

The Sword AND Staff

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

When the Whole Church Comes Together into One Place

WE HEAR the word "when," and we think in terms of the time, occasion, or point that something happens. The word can be used to state a fact that such has taken place or is anticipated. Like the word "whenever," it can sometimes indicate that it happens every time. It can imply that what takes place is the ordinary and expected course of action or is usual under the circumstances. This is especially obvious when our background knowledge of such occurrences all points in this direction. What we know has simply been verified.

With all of this in mind, let us look into several verses of Scripture that make use of the word "when" in this way. Things are spoken of taking place as a matter of course, as that which is expected, and as that which is usual. This study should make the truths considered more emphatic and obvious. The Lord intended for them to be universal and commonly practiced.—Editor

● By JAMES E. GIBBONS
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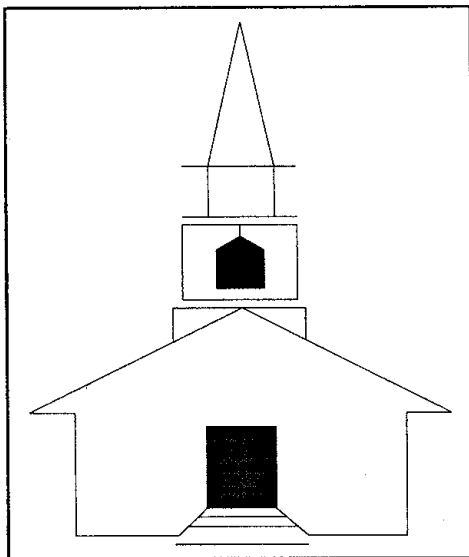
MAKING a study of the early church is very worthwhile and absorbing. And as we further pursue this series of articles involving the word "when," we find this word repeatedly used in connection with the church coming together. A decided pattern of time and practice unfolds before us.

Therefore, with our minds fixed upon this word, let us enter into a study that should prove both practical and informative. Then, upon learning the truth of what is taught, let us be diligent to put it into practice.

I. THEY WERE COMING TOGETHER

The brethren in the early church not only were a community of believers, they were a community of believers that assembled together. The apostle Paul in his I Corinthian letter makes several references to this:

● "For first of all, *when* ye come together in the



church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it" (I Corinthians 11:18).

● "*When* ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper" (I Corinthians 11:20; more will be said about this later).

● "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?" (I Corinthians 14:23)

● "How is it then, brethren? *When* ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying" (I Corinthians 14:26).

Notice the "when" in these references. It is plainly implied that they were coming together as an ordinary and usual practice (as they did all of the time as Christians), although there may have been

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THE SWORD AND STAFF
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INFORMATION:

■ We are totally dependent upon your financial backing in the publication of this religious paper. To get on the mailing list, send a contribution. Subsidizing gifts are definitely needed along for us to continue this unselfish labor of love for God and truth. You may use the date affixed beside your address as a reminder to send an offering (perhaps annually). No notices are sent. Make out your checks to CHURCH IN MOUNT AIRY. The extent (and frequency) of publication is determined by incoming support. James E. Gibbons is editor. (Money received for printed material is all considered as an offering). □

—THANK YOU—

Proverbially *SPEAKING...*

IF YOU let the smallest thing get the "best of you," the best of you must be a thing that's very small.

God's love is so great, although He loves everyone alike, it is as if He loved only you.

If life is a vapor (James 4:14), we need to turn it into showers of blessings and solidify it into good works before we are gone from here.

"It is not enough just to be good—be good for something."

If the weight and burdens of life bring you to your knees, just remember that is the best position in which to pray.

"The lowest ebb is the turn of the tide."

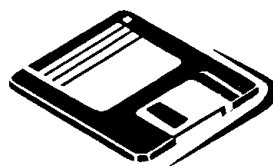
If some people were as concerned about counting the cost (Luke 14:25-33) as they are in counting the numbers, we would have a better church.

"A ship is safe in the harbor, but that isn't what ships were made for."

If while in Rome you do as the Romans do, you will soon become undone.

"If you removed the rocks, the brook would lose its song."

EDITORIAL COMMENTS...



REASSURING TRUTH, GOD IS FOR US

IT IS GOOD to know that God is real, that we are created in His image, that He is our Heavenly Father, and that He has our well-being in mind. It is likewise good to know that such a Supreme Being is not our adversary. (A lesser being, Satan, is this, for that is what his name means). Whether we even know it, acknowledge it, or like it or not, God loves us. It is only in rebelling, sinning, and pitting ourselves against Him that we become aliens and enemies of Heaven. Then we find the way of a transgressor is hard. As the Lord said to Saul of Tarsus, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Adam and Eve experienced this, and all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But God still loves us, has our well-being in mind, and would like for us to get our lives turned around.

That is what the gospel of Christ is all about. Even in the Old Testament period God said, "As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel 33:11). Now with the coming of Christ, we read, "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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:16,17). Read Romans 5:6-10. Then the writer of Hebrews declares, "Wherefore he is able also to

Hold Fast! Press On!

It has been said
The darkest hour comes right before the dawn.
It's likewise true
The hardest battle's fought before the vict'ry's won.
So don't despair if night seems dark and battle's long;
The sun shines bright,
And battle's din is but prelude to vict'ry's song;
Hold fast! Press on!

—By James E. Gibbons

save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). Contemplating all of these great truths, and the sovereignty of God, Paul intently questions in Romans 8:31, "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" The rest of this eighth chapter of Romans is wonderful reading.

The bottom line to all of this is that God is "for us," not against us. Sinner, recognize this great truth, and may the goodness of God lead you to repentance (Romans 2:4). Christian, daily live out these great truths in your life, realizing that "He careth for you" (I Peter 5:7).

Yes, "If God be for us who can be against us?"



EDITORIAL

Byways

TRUTH VARIEGATED IN FORM AND PRESENTATION

(BECAUSE I dealt with sin and sinners in an uncomplimentary way in past writings, even using a little touch of satire, a reader in a distant state has accused me of being "self-righteous" and not having "love." His long letter is not included here, but he was very judgmental in his pointed accusations, although apparently sincere. It is our observation that religious truth is given to us in variegated form and it is our conviction that we may use various approaches in its presentation, as the Bible verifies. The use of various forms of presentation does not mean a lack of love, but good sense in trying to get a point across. Love actually prompts us to use different approaches, with patience, trying to get people to see God's will on a subject. If one way in presenting the truth doesn't work, maybe another one will.

Excerpts from our correspondence with this very critical and judgmental correspondent follow. You will be able to follow the gist of thought.—J.E.G.)

The Letter of Reply

Pardon my delay in writing. It is not without reason that the following words are put in *The Sword and Staff* (I trust you are understanding):

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.

I appreciate you taking the time to write. Obviously you are a very religious person, which I appreciate. Although a stranger, you have been very

frank and open in writing to me. I trust, without offense, you will grant me the same privilege and courtesy in response...

Yes, I thank you for your letter and your sincere thoughts. Building upon what you have written, I would like to go one step further. Although you would judge me otherwise (are you a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" like God? Hebrews 4:12,13; Revelation 2:23), I, too, believe that all that we do should be governed by love (I Corinthians 16:14; Ephesians 4:15). I get the impression that you disagree more with the way something has been said than what has been said. The Bible is a much variegated book in its content and in the way that it is presented. We would be wise to understand that. Paul speaks of the "manifold wisdom of God" (Ephesians 3:10), and it is "manifold" in its presentation. "God, who at sundry times and in *divers manners* spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Hebrews 1:1,2a). Even in the speaking of Christ, people noticed a difference in his methods and that of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:16-19), yet both represented the truth of God. At different times Christ was moved by anger when he spoke (Mark 3:1-5; John 2:13-17; Matthew 23; etc.), yet that did not mean the absence of love (Matthew 23:37). Christ said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent" (Revelation 3:19). Was John the Baptist self-righteous, not having any love, because he called upon others to repent (and in pretty sharp terms, Matthew 3)? I think not. Neither am I. In recognition of the different ways in dealing with sinners, Jude said, "And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 22,23).

Through the years in *The Sword and Staff* it has been my aim to present truth in a variety of ways (none to the exclusion of the other). Not only does variety make for more interest in reading, if one approach does not get a person's attention, perhaps another will. Readers have more than once expressed an appreciation for this. And, if you will study the Scriptures a little more on this subject (may I say kindly), you will find the limited use of satire is in keeping with presenting the truth. It accents the truth and helps get the sinner's attention.

What Elijah said to the prophets of Baal was a little stronger than satire. "And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until

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EDITORIAL *Byways*

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noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. And it came to pass at noon that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked" (I Kings 18:26,27).

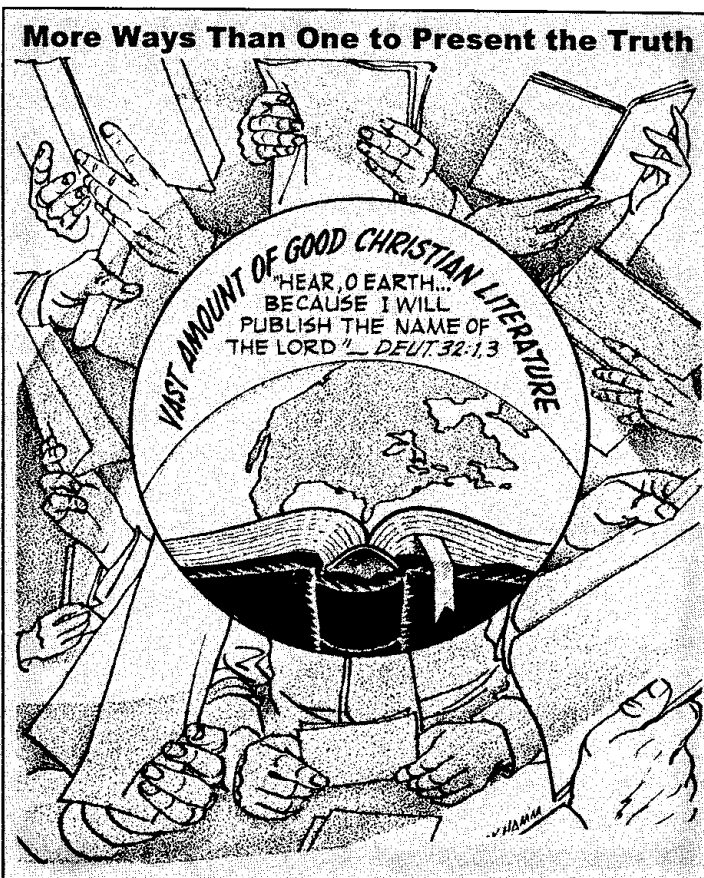
You belittle me, saying the writers of Scripture do not use "satirical or sing-song wording" in the condemnation of sin and sinners. May I call your attention to the Psalms, the Proverbs, and the Prophets (all of them written in "sing-song" poetic style). What about the 53rd Psalm where the unbeliever is called a fool and spoken of in belittling terms? What about Proverbs 1:24 and following where Wisdom says, "But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." What about the wording of Isaiah 1:10 where Isaiah speaks of Judah in the rhyming couplet of Hebrew poetry in the most degrading terms,

"Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom;
Give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah"?

Notice how the adornment of the "daughters of Zion" is described in language more eloquent and uncomplimentary than I am able to write (Isaiah 3:16-24). But did all of this mean that God did not love these people? No! Repeatedly we read, "But his hand is stretched out still" (Isaiah 9:12,17,21;10:4). God would comfort His people after dealing with their sins and forgiveness (Isaiah 40). The sarcasm and satire did not indicate a lack of love. It was to make them aware of their wrong.

No, I am not alone in using a little touch of satire in *The Sword and Staff*. I feel that I am in good company when I read the words of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians, "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised" (I Corinthians 4:8-10). Because Paul wrote these words does not mean he had no love. Contrariwise (II Corinthians 12:15), it was to lead them to repentance (II Corinthians 7:8-12). That is my purpose in writing in *The Sword and Staff*. And if you see the whole

picture and the larger context, you will have no problem in understanding this. I had dealt with the subject of adornment in a more positive vein in previous issues. Perhaps another approach would now get someone's attention (thus the poems on "Worldly Womanhood" and the "Macho Man"). And it got your attention.



In the Bible love is not a doting, wishy-washy sentimentalism that has no backbone. The *agapé* love is the love of intelligence and corresponding purpose. Because I believe in what is right, and am against the wrong, does not make me self-righteous (although that may be the fuzzy mentality of the modern world). Through the grace of God and blood of Christ I am made righteous (Ephesians 2:5,8; Romans 5:6-10; II Corinthians 5:21; I Corinthians 1:30). You mentioned the wonderful words of Christ, "Forgive them Father, for they know not what they do," and urged me to meditate upon them. Great! But this forgiveness must be accepted before it avails us anything (Acts 2:36-40; Revelation 1:7). We are not to continue in sin, thinking that grace will abound—it won't! (Romans 6). Christ came to save us from our sins, not in them (Matthew 1:21; Titus 2:11-15). A doting love that does not try to convict the sinner of his sins will leave him in his sins...

In closing, I would humbly point this out to you (although it is nothing new). Love is a two-sided

coin. The Psalmist exclaimed, "O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day...Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way" (Psalms 119:97,104,127,128). The other side of the coin is hate or the abhorrence of that which is evil. A great love for right produces a disdain for that which is wrong (in ourselves and others). Of Jesus, the perfect one, the writer of Hebrews said, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Hebrews 1:9). The apostle Paul firmly admonished, "Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor [hate, shrink from] that which is evil; cleave [be joined] to that which is good" (Romans 12:9). Love "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth" (I Corinthians 13:6). That great apostle of love, John, declared, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (III John 4). We are to love the truth, hate sin, but love the sinner (all of these truths we mutually recognize, right?). How wonderful to experience the love and grace of God that saves us from our sins!...

I have no delusions of self-righteous grandeur. Gladly I acknowledge that without Christ I am nothing. And I humbly declare with the apostle Paul, "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" (Galatians 2:20).

Sincerely in Christ,
James E. Gibbons

BARBS

with a Point

YOUR ENERGY is uselessly spent unless it is spent on that which is useful.

The only religious organization the New Testament authorizes beyond the local church is another local church.

If your best friends are sinners and compromisers, they will compromise the best in you (I Corinthians 15:33).

Of all sins, lying most conspicuously is of the devil since he is the father of the lie (John 8:44).

A comet makes a great display as it goes across the heavens, but that doesn't prove anything; it has little substance, being primarily dirty ice and gases.

What will the people do who have strutted and tooted their own little horn when Gabriel blows his trumpet?

People who are preoccupied with enhancing their image need to realize that images are idols, and we are to "flee from idolatry."

The validity of our message will never be confirmed, nor even realized, until we have restored the local church.

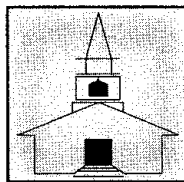
Insecure people are the most likely ones to be "sucked in" by the self-seeking person who uses flattery and thus would use them.

A paranoid preoccupation with sickness is not healthy.

In a society where success is measured by bigness and numbers, some churches feel paranoid if they are small in number rather than being burdened because of the great number lost in sin.

It is not very wise to turn out the lights and then curse the dark. □

When the Whole Church Comes Together into One Place



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some problems and abuses in the Corinthian assembly which needed correcting.

While upon this earth the Lord had said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). It is of interest to note what Paul wrote in I Corinthians 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" The "ye" in this verse is plural. God was dwelling in them collectively. One manifestation of this was when they assembled together.

The writer of Hebrews admonished, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:23-25). The book of Acts records the early church coming together regularly and at different times under different circumstances. James 2:1 and following speaks about visitors coming into the assembly of Christians and how they are to be treated.

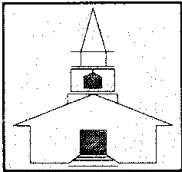
So, it is quite apparent that the believers were regularly meeting together in public assembly as

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Christians. The word "when," as well as the other Scriptures, makes this evident.



II. WHEN THEY WERE COMING TOGETHER

The First Day of the Week

Let us examine Hebrews 10:25 a little more closely where the writer said, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." In their diligence to be found faithful, they were to exhort one another to not forsake the assembly. This was to be done in view of them seeing "the day approaching." What does "the day approaching" mean?

Different possibilities have been presented as to what day this is. (1) Some have suggested the second coming of Christ. (2) Others point toward the destruction of Jerusalem 70 A.D. (3) Then others strongly say it must mean the Lord's day, the first day of the week.

Perhaps in a sense all of these possibilities could be true, but the Lord's day (the first day of the week) is the most basic in our consideration. Other Scriptures bear this out.

The early church did make a practice of assembling on the first day of the week. Acts 20:7 reads, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." As already pointed out, Paul wrote to the church at Corinth about "when" they came together. Then specifically in I Corinthians 16:2, he said, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him..."

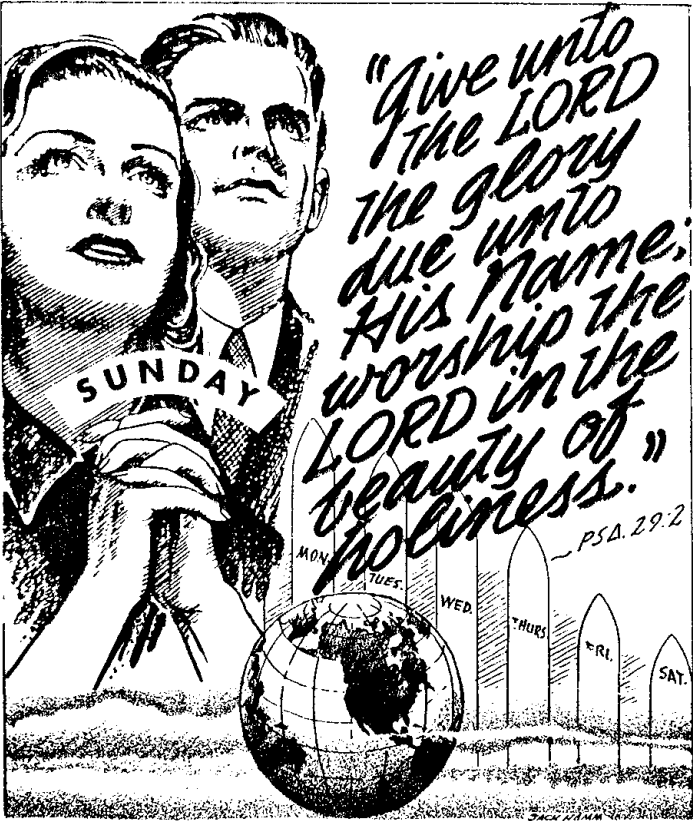
The first day of the week was nothing new with these Christians as this day had been the center of focus since the beginning of the church. In Acts 2:42 we can find the worship of the church on the day it was established, the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1). What day was the day of Pentecost? It was a Jewish holiday that fell upon the first day of the week (Seven Sabbaths followed the Passover, and the next day after the seventh Sabbath was Pentecost, meaning 50th day—Leviticus 23:15,16). The first day of the week also was made great because it was tied in with the resurrection of Christ (Mark 16:9; John 20: 1,19,26; Psalms 118:22-24; Acts 4:10-12). What a day for Christians perpetually to assemble! And with the Psalmist exclaim, "This is the day

which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

Other Times of Meeting

Yes, the early church met on the first day of the week, the Lord's day, but that was not the only time they came together.

In the early days of its initiation, the church met on a daily basis. Those were exciting days. "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be [were being] saved" (Acts 2:46,47). The language of Acts 11:26 may indicate that this experience was repeated in the first Gentile church in the early days of its inception, "And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." In times of gospel meetings and revival the modern church has practiced meeting on a protracted basis. How wonderful when there is the enthusiasm and spiritual appetite for extended periods of coming together!



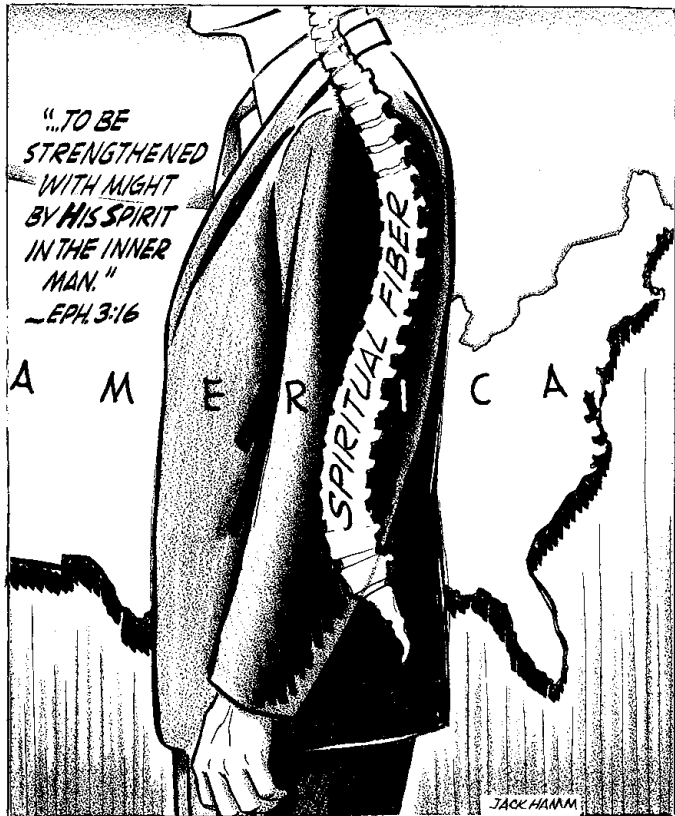
We find the Jerusalem church coming together for a prayer meeting in Acts 4:23-31. Again we find the church in a prayer meeting in Acts 12. James had been killed and Peter was imprisoned. We read, "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was

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Spiritual Food for Thought

By Andrew Gibbons

LACKING?



WHAT is the difference between a jellyfish and a gold fish? It is a similar difference as between the coward and the brave. One is an invertebrate and the other is a vertebrate. What is that?

Well, the invertebrate doesn't have a backbone and the vertebrate does. (The difference between the coward and the brave is the same figuratively speaking). The one without backbone lacks courage to stand up for what he thinks and believes and the one with backbone is willing to take a stand and be counted.

We can see people who lack backbone all around us. Some would call these people wishy-washy or unstable, and these words do apply in the spiritual realm as well as physical everyday life. From the parents to the children, from the church to the school, from the law enforcement to the court system, from the local politician to the federal government, many are spineless to stand up for what is right. I think it is linked to the lack of godly spirituality. A lack of following God and His standards that causes us to fear what we shouldn't and act cowardly instead of courageously.

Romans 8:6, *"For to be fleshly minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."*

Do you have life and peace? If not, then maybe you need a change of mind.

II Timothy 1:7, *"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and sound mind."*

Remember silence is golden, but sometimes it is down-right yellow.

Stand up for what is right. The key is linked to our mind whether we are spiritually minded or fleshly minded. □

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made without ceasing of the church unto God for him" (12:5). We see the nature of the prayer meeting. "Many were gathered together praying" in the house of Mary the mother of John Mark (12:12). Prayer meetings of the church, whether on a set basis or a called basis, are always in order. The "when" may be on a Wednesday night or other times.

The "when" in reference to the meeting of the church can also be seen in Acts 15. Here they had a special called meeting in the Jerusalem church to deal with specific problems (15:4f). Likewise meetings were called among the Gentile churches to read the special communiqué from the Jerusalem church (15:30).

Therefore, all things considered, we conclude that the early church met regularly upon the first day of every week and at other times when the leadership esteemed it needful and profitable for all concerned. Thus, with the Hebrew writer, we admonish you to not forsake the assembling of yourselves together (as the manner of some still is). Be found faithful.

III. WHY THEY WERE COMING TOGETHER

In the other considerations we have somewhat touched upon why the early church came together. But now let us more specifically look at it. Worship is involved. Edification is involved. With Christians worship is a way of life (Romans 12:1,2; James 1:27), but it is also something more specific having to do with time and place. They assembled for this purpose, and at the very center of their worship was Christ. Worship and edification go together.

The Lord's Supper

The early church met for the express purpose of partaking of the Lord's supper on the "first day of the week" (and every week has a first day). As already noticed, Acts 20:7 states, "And upon the first day of the week, *when* the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them..." The "when" indicates this was their regular practice. The record could have said that they met to hear the apostle Paul preach, but that is not what it says. Although on the surface it may sound just the opposite, the weekly observance of the Lord's supper is taught in I Corinthians 11:20, "*When* ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper." Read the rest of the chapter to see what is meant. They were making a regular meal, bordering on the riotous, out of the Lord's supper.

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Is **THIS** What God Intended?



“Admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers*, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed” (TITUS 2:4,5, NKJV).

* “*Oikouros (Οικουρος)*...properly a keeper or guard of a house; a home-keeper, stay-at-home, domestic, Titus 2:5.”—*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Thomas Shelton Green.

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 sincerely appreciated. □

FLORIDA:

■ "Please discontinue sending *THE SWORD AND STAFF*."

■ "...I enjoy reading the truth and you cannot find it in many papers.

■ "Your paper is one of the most valuable periodicals reaching my desk.

"The uncompromising stand for Scriptural truth and doctrinal soundness is commendable.

"Keep up the good work, and may the Lord bless you."

SOUTH CAROLINA:

■ "I really do enjoy *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. It is one of the few papers that isn't full of controversy and is full of the gospel. I know that we're to contend for 'the faith,' Jude 3, but I'm talking about all the bickering that goes back and forth between brethren. I appreciate your paper best, and I learn by it. Keep up the good work."

NORTH CAROLINA:

■ "Enclosed is a check. I want to thank you for the good work you are doing. I wish I could get all of your religious papers. You are the best. I read them over and over. I would like to get *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*. I will be praying for you and supporting. May God bless you."

VIRGINIA:

■ "We enjoy *THE SWORD AND STAFF* very much. We read and read, put away, and read again..."

■ "Thank you for *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I do enjoy reading it. The Bible Questions are so great. Everything is good. God bless your work. Thanks again."

TENNESSEE:

■ "Please place me on the mailing list for *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I have heard that it is an excellent paper."

■ "I thank the LORD for your fine paper. Please add the following names to your mailing list...Keep up the good work."

KENTUCKY:

■ "Please remove my name from your mailing list."

■ "Keep up the good work. Enclosed is a small contribution, and please send me 2 *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*."

OHIO:

■ "Please send me 5 copies of *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*. I think the last issue of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* is one of the best I have received..."

INDIANA:

■ "First, I thank our God for your consistent stand and work you put into *THE SWORD AND STAFF*.

"Secondly, I have enclosed a small order for materials.

"Thirdly, I have enclosed a list of people that I would like to have subscriptions to *THE SWORD AND STAFF*..."

■ "Would you please put me on your mailing list for *THE SWORD AND STAFF*? I received your first issue and I loved it. I love to read magazines like yours. I wish I'd subscribed years ago..."

ILLINOIS:

■ "We enjoy *THE SWORD AND STAFF* very much. Keep up the good work..."

■ "Please keep up the good work; so many of us need it."

IOWA:

■ "I enjoy very much *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. Keep the good work up. May God bless all of you and care for you."

MISSOURI:

■ "Several months ago I became acquainted with *THE SWORD AND STAFF* through the church I attend. I have sent for all the books of the back copies. I sure do appreciate reading *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I thank God that He is using you this way. Keep up the good work..."

NEBRASKA:

■ "...I thank you so much for *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. It stands firm, not yielding preaching the truth. As a young Christian I can use all the growing help I can get. *THE SWORD AND STAFF* provides that. I am still digesting the bound volumes...Please

(Continued on Page 11)

When the Whole Church Comes Together into One Place

(Continued from Page 7)

That is not what the Lord's supper is all about, nor why they were supposed to be coming together, but it should have been for a very solemn and sacred religious observance (not just to "eat" the Lord's supper). Aside from the Bible, it is a matter of public record that the Lord's supper was observed every Lord's day by the church in the early centuries. And New Testament Christians will reverently and lovingly do the same today.

Acts 2:42

Acts 2:42 contains many things that were engaged in by followers of Christ as they met upon the first day of the week. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Teaching and learning the apostles' doctrine, fellowship (which includes giving and sharing, Philippians 1:3-5; 4:15-18; I Corinthians 16:2), the Lord's supper, and praying are all very important. Each category deserves our special study and care. As we can see, worship and edification are interwoven.

I Corinthians 14:26

Although some of the things mentioned in I Corinthians 14:26 have to do with the passing charismatic gifts that were much in evidence in the early church, we can see what they did when they came together. "How is it then, brethren? *When* ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." Abiding principles involving the assembly can be seen here in statements like, "Let all things be done unto edifying." Then later in this chapter (14:40), "Let all things be done decently and in order."

To Hear God's Word

Some interesting and informative Scripture is found in I Timothy 4:13-16. It starts out by saying (Paul to Timothy), "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine [teaching]..." The word "reading" here has reference to the public reading of God's Word (then the exhorting and the teaching are tied in with it). Much of the New Testament constitutes letters that were to be read to assembled churches. Paul said in Colossians 4:16, "And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans..." Notice I Thessalonians 5:27. How that the reading, preaching, and teaching of God's Word is needed today. This is what will build our souls up

and give us a home in heaven (Acts 20:32). But some churches are bored by this and prefer to come together for other reasons.

Other Considerations

This little article is not an extensive treatment of this subject, but the church came together at other times and for various reasons. Protracted meetings

BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. In his patriarchal blessing, which one of his twelve sons did Jacob speak of as being unstable as water?
2. Why didn't God allow Moses to go into the Promised Land?
3. When the city of Jericho was destroyed in the conquest of Canaan, what curse was placed upon anyone who would rebuild it?
4. Ruth was a native of what country?
5. What man in the O.T. Scriptures hanged himself when the counsel he gave involving a king was not followed?
6. Why didn't God allow King David to build the temple although this was what he wanted to do?
7. What prophet in the O.T. times was fed by ravens when he was in hiding?
8. What thoughts prompted Agur, a writer of some of the Proverbs, to say, "give me neither poverty nor riches"?
9. What seems to be the only commonly domesticated animal not mentioned in the Bible?
10. Why was Jesus baptized?
11. What did Jesus say a person would be in danger of if he called another person a fool?
12. How many men by the name of Simon are mentioned in the N.T. Scriptures (and name them)?
13. What parable (or story) did Jesus tell in answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor"?
14. Where did Jesus tell his disciples that he would meet them after his resurrection?
15. After the resurrection of Christ when the disciples were back in Galilee, and Peter said, "I go a fishing," how many were in the group and who were they?
16. Having been in the number scattered by the great persecution in Jerusalem, where did Philip go to live after preaching the gospel in Samaria and then to the Ethiopian eunuch?
17. What did the apostle Paul say was greater than faith and hope?
18. What was the name of Timothy's mother and of his grandmother?
19. According to the book of Hebrews, what is the anchor of the soul?
20. In II Peter 2, Peter foretold the coming of false teachers whose lives were also false and ungodly, and then what other N.T. writer later affirmed that they had come in his day?

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

for preaching and teaching have already been named. Besides the prayers at the regular assemblies, there were special prayer meetings (Acts 4:23-31; 12:4-25). The church met specifically to address church problems (Acts 15), as well as dealing with problems when they regularly met (I Corinthians 5:4,5). The truth of I Corinthians 14:26 ("Let all things be done unto edifying") and 14:40 ("Let all things be done decently and in order") governed their gatherings.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Considering the word "when" involving the assembly of the church has led us down some interesting paths. From it we have concluded that the early church came together as a regular practice. That led us into identifying the "when." They met on the first day of the week and at other appointed times as was regarded needful.

In view of their divinely established practice of assembly, the writer of Hebrews admonished, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25).

Yes, we need the Lord. We need one another. Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together in these days of the church. To forsake the assembly is to forsake Christ and the strength and fellowship much needed in these evil times. □

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Page 9)

accept this minute token of appreciation. Thank you. Please continue to 'contend for the faith,' Jude 3.

*Some days seem tough
Weeks were rough
Through Jesus' power
There always was enough.*

"May our blessed Lord and Savior continue to strengthen and keep you. Your bold message and stand strengthens me!"

NEVADA:

■ *"I get THE SWORD AND STAFF from my church...I enjoy it so much and thank you...God bless you for your work you are doing."*

CALIFORNIA:

■ *"Please take me off your mailing list. Thanks."*
■ *"It was a pleasant surprise to stop in a little desert town while traveling and finding a copy of your paper. It was an impressive edition..."*

"Enclosed you will find a check for some of your bound volumes. If others are available, please let me

know, and may the Lord continue to bless your ministry for him."

OREGON:

■ *"Thank you for publishing THE SWORD AND STAFF. I appreciate your strong Biblical stand on issues that many others have watered down to fit our secular culture. I take greater pleasure in receiving your publication than I do in receiving any of the others currently available. I don't always agree exactly with the stand you take on some issues or the interpretation of some Scriptures, but in the vast majority of cases, I believe you are correct. Long may your voice be heard, and long may THE SWORD AND STAFF continue!..."*

■ *"Please remove our name from your list."*

CANADA:

■ *"...Please remove my name from your mailing list."*

GHANA, WEST AFRICA:

■ *"Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love. I cannot just thank you for the copies of THE SWORD AND STAFF...THE SWORD AND STAFF is really good to use for Bible class, leadership training and a lot more. It is unfortunate each day brethren come to my house, they request THE SWORD AND STAFF of which I am using. This situation has prompted me to request some old copies from you so the brothers here would be able to study and use..."*

The Second Coming Simplified

Eschatology simplified: Christ said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3; Hebrews 9:27,28; John 5:28,29; II Timothy 4:1; I Thessalonians 4:16-5:4). □

Faith that is not centered on the object of its source will soon be off course. □

**The Lord's Way
NO DENOMINATIONS
Just His Church**

Matthew 16:16-18; Ephesians 4:4-6; Colossians 1:18
I Corinthians 1:10-13; Galatians 1:8; I Timothy 3:15; 4:16

“I Never Would Have Believed That...”

I'M NOT SURE who first wrote these lines, but they seem so apropos for the age in which we live:

**I dreamed that somehow I had come
To dwell in Topsy-Turvydom,
Where vice is virtue, virtue vice;
Where nice is nasty, nasty nice;
Where right is wrong, and wrong is right;
Where white is black, and black is white.**

I never would have believed that churches would be asked to hand out condoms like one Cincinnati city councilman has asked. I never would have believed that homosexuals would go so far as to ask to have legitimized and recognized marriages between two people of the same sex. I never would have believed legalized abortion would become a prominent method of birth control. I never would have believed that Christ would be taken from school Christmas programs and baccalaureate programs would be dropped.

If...in 1967, someone would have told me that things would be as they are in 1994, I never would have believed that we could sink that far. I would have said, “No, it will not be because the church is here and the church will stop those things from happening.”

But things have gone that way and I must ask, “Where was the church?” Back in 1917, when the Bolshevik Revolution was taking place, they say that the clergy were having a meeting a few blocks away talking about the color of the vestments that they would wear. Today the church too often sits and talks about how things have changed and “the church too needs to change.”

The more I hear about these changes, the more I question the changes. Is the world worse today than the way Paul described it in Romans 1? Are the changes that churches are told they need to make (often being told by pollsters) really necessary? One preacher wrote: “Our gimmick-gear'd gospel would have fallen as flat in that day (Paul's day) as it has in our day. Can you imagine Paul and his party confronting this pagan, wicked hoard (sic) with hip-swinging girls and hand-clapping boys singing, “Something Good is Going to Happen to You?”

Maybe the real change the church of today needs to make is simply going back to the New Testament way. “When in doubt, read the directions.” Maybe we should major more on prayer. Maybe we should have more Bible studies that look into what the text says instead of “what the text means to you.” Maybe we should restore preaching no matter how many

say, “Don't preach to me.” Maybe that preaching should be Biblical instead of popular. Maybe that preaching should follow the outline of Paul to Felix, “righteousness, self-control, and judgment to come,” rather than simply trying to make people feel good.

I find it interesting that a group of “unschooled, ordinary men” (NIV), or “unlearned and ignorant men” (KJV) were able to turn the world “upside down” (KJV) or “cause trouble all over the world” (NIV) in their generation, but with out multi-degree, hi-tech, well-surveyed and diagnosed churches, we see little being done in righting the world.

Yes, “topsy-turvydom” is here. I wonder when the church will go back to Acts for directions on how to turn it “upside down” again [right side up; it had/has been “upside down” too long]?... □

—*Restoration Herald*



Your Family Must Not Stand in Your Way

THERE IS a spirit of casualness that pervades the professed Christian community; its presence is striking, by way of contrast, with the Word of God. Indeed, it is most difficult to find an individual among professed believers that is zealous enough for the name of God to forfeit, if required, earthly relations.

Certain methods and techniques have been employed to confront this condition. There are experts in church growth, domestic issues, and organization problems. Today, marketing procedures are quite common. The quick-sell approach is employed to emulate success, and people “love to have it so” (Jeremiah 5:31).

These things have achieved such a high level of acceptance that the faith of anyone questioning them is challenged. Be that as it may, I challenge them, for they are wrong, and out of harmony with the thrust of the heavenly kingdom. A few examples from God's Word will confirm that holy men have always considered temporal relationships to be subordinate to eternal ones.

ABRAHAM

**Did Not Refuse to Offer His Only Son,
Isaac, As Commanded**

“Then He said, ‘Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you’ So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and

Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him" (Genesis 22:2,3).

LOT
Did Not Identify with His Wife
As She Looked Back

"So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt" (Genesis 19:25,26, NKJV).

LOT'S DAUGHTERS
Left Their Husbands in Sodom

"So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, 'Get up, get out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city!' But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking. When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, 'Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city' " (Genesis 19:14,15 NKJV).

MOSES
Refused to be Called the Son
of Pharaoh's Daughter

"By faith Moses, when he became of age, [refused to be called] the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin" (Hebrews 11:24,25, NKJV).

HANNAH
Gave Samuel to the LORD

"Then she made a vow and said, 'O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.'...But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, 'Not until the child is weaned; then I will take him, that he may appear before the LORD and remain there forever' " (I Samuel 1:11,22, NKJV).

JESUS
Did Not Come Out to Talk
to His Mother and Brothers

"Then one said to Him, 'Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You.' But He answered and said to the one who told Him, 'Who is My mother and who are My brothers?' And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, 'Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother' " (Matthew 12:47-50, NKJV).

PAUL
Things That Were Gain to Him
Counted All But Loss

"But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ" (Philippians 3:7,8, NKJV). □

—*Word of Life*

FANNY CROSBY
Glad She Was Born Blind

FANNY CROSBY gave us more than 8,000 gospel songs although she was blinded at the age of 6 weeks. A preacher once remarked, "I think it is a great pity that the Master did not give you sight when He showered so many other gifts upon you." She quickly replied, "Do you know that if at birth I had been able to make one petition, it would have been that I should be born blind?" "Why?" asked the surprised preacher. "Because when I get to heaven, the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Saviour!"—*The Biblical Messenger*

The Bottom Line to Worry

THERE are only two things to worry about: Either you are well or you are sick.

If you are well, there's nothing to worry about. But if you are sick, there are only two things to worry about: Either you get well, or you die.

If you get well, there's nothing to worry about. But if you die, there are only two things to worry about: Either you will go to heaven or hell.

If you go to heaven, there's nothing to worry about. But if your go to hell, there is all eternity to worry about.

Where will you spend eternity? This is the bottom line to worry.—*Adapted* □

Answers to:
BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Genesis 49; 2. Deuteronomy 32:48-52; Numbers 20:1-13; 3. Joshua 6:26; I Kings 16:34; 4. Ruth 1:4; 5. II Samuel 17:1-23; 6. I Chronicles 22:6-8; 28:1-8; 7. I Kings 17:1-6; 8. Proverbs 30:1,8,9; 9. The cat; 10. Matthew 3:13-17; 11. Matthew 5:22; 12. Nine: (1) Simon Peter (Matthew 10:2); (2) Simon Zelotes (or the Cananaean) (Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15); (3) Simon brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3); (4) Simon the Leper (Matthew 26:6; Mark 14:3); (5) Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-40); (6) Simon of Cyrene (Matthew 27:32); (7) Simon the father of Judas Iscariot (John 6:71; 13:2,26); (8) Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:9); (9) Simon the Tanner (Acts 9:43); 13. Luke 10:29-37; 14. Matthew 26:32; 28:7,10,16; 15. John 21:1-3; 16. Acts 8:40; 21:8; 17. I Corinthians 13:13; 18. II Timothy 1:5; 19. Hebrews 6:19; 20. Jude. □

Two Cents Worth

A PARTICULAR church fired their preacher, and after a long confusing debate as to who they should hire, decided to do something no other congregation had ever done. They built their own preacher! One gentleman in the congregation was very knowledgeable in electronics and another was good in mechanics. With their combined efforts and many long hours the perfect preacher was made.

The preacher stood behind the pulpit every Sunday never moving or changing expressions. The only way to get this perfect mechanical preacher to preach a sermon was to insert two pennies into his back left pocket. Then program the sermon that you wanted to hear by pushing the desired button placed on the pulpit.

This system worked fine for many years. Then one day someone put in their two cents, selected a sermon and returned to their seat.

Upon hearing which sermon had been selected another member of the congregation got up, went to the stage, put in his two cents and selected another sermon.

With this a relative of the first selector marched to the stage and put in his two cents and selected yet another sermon.

A young man who had been quietly observing all the commotion rose to his feet, went to the stage, put in his two cents and said, "What we all need is a good sermon on loving one another."

Just as he returned to his seat an elderly woman stood, went to the preacher, put in her two cents and said, "We don't need a sermon about loving one another, we need a sermon on young people respecting their elders."

At that point another man went to the preacher, put in his two cents and pushed some buttons. About that time something strange happened. There was a long silence. The preacher malfunctioned!

This really caused a problem. The two gentlemen who had made the preacher said that they would not fix him because they were never allowed to listen to the sermons that they wanted to hear. Then they got up and walked out.

One lady stood up and said she didn't care if the preacher was broken, he was always a little unfeeling anyway.

One gentleman said, "I don't care either, he never preached the way I wanted him to."

Finally one man after patiently waiting for his turn to speak said, "Well, if the preacher can't

preach what we want him to, he is just a pile of junk."

The last man that stood up said, "I kind of like him this way. He will never preach another bad sermon, never squeak when raising his arm, never need all that costly maintenance and never cause us to be late for dinner on Sunday again." After thinking about it for a few moments everyone agreed and went home feeling like they had accomplished something.

The moral of this story is, there are many mechanical preachers preaching mechanical messages, but when it's all said and done the sermon isn't worth "two cents."

Preachers, preach the Word! —*Hank Ballinger*



What the Bible Says About

BAPTISM

● "And he [Jesus] said unto them, 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).

● "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).

● "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the [Ethiopian] eunuch said, See here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (Acts 8:36-38).

● "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

● "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 up 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 shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Romans 6:3-5).

● "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27).

**Have You Been Baptized into Christ
the Way the Bible Teaches?**

“The Windows of Heaven”

THERE IS an interesting phrase that is found in at least three places in the Scriptures: “The windows of heaven.” In each of the passages (once used twice), there is a different lesson that can be gleaned from the study of it. The phrase is a figure of speech for a means through which God pours forth either blessing or judgment. It describes:

1. Judgment rendered. It was at the time God looked down on a most wicked generation, and determined to destroy the unfaithful and unbelieving. The flood poured forth through the open windows of heaven. “In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened” (Genesis 7:11). It is more than evident that God was the One who poured forth that which happened to cleanse the world of the sin that prevailed.

2. Doubt. There was a question in the mind of a prominent officer of the court about God’s word being true. Having been told what was to happen on the following day, he doubted. “So an officer on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God and said, ‘Look, if the LORD would make windows in heaven, could this thing be?’ And he said, ‘In fact, you shall see it with your eyes, but you shall not eat of it’ ” (II Kings 7:2). The same thing was repeated again in verse 19. When one doubts, it seems that no amount of evidence will suffice to dispel that unbelief.

3. Blessings. This is my favorite of the three, for it promises blessings to be poured out. However, it is not without condition. Such blessings would not be available to that unbelieving one who will not be convinced. Israel had been very careless about their observance of the law. They were offering either inferior sacrifices, or no sacrifice at all. “ ‘Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and prove Me now in this,’ says the Lord of hosts, ‘If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessings that there will not be room enough to receive it’ ” (Malachi 3:10).

Whether it be blessings or judgments, notice that the windows are “opened,” not “closed.” The readiness of God to handle all situations is surely evident in each case. The assurance of blessings in such abundance should move us to respond with obedience to all the commands of God. Be faithful, never doubting.—*Leroy Sedgwick* □

McGarvey on Pastor

THE TERM pastor furnishes a striking example of the power with which sectarian usage forces itself upon us. We now have all the facts before us necessary to a proper estimate of the term pastor. To apply it to a preacher who is not a regularly appointed elder of the church is a misnomer; as much as to call the Lord’s Day Sabbath, or to call sprinkling baptism. It is a violation of the law that we must speak as the oracles of God; it is letting go of the form of sound words which we have heard from the apostles. Again: to style a preacher “the pastor” is still more unscriptural, for it robs the eldership entirely of this title, and makes it appear that there is but one pastor to the congregation, whereas the apostolic churches all had a plurality of them. If we use the term at all we must apply it to the eldership and may speak of “the pastors of a church,” and of “a pastor,” but never of “*the* Pastor,” unless, indeed, a church is so ill organized as to have but one leader.

—*J.W. McGarvey* □



If the Shoe Fits Wear It

HE HAD just completed a scorcher on the evil and sin of using foul language. He stated several times that he knew one of his hearers was guilty. The service ended, and he stood at the door greeting each person as he left the building.

The first to go was a woman no one would ever suspect of using foul language. Red-faced and angry she exclaimed, “I’ll never set foot in this building again!” Before the preacher could gather his wits over that one, another said, “If I had known you were that near last week, I would have been more careful.” And still another said, “At least you could have told me privately.” A fourth said, “Well, I was never so embarrassed in all my life.”

Then came the guilty party. He pumped the preacher’s hand heartily and with an innocent smile said, “Now, that’s what I call preaching. You sure poured it on ‘em today!”—*Selected* □



MONUMENTS TO THOUGHT

*Man’s written words are monuments to thought
That stand and tower into today, tomorrow;
A true memorial for good or naught,
Perpetuating gladness or prolonging sorrow.*

—*By James E. Gibbons*



Treasure

MANY who love the Word of God have discovered Treasure much to their liking when they obtained the bound volumes of *The Sword and Staff*. If you like this current issue, you will likewise be thrilled with the back copies in book form. Notice those still available (while they are still available), and place your order now for good reading. Make them part of your library and part of your life. You will be glad that you ordered them. □



“Under the Law to Christ”

WE ARE no longer under the law of Moses as such. The law of Moses has not been destroyed *per se*, but fulfilled (Matthew 5:17). As Paul wrote in Galatians 3:24,25, “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.” The law as law served its purpose, and still does (I Timothy 1:8-10), but as Christians we have graduated from it. We did not destroy our school years when we finished high school, but graduated to something higher and better. Man could never be justified by the deeds of the law (Romans 3:19-31). One disobedience undoes all righteousness (it did in the Garden of Eden), and all of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:10,23). As Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount, breaking God’s laws takes place in the heart as well as outwardly. Whether we have or have not broken all of the ten commandments outwardly, we have broken them in our hearts one way or another. But now we are justified by grace through an active faith (Galatians 2:16-20; 5:4). We are “under the

(Continued in Next Column)

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law to Christ” (I Corinthians 9: 21), the law of love. Consequently, those laws of the ten commandments which are distinctly universal (the Sabbath was not) are fulfilled in us because of our love (Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:13,14; 6:2). Grace moves us to an even higher level of obedience (Romans 6:1-6; Titus 2:11-14), and it all comes through Christ who is our righteousness (II Corinthians 5:21; I Corinthians 1:30).—J.E.G. □

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

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