and senators opposing this amendment. We need to organize opposition to this legislation. Christians should be against every candidate who is for passing laws to protect and promote homosexuality...

Remember Sodom and Gomorrah!

—*Elton Holden (adapted)* □

when he was twelve years old in the city of Jerusalem. We know he grew up in the mountainside town of Nazareth, not the most outstanding place from which to hail in that day. Of the rest we know nothing, except from the time that he was about thirty years old when he began his ministry, which lasted a little over three years. In relation to the rest of his human life of which we know the most, ninety percent was in preparation for the remaining ten percent. His background and preparation period could be looked upon with disdain. Not

knowing or understanding, when he began his ministry, the question was asked, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Little did they know that his life would be the most fulfilling of lives that has ever been lived. It is no wonder that Isaiah said, "Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form or comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him" (Isaiah 53:1,2). His earthly life and ministry ended in one great predestined and fulfilling climax which crowned it all. For that very "hour" he had come into the world, he said (John 12:27). A very ordinary life ended in the most extraordinary ministry and the most extraordinary of deaths. He was crucified and raised from the dead to become the Savior of the world. Heaven's purpose had been accomplished on earth. Hope and salvation had been restored to man.

This brings us back personally to our sense of accomplishment and fulfillment in life. Keep these lessons in mind as far as personal aspirations and goals are concerned. Do not despair. God's crowning purpose may yet have to be realized in our lives. Look at every day as preparation for greater things to come (regardless of our age). Whether for time or eternity, God is getting us ready for bigger and better things (if we are his children). With most of us it will be nothing sensational as far as this world is concerned. The world may not recognize it, but God will. Yes, every facet of a Christian's life is filled with the utmost meaning and dignity every step of the way as he embodies the teachings of Christ on earth. Paul said, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Colossians 3:23; I Corinthians 10:31). Then that sense of fulfillment may be brought out more vividly at various times when we are called upon to glorify God in some special way. Within itself, consistently living the Christian life is the most fulfilling thing that can be done upon this earth. It is the most exciting experience. Consequently, the greatest personal accomplishment in life is to die in the Lord. Yes, finally to hear Christ say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," it will ring in our ears throughout eternity. The victory "crown" will be ours (Revelation 2:10).

Keep on, Christian. Press on, brothers and sisters. Whether for time or eternity, the best is yet to come. There are greater heights and attainments ahead (Philippians 3:13,14).—*J.E.G.* □

## False Prophets, False Teachers, and False Teaching (Cont. from Page 1)

The Bible is plain in telling us there is such a thing as false prophets, false teachers, and false teaching. Warnings abound. Today we live in the aftermath of the great apostasy and in times of a more general and widespread apostasy. Today we live in a pluralistic society that is permeated with human (and humanistic) philosophies that deny the absolute (and absolutes). To many, truth is relative, and to say that there is such a thing as "false prophets, false teachers, and false teaching" is unthinkable. It is an affront to the modern mind. This fuzzy mentality has filtered its way down to the man on the street and is voiced in such unintelligible nonsense as, "It doesn't make any difference what you believe just so you are sincere."

Then there are those who readily admit there is such a thing as false teachers (and false teaching). To them false prophets and teachers are those whose teachings are contrary to the Word of God—they are false. This acknowledgment is good. This understanding is true as far as it goes, but it doesn't take into account the whole picture.

In this article let us notice what was initially involved in a person being a false prophet in ancient Israel. And as Peter said there would be false teachers in church circles, it is well that we know exactly what he had in mind. Indeed it is imperative that we know since we are living in times of "falling away" in our day.

### I. FALSE PROPHETS

#### The Word "Prophet"

Our English word "prophet" basically has its origin in the Greek word *prophetes*. The word *prophetes* comes from two parts, *pro* (before) and *phemi* (to tell, to speak). Consequently, that would make a prophet one who speaks before. In the Bible he was God's inspired spokesman, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost [Spirit]" (II Peter 1:21). His message was gotten directly from God and conveyed unto man. What God said to Moses illustrates the basic meaning of prophet. "And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land" (Exodus 7:1,2).

#### Prophets Foretell and Forttell

The work of the prophet in representing God before man was to *foretell* and to *forttell*. By divine

from GOD'S FAITHFUL & OBEDIENT PROPHET



inspiration he would foretell things to happen in the future (i.e., he would prophesy). Also by divine inspiration he would forttell, presenting God's Word by direct revelation from Heaven. In contrast, a false prophet would be one who was not inspired of God to foretell the future and one who represented his own words as the Word of God, leading the people astray. Even if he was able to produce a sign or a wonder, the ultimate test was the truthfulness of his words. Did they harmonize with established revelation?

#### Important Scriptures

Deuteronomy 18:20 speaks of those who would presumptuously speak on their own, who really were false prophets. "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."

As we said, even though a supposed prophet was able to produce a sign or a wonder, what really mattered was the truthfulness of his words. Listen: "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake

unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them: Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 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. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee" (Deuteronomy 13:1-5).

Yes, the ultimate test was the Word of God. Were they walking according to the truth and commands of God's Word? "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isaiah 8:19,20).

**Summary Statements**

Therefore, we summarize:

- (1) A man was regarded as a false prophet if he spoke as a prophet on his own initiative without God inspiring or prompting him to speak (in other words, he did not have the gift of inspiration, the gift of prophecy).
- (2) He was a false prophet if he did not stand for the truth of God and His commandments. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).
- (3) If what a supposed prophet said (prophesied) did not come to pass, it was obvious that he had spoken presumptuously and was a false prophet.
- (4) In ancient Israel false prophets were to be put to death.

**Another Factor**

There was another factor, in addition to these listed, that entered into a person being a false prophet. In anguish Jeremiah wrote, "I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none return from wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah" (Jeremiah 23:14). Also, for illustrative purposes, consider Isaiah 28:7 and Micah 2:11. Peter said, as

earlier noticed, that "holy men" spoke as they were "moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21). These men were anything but holy. A person could be a false prophet because his life was false too.

**New Testament Prophets**

The early church had its prophets. They were much in the same category as that of the Old Testament prophets. By direct revelation from God they could foretell and forthtell. This spiritual gift of prophecy was one among various other miraculous gifts (Hebrews 2:3,4; I Corinthians 12:4-11,28-31). Paul said that the church was "built upon the foundation of the apostles and *prophets*, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20). The New Testament was "revealed unto his holy apostles and *prophets* by the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:5). Paul said that "prophecies" would fail, and that supernatural "knowledge" would vanish away, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (I Corinthians 13:8-10). The time came when the gift of prophecy, and consequently prophets, would no longer be in the church (being no longer needed). Along with its demise, the other supernatural spiritual gifts are not in the church today either.

Therefore, for someone to claim that he (or she) has the gift of prophecy today (and the other spiritual gifts) is to show that he (or she) is indeed a false prophet. The canon of the Scriptures is complete. In ancient Israel it was a very serious matter to claim to speak as a prophet and not be one.

**II. (A) FALSE TEACHERS**

**The Bottom Line**

The New Testament speaks of false Christs (Mark 13:5,6,21-23), false apostles (II Corinthians 11:13-15; Revelation 2:2), false prophets (Matthew 7:15; I John 4:1), false teachers (II Peter 2:1), and false brethren (II Corinthians 11:26; Galatians 2:4). The Greek word for false (a lie) is *pseudēs*. This word found its way into English in the form of the prefix "pseudo" (as in pseudonym). False Christs make pseudo-claims of Messiahship. Pseudo-apostles falsely represent themselves as being sent. False prophets say that they speak for God. False teachers assert that their pseudo-message is the truth. False brethren present themselves as that which they are not. Yes, collectively they all are false. The bottom

(Continued on Next Page)

**To preach a false doctrine is to be doubly guilty of preaching two: (1) the denial of the true one (saying in essence that it is false), and (2) the declaration of the false one.**

## **False Prophets, False Teachers, and False Teaching** *(from Previous Page)*

line is that all of them are false teachers in one way or another (regardless of the capacity in which they present themselves).

### **"Take Heed unto Thyself and unto the Doctrine"**

What the apostle Paul said to the Ephesian elders, and later wrote to the preacher Timothy, has a bearing upon this subject of false teachers. To the elders he said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost [Spirit] hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). He admonished Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:16). The elders and this preacher first had to take heed to their own personal lives and then to the teaching. Not only did their teaching (doctrine) have to be right, their lives had to be right too. Therefore, from the other side of the picture, a person may be regarded as a false teacher because his life is false as well as from his teaching being false.

### **False Teachers by Example**

Preachers and elders must be an embodiment of their preaching and teaching. Their position is that of role-model, as well as being spokesmen of God's Word. The apostle Paul admonished, "Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ" (I Corinthians 11:1). They were to follow Paul as he personally followed the example and teaching of Christ. Paul instructed the younger preacher Timothy to be "an example of the believers, in word, in conversation [behavior], in charity [love], in spirit, in faith, in purity" (I Timothy 4:12). Hebrews 13:7 reads, "Remember them which have the rule [leadership] over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation [way of living]." Elders are to be "examples to the flock" (I Peter 5:3). Consequently, they have definite qualifications that must be met (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-11). If their lives do not back up their teaching, they are unqualified and are false teachers (by example).

### **The Scribes and Pharisees**

The Sermon on the Mount dealt with exceeding the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, the religious teachers of Jesus' day (Matthew 5:20). Their shallow, legalistic approach to religion can be seen in Matthew 5:21-48. Their showy pretension and materialism is alluded to in chapter 6. In this setting, Jesus warned, "Beware of false prophets

which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matthew 7:15). With this in mind, Jesus continued, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:21-23). Next read the entire 23rd chapter of Matthew in which the Lord pronounced the many "woes" upon these very scribes and Pharisees. In a lot of ways they taught the truth, but they didn't live it. Jesus said to do as they taught, "but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." Their kind had made the name of God become a curse word among the Gentiles (Romans 2:17-24). They were false teachers because their lives were false.

### **False Lives and False Teachers in II Peter**

Read the entire second chapter of II Peter, and then read the epistle of Jude, which is a fulfillment of this. All of this is most impressive in showing that false teachers are considered false because their lives are false (as well as their doctrine). Peter wrote, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." Then years later, it seems, Jude wrote these same people, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before ordained [*prographo*, to write before—translated 'write aforetime' in Romans 15:4a and 'write afore' in Ephesians 3:3] to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4).

### **"Greedy of Filthy Lucre"**

These false teachers were controlled by materialistic motives, as Peter said "through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you..." (II Peter 2:3a). Paul speaks of this kind of false teacher in I Timothy 6:3-5. He told Timothy they were "destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." As implied in II Peter, they used flattery to get the people to open their pocketbooks. Jude said they "ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward" (Jude 11). In contrast with that, Paul spoke of his preaching and



that of his co-workers, "Neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness" (I Thessalonians 2:5). Although Paul used the illustration, "The labourer is worthy of his reward" (I Timothy 5:17,18; I Corinthians 9:6-14), to illustrate the appropriateness of elders and preachers being financially supported in their work, they are not hirelings (John 10:12,13). The elders were (and are) to do their work, "not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (I Peter 5:2). The qualifications of an elder forbids him to be "greedy of filthy lucre" (I Timothy 3:3a). The elder (and preacher) who is so wrapped up in materialism that he has no time (or interest) in doing his work is a false teacher.

### "Eyes Full of Adultery"

Covetousness and sexual sins are closely related, and in the Scriptures they are spoken of in the same breath (Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5). It is no surprise then that the false teachers in II Peter are spoken of as "having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children" (II Peter 2:14). In our day it becomes wearisome to hear of the increasing number of preachers overcome in the sin of adultery. Certainly the "truth is evil spoken of" because of this. God's name has again been made a curse word (Romans 2:22-24). And as elders in their capacity of role-models for the church are to be the husband of one wife (I Timothy 3:2), what about preachers who have been divorced and experienced multi-marriages? They are supposed to project the ideal pattern for others to follow. But their lives do not match the message, and consequently they come through as false teachers.

## III. (B) FALSE TEACHERS

### The Judaizers

In the early church, from the standpoint of false teaching itself, the first false teachers to appear on the horizon were the Judaizers (Acts 15). They didn't want to make a break with the Law of Moses, wanting to impose this legal system upon the Gentiles. Relatively speaking, they seemed to be good moral people, and they had a hard time accepting the grace (unmerited favor) of God in its fullness (thinking it would open the door to sin). In Galatians 2:4 Paul writes about "false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage." The churches in Galatia, which were predominately Gentile, had been disrupted by these teachers. They were at the point of being circumcised, observing days and months, and thinking that they could be justified by law (whereas the law only

condemns, "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," Romans 3:23). Read Galatians 2:16-21. Consequently Paul solemnly stated, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4). Thinking that they could be good enough to save themselves nullified grace. Consider Ephesians 2:8,9 and Titus 3:5. And in view of these false teachers who were misrepresenting the nature of the gospel, Paul declared, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8).

### Denial and Despising of Authority

Let us come again to the false teachers of II Peter and Jude (many years removed from the first appearance of the Judaizers). Their false living has already been noticed, but their teaching was just as rank. We don't know all about it, but it was an affront to the Lordship and authority of Christ. Peter said that they would "bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them" (II Peter 2:1). Jude speaks in the same vein about them (Jude 4). This word for Lord here is not the regular Greek word *kurios* (which is used extensively in the New Testament). It is a word used only a few times, *despotes*. *Despotes* means Lord in the sense of absolute, unrestricted authority. The word has been brought over into English as *despot*, which still carries the idea of absolute authority (but in a negative way). In whatever way these false teachers were denying Christ, they were denying this authority vested in him. That is why *despotes* is used to express this truth here. In fact, verse 10 goes a step further and says that they "despise government" (authority). They are anomic, throwing off law and restraint.

### Grace Turned into Lasciviousness

With the denial of authority, Jude tells us that these false teachers were "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness" (Jude 4,8-10). Their heresy was just the opposite of that of the Judaizers who emphasized law. Many would not go as far as these false teachers today, but they likewise deny and despise authority. They belittle those who would point to the Scriptures, and accuse them of "legalism." In the New Testament our fixation is on Christ, not a legal system as such. But it is a fixation on one who has "all authority" (Matthew 28:18), and he must be Lord of all in our lives (and the church) or he is not Lord at all. We want to do what he says. He said that if we love him we will keep his commandments (John 14:15; I John 5:2,3). Grace is unmerited favor in the forgiveness of sins that enables us to live the

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## False Prophets, False Teachers, and False Teaching *(from Previous Page)*

good and godly life, not license for unrestrained behavior. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:11,12). After saying much about grace and that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20), Paul, it seems, was afraid that he might be misunderstood. Thus he was quick with prodding questions which he therewith answers, "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?..." (Read Romans 6:1-6; also read Galatians 2:20). Many who talk much about grace today still have much to learn about it.

### Two Calvinistic Doctrines Declared False

While II Peter 2:1 has our attention, let us say that this verse deals a death blow to two Calvinistic doctrines. One is their brand of predestination, and the other is "once in grace always in grace." The apostle Peter said that these false teachers would "bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." They are represented as having been "bought" by the Lord. Their doctrines are called "damnable heresies" which brings damnation and destruction upon them (the false teachers).

What is meant by being "bought" by the Lord? Does it mean that (1) they had potentially been "bought" by the Lord as he died for the world (John 3:16), but were not Christians, or that (2) they were "bought" by the Lord in the full sense that they had become Christians at one time? If we say that the first one is the answer, that means that Calvinistic predestination is false for their doctrine has Christ dying only for a select number (not generically for "whosoever will" in the world). If the second one is the answer, that means they had been Christians at one time and now were facing damnation (thus showing "once in grace always in grace" is not true).

It seems unquestionably clear that they had been Christians. The last three verses of this chapter (II Peter 2:20-22) is still talking about them. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after

(Continued on Page 10)

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

### *(Random Questions Over the Bible)*

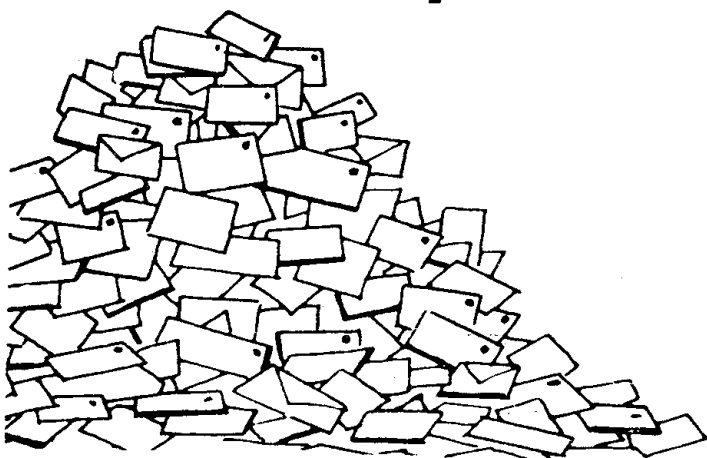
1. Who was the first man in the Bible to have more than one wife, and what were their names?
2. Where is the first time in the Bible that God is spoken of as "Almighty God," who said it, and in what connection was it said?
3. Who accompanied Moses as he went up into the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments from God?
4. Where did the Israelites encamp in Canaan while they were making conquest of the Promised Land?
5. Which one of the tribes of Israel had no inheritance in the land, and it is said that the LORD God was their inheritance?
6. Which one of the twelve tribes of Israel had its inheritance within the bounds of another tribe?
7. What well known building in the Bible was constructed without the sound of hammer or other tools being heard?
8. What king of Israel (northern kingdom) married a Phoenician princess who promoted Baal worship and idolatry throughout the land?
9. Which king of Judah became a leper and was a leper unto the day of his death because he took it upon himself to burn incense in the temple which only the priests were supposed to do?
10. What were the names of Job's three friends who came to visit him during his affliction, and how long were they with him before they spoke?
11. According to the book of Proverbs, to have friends a person must do what?
12. What prophet said, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son: but I was a herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit; And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel"?
13. Under what circumstances do the words "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN" appear in the Bible, and what do they mean?
14. Which prophet in the O.T. asked these questions and then answered them: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings"?
15. Which of the four gospel writers call the body of water in northern Palestine "sea of Galilee," which "lake of Gennesaret," and which "sea of Tiberias"?
16. Which is the only gospel writer that tells about Jesus sending out the seventy?
17. When Jesus was first brought before Pilate by the Jews, and Pilate learned that Jesus was from Galilee, how did he try to get out of his responsibility involving him?
18. Where is a Scripture reference found that shows the early church practiced observing the Lord's supper on the first day of the week, the Lord's day?
19. Who were the only people Paul remembered baptizing at Corinth, and why was he glad that he had not personally baptized any more of them?
20. What seems to be the underlying theme of the epistle of I Peter?

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



# READERS'

## ... Response



### FLORIDA:

■ *"I feel you are doing a good work for the Lord and want to help you keep it up."*

### NORTH CAROLINA:

■ *"Please use this small amount of money to...keep THE SWORD AND STAFF being sent to me. I read it from cover to cover and look forward to getting the next issue."*

### TENNESSEE:

■ *"Here is a little donation to help with the publication of THE SWORD AND STAFF. I really enjoy this magazine. I clip articles and put them in scrapbooks. Everything is so easy to understand. Just keep up the good work."*

### VIRGINIA:

■ *"Thank you for sending me THE SWORD AND STAFF. I enjoy reading the truth. Enclosed is a small gift that should have been sent out much sooner."*

### KENTUCKY:

■ *"I have been reading your SWORD AND STAFF for 5 years now, and I am always looking forward to your next publication. I really enjoy your thoughts and comments very much."*

*"May the Lord see fit to bless you with long life and good health that you may keep up the good work."*

### WEST VIRGINIA:

■ *"...Thanks for this magazine. You will never know in this life how much the magazine means to me. May God bless you in this great work."*

■ *"My husband and I have been given several copies of THE SWORD AND STAFF, and we find enjoyment and insight in your publication. We would very much like to be included on your mailing list. Enclosed find our contribution toward your work for King Jesus. May he bless you in the work you do on his behalf."*

*"Also, I have noticed in the copies that were given to us that you have bound volumes of your publication. As the copies we received were older editions I was hoping you*

*could inform me of the years you have available and the cost. I believe them to be excellent gift ideas. Thank you for all the help you have been."*

(Editor's Note: The little "Clip and Mail" fill-in section on the back page of this paper gives the information you want about which bound volumes are currently available and the expense).

### OHIO:

■ *"I am looking forward to receiving your new book of poems and proverbs..."*

### MISSOURI:

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

■ *"How very much I appreciate receiving THE SWORD AND STAFF, and I would like Volume 30 [Number 3] sent to the following (because I think that it is the best that you have published)..."*

### IOWA:

■ *"I am an elder in the church of Christ here in Iowa. You know the responsibilities of that office and I am sure there are problems in all congregations (goes along with the fact that we are fleshly beings). But I have been discouraged over the amount spent on new drapes, new carpet (many times to fit a color scheme) and elaborate buildings in the last 30 years..."*

### NEBRASKA:

■ *"Thank you for publishing THE SWORD AND STAFF in these days of apostasy, and exalting and glorifying the Lord with the truth therein...May the Lord richly bless you and yours in advancing His cause."*

■ *"I really appreciated your article, 'Blest Be the Tie That Binds.' I wholeheartedly agree that it wouldn't be 'unity' as in the early church if the denominations made a 'union.'"*

*"I really appreciate your good paper and the efforts you put forth. We need such in these trying times."*

### OKLAHOMA:

■ *"Just a note to let you know how much we appreciate your paper. I realize it has been a while since we sent a contribution, and we will send it. Your articles have really helped me and helped me to rededicate my life to the Lord."*

(Continued on Next Page)

### Answers to:

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Genesis 4:19; 2. Genesis 17:1-8; 3. Exodus 24:12-18; 32:15-18; 4. Joshua 4:19; 5:10; 9:6; 10:6,7,9,15,43; 5. Joshua 13:33,14; 18:7; 6. Joshua 19:1-9; 7. Solomon's temple, I Kings 6:7; 8. I Kings 16:29-33; 18:4,19; 21:25,26; 9. II Kings 15:1-7; II Chronicles 26:11-23; 10. Job 2:11-13; 11. Proverbs 18:24; 12. Amos 7:14,15; 13. Daniel 5; 14. Malachi 3:8; 15. "Sea of Galilee," Matthew 4:15,18; Mark 1:16; 7:31; "Lake of Gennesaret," Luke 5:1; "Sea of Tiberias," John 6:1; 21:1; 16. Luke 10:1; 17. Luke 23:1-7; 18. Acts 20:7; 19. I Corinthians 1:10-16; 20. Suffering, and dealing with it. □

## READERS' . . . *Response*

*(Continued from Previous Page)*

*I am sending some names to add to your mailing list...Thank you very much for the spiritual instruction."*

### TEXAS:

■ *"I received the last issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF a few days ago. As usual it was very good; especially the article, 'Blest Be the Tie That Binds.'*

*"Please keep me with a standing order for the next mailing of the bound volumes of THE SWORD AND STAFF."*

### OREGON:

■ *"Thank you so much for THE SWORD AND STAFF. We read it diligently and enjoy all of it. We want you to continue so here is a little to help..."*

*"God bless you in your work and give you strength and courage to carry on."*

### REPUBLIC OF NAURU:

■ *"Would you please send me 1980-81-82 of THE SWORD AND STAFF that is bound in book form together with a one year subscription...Enclosed you can find my donation. Thanks."*

### UNITED ARAB EMIRATES:

■ *"I just wanted to know if THE SWORD AND STAFF is still in circulation since I have been a subscriber way back 4 years ago when I was in the Philippines."*

*"Now I am here...to earn a living. Most of my time, especially when I am alone, I feel so bored. The way to ease my boredom is through reading the Bible and some old issues of THE SWORD AND STAFF that I kept from a long time ago."*

*"I wonder if you could send me a subscription to THE SWORD AND STAFF"*

*"I gotta go. I wish that this SWORD AND STAFF is still in circulation. God bless us all!"* □

**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 sincerely appreciated.

## False Prophets, False Teachers, and False Teaching *(Cont. from Page 8)*

they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." "Once is grace always in grace" is not a Bible doctrine.

### The Gnostics, Et Cetera

The apostle John warned in I John 4:1-3, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the

Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." The problem confronting his readers here is thought to have been a heresy known as Gnosticism (in its early stages). That word signifies knowledge (and knowing). They claimed to be the knowing ones with extra-scriptural knowledge and insights. Perhaps that accounts for John's repeated references to what Christians can "know." Also, his references to Christ not coming in the flesh probably alludes to a tenet of their beliefs,

### HE DESERVES BETTER

For the cross he bore  
And the blood he shed,  
For the nails in his hands,  
The thorns on his head...  
For that and more  
We should ever be  
Beholden to him  
Who set us free;  
And surely, SURELY!  
HE DESERVES BETTER  
From you and me.

'Twas not for his crime  
He suffered and died—  
But for our sins  
He was crucified.

Had not he surrendered  
To the Father's will,  
Going all the way up  
Golgotha's hill,  
We'd be headed for Hell  
And sinners still.

We none deserved it—  
Nor could we ever repay;  
So let's give him our best  
With each new day.

When called to serve him,  
Don't make such a fuss.  
PRAY! Can't you see  
He deserves better from us?

To Christ and his cross  
I am forever a debtor...  
And frankly, my friends,  
From ALL of us,  
HE DESERVES BETTER!!!

—Bob Wickline

that it was unthinkable that deity would actually take a material form. So this rule making a teacher to be of God because he confessed that Jesus had come in the flesh fits the immediate situation, but is not of universal application (for the “devils” believed in Christ). The hybrid heresy at Colosse (Colossians 2:4-10,18-23) is thought to contain elements of early Gnosticism. In writing to Timothy (I Timothy 1:19,20), Paul singled out Hymenaeus and Alexander as men who had been involved with false teaching. The name Hymenaeus appears again in II Timothy (2:16-18) along with Philetus. Yes, false teachers and false teaching were (are) an ever-present problem to be dealt with.

**Concluding Remarks**

The purpose of this presentation has not been to give an exhaustive treatment of this subject, nor to deal in particular with modern day false teachers (and false teaching). Its intention has been to make us aware that there is such a thing. The modern mind is slow to accept this. Modern denominationalism, by its very nature, abounds both in false teachers and false teaching. Apostasy is more than just a potential danger in our midst. Keep in mind that a person can be and may be a false teacher, not only because his doctrine is false, but because his life is false too. Let us deeply respect, appreciate, and love the truth (being satisfied with nothing else save the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth). Preachers, take heed to I Timothy 4:16 and II Timothy 4:1-5. Elders, don't forget Acts 20:28 and Titus 1:9-11. It's your responsibility. And with Jude, realizing that we are living in times of falling away, let all of us “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). □

**QUESTION ANSWERED**  
(from California)

**Question:**

“How long must hair be to be considered long?”

**Answer:**

This question came in response to what was said on page 10 (26) of the number 2 issue of *The Sword and Staff* this year (1992). We remarked that the drawing representing Jesus having long hair was inappropriate because Paul said that it was a shame for men to have long hair (I Corinthians 11:14). Since Paul was an inspired spokesman for the Lord, and he instructed those who read his writings to receive them as the commandments of the Lord (I Corinthians 14:37), he and the Lord would have been in agreement in this matter (I Corinthians 11:1). Our use of the drawing not only in a sense illustrated the

article on “The Beatitudes,” but drew attention to the New Testament teaching involving long hair on men. That is why we used it.

The apostle Paul questioned, “Doth not even nature itself teach you that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame to him?” (I Corinthians 11:14) He saw a universal significance in this. Among other things, in this chapter he teaches that man is head over woman. The role of woman is a submissive one. The short hair and the long hair seem to tie in, emphasizing these truths. Man is to take the leadership. In this day of women's LIB and so-called “gay rights,” along with rock 'n roll “stars” trying to project an androgynous image (long hair, effeminacy, etc.), many young people are all mixed up about their sexual identity (as well as their sexual role in life). The practice of what Paul teaches here is a step in the right direction in the recognition of the distinctive Biblical role of men and women (letting men be men and women, women).

Dismissing Paul's words as applying only in a cultural context that should be respected only in a given situation will not make his words go away. The society in which the editor of *The Sword and Staff* was born and grew up frowned upon man having long hair. Only in the last few decades has long hair appeared in our “culture” (in modern times). It originated with the hippies and rock 'n roll groups in a fringe subculture setting, then it began to spill over into society at large. Main stream “culture” was initially offended by it. It was repulsive (and especially to many Christian circles). This is a matter of record. So, if a cultural context prompted and justified Paul's opposition to long hair in the first century, the reaction of Christians should be no less in the 20th century. However, to the apostle Paul the significance of men having short hair was a self-evident truth from nature in view of God's role for man. It is of universal and timeless significance, emphasizing truths that are such.

Our questioner wants to know, “How long must hair be to be considered long?” How long is “long,” and how short is “short”? Obviously the answer is a relative one (in a set context). The short is considered short in contrast with the long. The context (and contrast) has to do with man and woman. Man's hair should be shorter than the woman's. If there is a question mark about this, it should be short enough so that there would be no question. Christians should avoid borderline, questionable matters. A man's hair is too long when man can't be distinguished from a woman by the length of his hair. □

**“Love One Another”**

# OVERCOMING *SORROW* THROUGH JESUS (JOHN 11:1-46)

## Introduction:

1. The Bible is a book of life, and therefore it is true to life. It deals with all of our problems on the basis of their reality. Its solutions to our problems are practical.
2. One of the greatest problems of life is sorrow. There are some problems that are peculiar to certain people, but the problem of sorrow is common to all of us.
3. Many have already tasted its bitter dregs and those who have not will.
4. We need to learn how to overcome sorrow for two reasons:
  - A. First, there is no escape from it.
  - B. Second, sorrow can produce a crisis in life as perhaps nothing else.
5. What we do in times of sorrow, our reaction to it, may determine our destiny.

## I. DISCUSSION:

1. I know of no better example than Jesus Christ to comfort one in times of sorrow. The comfort he gave his friends was strong and true. We have a very good illustration of this in the Bethany home. The sorrow was very great. Lazarus was dead, and Jesus came, not as other friends came, merely to mourn with the sisters, but to comfort their hearts in their overwhelming grief.
2. First, he lifted the veil and gave them a glimpse of what lies beyond the grave. "Thy brother shall live again." "I am the resurrection, and the life, he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?"
3. Thus, Jesus opened a great window into the other world. This is all plainer to us than it could be at the time for Martha and Mary; for a little while after Jesus had spoken these words, he himself passed through the valley of the shadow of death, coming again from the grave in immortal life. To those who sorrow over a Christian loved one or friend, it is a wonderful comfort to know the true teaching of the New Testament on the subject of dying. Death is not the end, but is a door which leads into the fullness of life.
4. Many in bereavement, though believing the doctrine of the future resurrection, fail to get present comfort from it.
5. Jesus assured Martha that her brother would rise

again. Her reply, yes, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection of the last day." The hope was too distant to give her much comfort now. Her sense of present loss outweighed every other thought and feeling. She craved back again the companionship she had lost.

6. Is there one who has not stood by the grave of a precious friend, or loved one, and not experienced the same feeling or inadequacy in the consolation that comes from even the strongest belief in a far off rising again of those who are in their graves?

## II. THE MASTER'S REPLY

1. The Master's reply to Martha's hungry heartfelt cry is very rich in its comfort. "I am the resurrection." This is one of the wonderful present tenses of the Christian's hope. Assurance to Martha now, though the comfort of resurrection was a dim, far away consolation.
2. "I am the resurrection," said Jesus. The resurrection was something present, not remote. His words embraced the whole blessed truth of immortal life. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" There is no permanent death for those who are in Christ. The body dies, but the spirit lives on. He is not here, our eyes see him not, our ears hear not his voice, we cannot touch him with our hands; but he still lives. No power in his being has been quenched by dying, no beauty dimmed.

"He that solved the sacred mystery,  
He hath crossed the great divide,  
Within the sacred city, far beyond  
The soundless tide.  
He the Master's face beholdeth,  
Whom unseen we all adore.  
He praiseth him rejoicing on that bright  
Celestial shore.  
Praises be to God the Father,  
We all may live for aye. Though folded  
Like a garment, we lay our body by.  
Eternal life we enter, by that full and swelling  
tide  
Within the golden city, where the gates stand  
open wide."

3. This is part of the comfort which Jesus gave his friends in their bereavement. He assured them that for the believer there is no permanent death. There remains for those who stay behind, the pain of separation and loneliness. But for those departed we need have no fear.
4. How does Jesus comfort the ones who are left behind? As we read over the story of the sorrow of the Bethany home, we find the answer to our question.

### III. BROUGHT BACK THEIR DEAD

1. Some may say, "He brought back their dead, thus comforting them by the literal undoing of the work of death and grief. If only he would do this now, in every case where love cries out to him, that would be comfort indeed." But we must remember that the return of Lazarus to his home was only a temporary restoration. He came back to his old life of mortality, temptation, sickness, pain and death. He came back, too, only for a season.
2. It was not a resurrection to immortal life; it was only a resurrection to mortal life. He must pass again through the mystery of dying, and the second time his sisters must experience the agony of separation and loneliness. We can scarcely call this comfort—it is merely a postponement for a little while of the final separation.
3. But Jesus gave these sisters true comfort besides this. His own presence with them gave them comfort. They knew that he loved them. Many times before, when he had entered their home, he had brought them happiness. They had a feeling of peace and security in his presence.
4. Even their great grief lost some of its sting when the light of his face fell upon them. Even strong, tender and true human love has comforting power. We can pass much more easily through a sore trial if a trusted friend is beside us. The believer can endure any sorrow if Jesus is with them.
5. The trouble with us too often is that we do not realize the presence of our Master, though he is close beside us, and miss altogether the comfort of his love (Acts 17:27).

### IV. WE NEED TO BE AWARE

1. Mary Magdalene stood with breaking heart by the empty grave, crying out for her Lord, who even was close beside her, but unrecognized, "she supposing him to be the gardener." A moment later, however, the speaking of her name in the old familiar tone of voice revealed him to her, and instantly her sorrow was turned to joy (John 20:11ff).
2. So we stand often times in the deep shadow of grief, longing for comfort, yearning for love, while Christ is beside us, closer than any human friend can be. If only we would dry our tears and look up into his face, believing, our soul would be flooded with his wonderful love and our sorrow shall be swallowed up in full-

ness of joy.

3. There is never the least doubt about the presence of Christ in our times of trouble; it is only because we remain unaware of that presence that we are not comforted.
4. Another element of comfort for those sorrowing sisters was in the sympathy of Jesus. There was a wonderful gentleness in his manner as he received first one and then the other. Mary's grief was seemingly deeper than Martha's, and when Jesus saw her weeping he groaned in the spirit and was troubled. Then, in the shortest verse of the Bible, we have a window into the very heart of the Master, and we find there the most touching sympathy: "Jesus wept." It is a great comfort in time of sorrow to have even human sympathy, to know that somebody cares, that someone feels with us, the pain and hurt.
5. It would have added something—very much indeed—of comfort for the sisters, if John, or Peter, or James, had wept with them beside their brother's grave. But the tears of the Master meant so much more. They told of the holiest sympathy this world has ever known—the Son of God weeping with two sisters in a great human sorrow. Picture the Master in your mind, standing by the grave of a friend, tears streaming down his cheeks, falling down to the ground!
6. The shortest verse in the Bible was not written merely as a fragment of the story. It contains a revealing of the heart of Jesus for all time.

### V. TRUE BELIEVERS

1. Whenever a true believer in Christ is sorrowing, ONE stands by who shares that grief. How this should help us to sing, "Oh, how I love Jesus" with meaning! There is immeasurable comfort in the revealing that the Son of God suffers with us in our suffering, is afflicted in all of our affliction, is touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Hebrews 4:15). We can endure our trouble more quietly when we know this.
2. There is yet another feature in the manner of Christ's comforting his friends which is suggestive. Too often human sympathy is nothing but a sentiment. Our friends weep with us and then pass by on the other side. They tell us they are sorry for us and then pass by on the other side. They tell us they are sorry for us, yet they do nothing to help us. But the sympathy of Jesus

(Continued on Next Page)





family values. Her comments and advice now are given in an amoral context.

From the Christian perspective, and that of the Bible, this is alarming. Homosexuality is not the same thing as a minority standing up for their rights. That which is basically and totally wrong cannot be spoken of in terms of "rights." If homosexuality is accepted, the very basis of human society is destroyed. God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve. What God did to Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19) shows dramatically what He thinks about this practice. Romans 1:24-32 teaches the evils of homosexuality, and states that those who sympathize with such behavior, even though they don't practice it themselves, are guilty before God. As far as living together in an unmarried relationship, what is said in Hebrews 13:4 is relevant. It says, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers (fornicators) and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4).

These words are written out of concern for the amoral mentality that confronts us every way we turn in our society today. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

Sincerely,

James E. Gibbons,

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## The Marlboro Man Is Dead

**THE HANDSOME** and rugged model for the macho smoker has succumbed to lung cancer. He was 51. You remember him. He had that patriotic eagle tattooed on his hand and rode the range punching cows like real men once did in the Old West. And he did something else the tobacco manufacturers would have consumers think was a he-man thing to do. He smoked.

What many of us didn't know was that he spent the last three years of his life warning others of the dangers of smoking. Though it was too late for him, he thought that if he could just keep one young person from starting, or get one smoker to stop, it would be worth whatever the cost. He was a convincing spokesman. He knew all too well the price to be paid for becoming enslaved to such a nasty habit, regardless of how the advertisers romanticized it.

We applaud the model's change of heart and eagerness to rectify the lie that was portrayed in all those years of ads. Implied in those commercials was the notion of freedom and enjoyment and fresh air. Fresh air indeed. No cigarette advertisers ever showed a smoke-filled room of emaciated hackers

delivering up their burnt offering to the god of tobacco.

The tragedy of the Marlboro man reminds us not to let anyone or anything have control over us except the Spirit of Christ. Our bodies are a temple. This is especially true if we are Christians. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. As such they should be honored and respected, not defiled or destroyed foolishly.—*Adapted* □

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## "Blessed is the Man"

**BLESSED IS THE MAN** who can criticize himself before criticizing others.

**BLESSED IS THE MAN** who always puts God first.

**BLESSED IS THE MAN** who is as pleasant at home as he is when the world is watching.

**BLESSED IS THE MAN** who realizes that God meant him to live eternally and acts accordingly.

**BLESSED IS THE MAN** who is quick to apologize for wrongdoing.

**BLESSED IS THE MAN** who knows right from wrong and indomitably sticks to the right.

**BLESSED IS THE MAN** who is easy to live with.

**BLESSED IS THE MAN** who can say no to temptation and stick with it.

**BLESSED IS THE MAN** who loves God supremely.

**BLESSED IS THE MAN** who fears God for he need fear nothing else.—*Selected* □

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## The Yoke Really is Easy

**WHEN** we read of Christ asking us to take his yoke upon us, the general view says we feel he is asking us to carry a burden.

He is not so. The yoke is not a burden to the animal that wears it. It is just the opposite. It is to make the burden light.

Attached to the oxen in any other way than by a yoke the plow would be intolerable. A yoke is not an instrument of torture; it is an instrument of mercy.

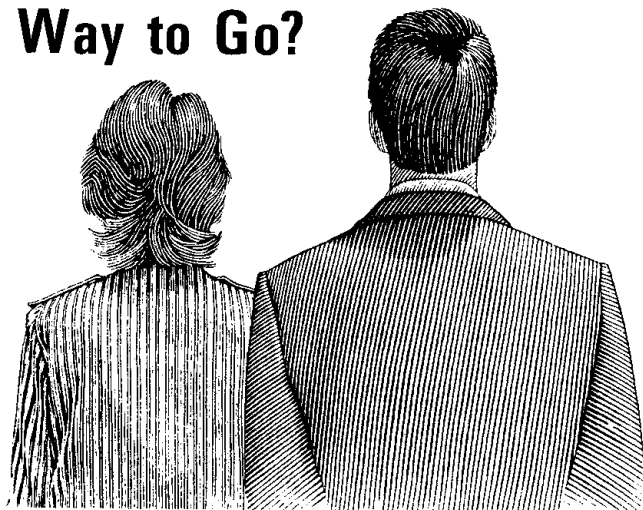
It is not meant to give pain, but to save pain. And yet men speak of the yoke of Christ as it were a slavery.—*Selected* □

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## How to Keep Learning

**WHEN** you study the Bible, study as if you had never studied it before, and you will continue to learn like you never learned before.—*J.E.G* □

# 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.

## Thank You! and More

(1) **WE BADLY NEEDED** a new printing press in publishing *The Sword and Staff*. Upon learning of this need you responded immediately and liberally. We now have the new press. What a pleasure it has been in using it to get out this issue of the paper. It will greatly expedite our humble efforts for the Lord. We sincerely and humbly thank you. May God be glorified.

(2) Because of press problems we have been delayed in printing our new poems and proverbs book. Now we will be able to get this done.

(3) Because of a lack of space we were unable to include other questions and answers relating to the Bible. We do not solicit questions as we do not have all the answers. However, the said questions will be commented on in a forthcoming issue, which we trust will be helpful.

(4) Please send a change of address when moving. Include with that the old address as well as the new.

(CLIP AND MAIL)

Gentlemen:

Enclosed find my contribution. Please put me on the mailing list of *The Sword and Staff*. ☐ New ☐ Renew

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**BE ON THE LOOKOUT** for an announcement concerning our forthcoming little book of poems and proverbs.

### MAILING LIST

**HELP** get out God's vital message by sending names and addresses of people who need this paper and would appreciate it. Contributions are needed and likewise much appreciated.

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● **HELP US REACH OUT TO MORE CHURCHES AND PEOPLE WITH THIS PUBLICATION—Thank you!**

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