

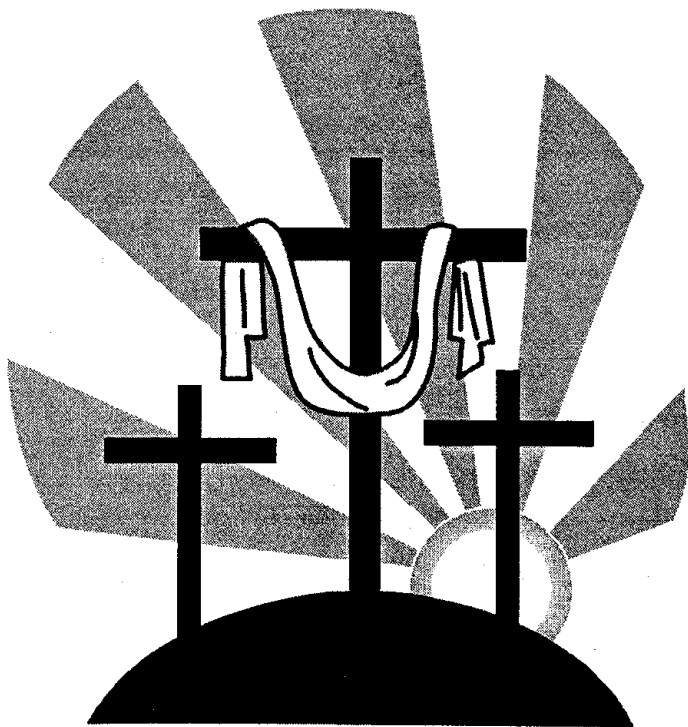
The Sword AND Staff

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

What Christianity is called...

DESIGNATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY

● By **JAMES E. GIBBONS**—1535 Fairfield Drive
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CHRISTIANITY is more of a modern word that has come into being, having a Bible base in the name Christian. We use the term in designating and describing the religion of the followers of Christ. Our religion is called many things in the Scriptures. It is our intention to examine some of them in this little article. We will find that each designation and expression is most meaningful in its usage. This will help us more fully to appreciate our privileged position as well as make application to our lives.

I. THE NEW TESTAMENT OR COVENANT (Hebrews 9:15) Meaning of the Word

The word covenant in the Bible is used in the sense of an agreement or contract. In ancient times God had many such arrangements with mankind, the covenants and conditions originating with Him. In bringing the Savior into the world, all of these covenants prepared man and pointed to the final one which was to come. Of course that one is the one in force now in the Christian age. The figure of a covenant in the New Testament is enlarged to include the idea of a testament or will. Christianity is called the "new testament." This word new primarily means new in reference to quality.

The Passing Testament

The most outstanding of the covenants before the New Testament was the Old Testament, but by its very nature it was destined to pass away. Serving its purpose in proving that man could not be justified by law (Romans 3:19,20), it was a "schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Galatians 3:19-29). Moses, that great spokesman, law-giver, and prophet of that era pointed to another like unto himself (Deuteronomy 18:15-19; Acts 3:22). The prophet Jeremiah in his day sensed the failure of the old covenant and spoke of the days when God would make a new covenant with His people (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13). According to the apostle Paul, that "handwriting of ordinances" that was against us, the Old Testament, has been taken out of the way and nailed to the cross (Colossians 2:14-17; Ephesians 2:14-16).

The New Testament

Before his death Jesus spoke of the blood of the "new testament" in the Lord's supper (Matthew 26:

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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 are going to be a Christian, be one.

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

Hope is the anchor of the soul (Hebrews 6:18,19), and those without it are adrift in a troubled sea.

Success is determined by getting up one more time than you fall down.

When you count your blessings and name them one by one, you will find yourself breathless before the task is done.

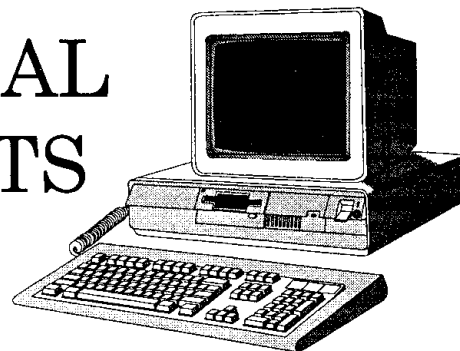
Trying to have the last word in an argument usually puts you back to where you started.

Seeds germinate better in warm soil; how needful it is for us then to sow the seed of the gospel into hearts that have first been warmed by the love of God.

Soft words and gentle actions turn away wrath and eliminate the factions.

When the sun shines upon the earth, the blackness of space that engulfs it is turned into the most beautiful shade of blue; and when the Son of God comes into our world, darkness is dispelled, and there are skies of blue.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS



NOW IN SPANISH, *La Espada y El Cayado*

WE ARE PLEASED to report to our readers in the English language that *The Sword and Staff* is now being published in Spanish. David and Lois Elliott of Puerto Rico are to be highly commended for their efforts and part in translation. We are doing the printing, mailing, and correspondence from our Mt. Airy address. The numbering system of *The Sword and Staff* in Spanish, *La Espada y El Cayado*, will start from the first of 1995 (this year will be Volume 1) and the first issue will be Number 1. That is how it will be reckoned. (The first issue of the paper translated actually is the third English issue that came out in 1994. From that issue onward the numbers will be reckoned in Spanish, starting as Volume 1, Number 1, 1995). A small number will be kept back each mailing for bound volumes for future use.

The purpose of *The Sword and Staff* is solely to "Preach the Word" (II Timothy 4:2) and to "Feed the Flock" (I Peter 5:2). We represent only the church that is found in the New Testament. Our aspirations only are to present the truth of God's Word unencumbered by human tradition. This is not a denominational position. We have no denominational allegiance. We are thrilled at the prospects of doing this in another language. May the God of Heaven be glorified and the cause of truth advanced in our humble efforts. Amen.

We are ready to put Spanish speaking people on the mailing list of this paper. Let us hear from you. If writing in English, please indicate Spanish edition. □

THE REASON FOR BEING ALIVE

IT IS SO SIMPLE. The reason for being alive is to live. Otherwise why did God make us? We read, "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7). And the fact that God made man in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26) indicates that we are miniature, living representations of Him. That image being a spiritual one, as responsible and intelligent beings, our lives are to glorify God as they reflect His likeness and

attributes in godly living. But man forfeited life, and at the same time failed in accomplishing the glory of God, by sinning. And this is true of all, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Now that the Savior has come, died for us, and restored that living relationship with God, we need to again assert the reason we are alive is to live. In a world of sin and death, the sinless Christ has come so that "we might have life" and "have it more abundantly" (John 10:10; also notice John 1:1-4; 3:16; 11:25,26; 14:6). In becoming a Christian we are forgiven of that which causes death, sin (Romans 6:23; Isaiah 59:2; James 2:26). We come up out of the waters of baptism to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:1-4). With the apostle Paul, being constrained by the love of God, we say, "...we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (II Corinthians 5:14,15).

Our Shame, Our Need, Our Care

Our shame today is that we know no shame;
It seems we have forgotten how to blush.
We do that which is wrong and feel no blame;
There is no trip of guilt—"why all the fuss?"

Our need is that we think we have no need;
But all of us in sin have gone astray.
Let us not grasp for more engrossed in greed,
But bankrupt, turn to God and humbly pray.

Our care should be that we no longer care;
That we no longer seek the things of God;
Nor of our fellow man are we aware;
To even care would seem to us as odd.

It seems that we have really missed the mark,
And point, of what this life is all about.
We see ourselves as light while in the dark;
We think we're in the way though off the route.

—By James E. Gibbons

We take seriously what the apostle Paul said in I Corinthians 6:20, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's". Now with "purpose of heart" (Acts 11:23) we unselfishly live our lives for the glory of God as we go about doing good (I

Corinthians 10:31; Matthew 5:16). The good life is lived doing that which is good.

Yes, the purpose of being alive is to live, but so many people think they are living today who really aren't. Being part of a society set on materialistic gratification, they live only for today when they are creatures of eternity (made after the image of the eternal God). Like the self-indulgent rich man, who said, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Luke 12:15-21), they sell themselves eternally short. God again says, "Thou fool!" And many think they are living when they "live it up." The moral life to them is boring; it is not the "good life." But the pleasures of sin are but "for a season" (Hebrews 11:25), for the "wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). The arch deceiver has done his work again. Like Eve, they have forfeited life. There is no life in sin. Like a ravaging epidemic sweeping across the land and leaving a trail of sickness, disease and death in its path, sin has the stench of death all about it. Yes, the Bible speaks of being "dead in trespasses and sin" (Ephesians 2:1). How foolish to think of this as living.

Simplify things in your life (and keep them that way). The reason you are alive is to live and to live for God. Let your life be filled and lived with purpose. With the apostle Paul say, "This one thing I do" (Philippians 3:13f) as he followed the teachings of Christ who said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). Then you will know that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (I Timothy 4:8). Amen. □

The Homeless

A FUGITIVE is one who is running from home.

A VAGABOND is one who has no home.

A STRANGER is one away from home.

A PILGRIM is one on his way home. □

Passing Through But Once

I **EXPECT** to pass through this world but once; any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow-creature, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.—**Selected** □



DESIGNATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY

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28). As the Old Testament ended with the death of Christ on the cross, the New Testament came into force. Using this figure of a testament or will, the writer of the book of Hebrews spoke of Christ being the "mediator of the new testament by means of death," then said, "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Hebrews 9:15-17). Paul says that those who preach the gospel are ministers of the "new testament" (II Corinthians 3:6). This New Testament is called an everlasting covenant (Hebrews 13:20,21). No other is to be given to man.

Implications and Promises

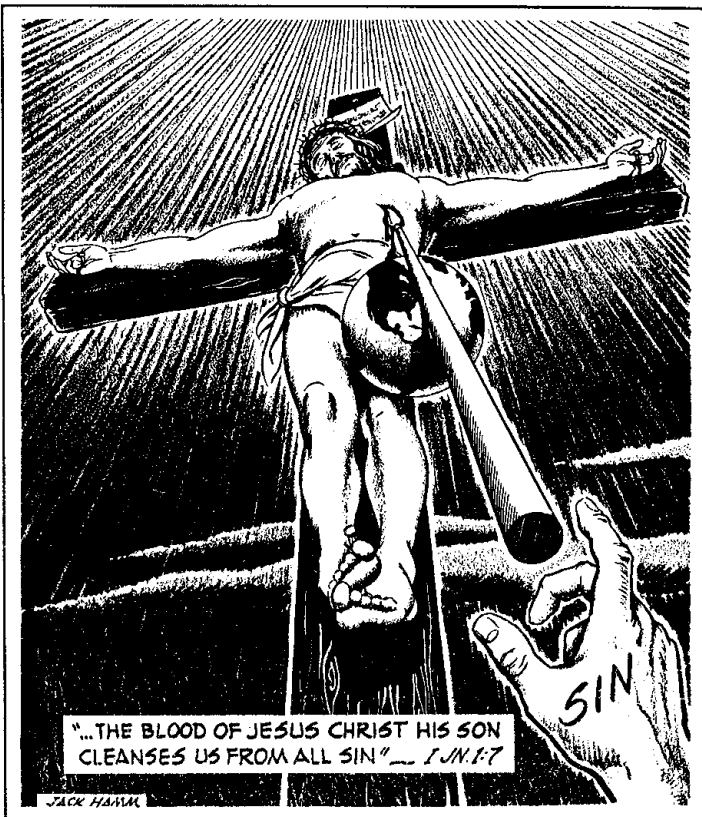
Inasmuch as Christianity is called a testament or will, legal implications are involved. Conditions must be met. Also, a testament has to do with people falling heir to an inheritance. With the Old Testament as a backdrop, the Christians are now the children of Abraham by faith (Galatians 3:7-9) and the spiritual Jew of God (Romans 2:28,29). As there was Israel after the flesh, there is the spiritual Israel of God today, the church of Christ (I Corinthians 10:18; Galatians 6:16; Romans 9:6-8). And as they were heirs to a physical promised land, we are heirs to an eternal one in heaven (Galatians 3:29; James 2:5; I Peter 3:7).

II. THE GOSPEL (Mark 16:15) The Good News

There is an element of excitement in the word gospel. It means good news or glad tidings. Mark writes of "the beginning of the *gospel* of Jesus Christ, the Son of God..." (Mark 1:1-4). After the baptism of Christ, we read, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the *gospel of the kingdom*, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matthew 4:23). In verse 17 we find what he preached in reference to the kingdom: "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). This was the beginning of the gospel, the good news of the coming kingdom. Some would live to see the kingdom come with power (Mark 9:1). This happened on the day of Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ as the first complete gospel message was preached (Acts 2).

Significance of the Gospel

The apostle Paul declared that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it was the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). He later defines the gospel as the exciting good news about the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as it relates to sinners (I Corinthians 15:1-4). More



generically, in Ephesians 1:13 he speaks of "the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation." Likewise the apostle Peter wrote, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Peter 1:25). So the gospel is Christ and all of those great truths surrounding him incorporated into our religion. It is the word of truth about the Word that became flesh to become our Savior (John 1).

Obedying the Gospel

Faithfully preaching the gospel of Christ produces faith, obedience in baptism, and living the Christian life (Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:37-42; 8:12,35-39; 18:8). The Scriptures speak not only of believing the gospel (Romans 1:16; 10:8-10), but obeying the gospel (Romans 10:16; II Thessalonians 1:8; I Peter 4:17). How does one obey the gospel? By embracing the good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and personally identifying with these wonderful truths by dying to sin in repentance (Christ died), being baptized (Christ was buried), and arising to walk in newness of life (Christ was resurrected) (Romans 6:17—i.e., I Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 6:3-6; Colossians 2:12; 3:1).

An Affirmative Word

Yes, Christianity is the gospel, and the gospel is Christianity. This exciting word sets the tone for the whole experience of the Christian in his relationship with God. Good news produces excitement, and expels darkness and gloom. In such a context we live and move and have our being as Christians. Christianity is a religion of positive affirmation, positive living and hope. Because he lives, we, too, shall live.

III. THE FAITH (Jude 3)

Justified by Faith

Parallel with the gospel is the designation "THE FAITH" as a mode of reference to Christianity. Not only is this a positive affirmation of all that the expression "the gospel" entails, it is used in contrast with the Old Testament. The Old Testament religion was characterized as THE LAW (John 1:17). Since perfect obedience was necessary before a person could be justified by law (Galatians 3:10,11), by it no one could be saved (Romans 3:19,20), "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). The sinless life of Christ and the cross were necessary in taking away our sins and counting his righteousness to be ours with forgiveness and justification (Galatians 3:13; I Peter 2:24; II Corinthians 5:21). We are now justified by faith (Galatians 3:23-27; Romans 5:1-10). Thus, Christianity is characterized as THE FAITH and consequently called that.

A System of Faith

Yes, we are justified by faith; we walk by faith (Romans 5:1; II Corinthians 5:7). We read that churches were "established in *the faith*" (Acts 16:5). Then the apostle Paul asserts that there is "one Lord, *one faith*, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5). The term seems not only to be used subjectively, but objectively. It has reference to the whole system of faith, Christianity.

Obedience to the Faith

As in obeying the gospel, there is something about THE FAITH that must be obeyed (perhaps meaning the same thing). In the early days of the church, we read, "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were *obedient to the faith*" (Acts 6:7). Paul speaks of "obedience to the faith among all nations" (Romans 1:5; also, 16:26). This has reference to becoming a Christian.

A Faith of Action

The writer James makes it clear that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:14-26). The common denominational doctrine of "faith only" heard so

much today is not taught in the Bible. In fact, James says, speaking of works of faith, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and *not by faith only*" (James 2:24). The object of our faith is the reality of the resurrected, living Christ—*vital and vibrant truths!* Therefore, active faith produces active, vibrant Christians. Christianity is not a "do nothing" religion.

IV. THE LAW OF CHRIST (Galatians 6:2)

Not Without Law

As the Law of Moses was not without faith, neither is THE FAITH without law. There is "the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). Hebrews 7:12 reads, "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." Paul wrote, "To them that are without law [the Gentiles], as without law, (being not without law to God, but *under the law to Christ*,) that I might gain them that are without law" (I Corinthians 9:21). The Old Testament was a yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1), the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2). The New Testament is called the "perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25). So, in some sense the New Testament is law.

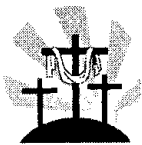
The Law of the Spirit

Being under the law to Christ involves spiritual obedience. Although we are not justified by the deeds of the law in the Old Testament sense, after talking about this, Paul questioned, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Romans 3:31). The law of faith does not take away moral restraint, responsibility, and accountability. As "the law of the Spirit" coming from within, it prompts a fuller obedience. Consider the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:20-48). It is more than just feigned obedience to an outward and external legal system (II Corinthians 3:6; Jeremiah 31:33). The one who has been born again, now a new creature in the context of God's mercy and grace, applies himself to keep the law of Christ. And all of the time he remembers, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth" (Romans 10:4).

Another Significance

Also, when Paul speaks of THE LAW OF CHRIST in Galatians 6:2, this expression seems to have another significance. Here he admonished the Galatian Christians, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil *the law of Christ*." In a verse in the chapter right before this, Galatians 5:14, he had stated, "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The law of love is called the law of Christ. A back-

(Continued on Next Page)



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drop for this concept can be seen in what the Lord said about "the first and great commandment" and "the second" in the Law of Moses (Matthew 22:36-40). Perhaps with this in mind Romans 13:8-10 is written, as well as the words in Galatians. The principle of love should determine and guide all of our actions. Paul instructed the Corinthians, "Let all your things be done with charity [love]" (I Corinthians 16:14). This is the law of Christ. (How excellent!) This is Christianity.

V. THE HOLY COMMANDMENT (II Peter 2:21)

An Appropriate Expression

The apostle Peter pictures those who apostatize from the faith as turning "from *the holy commandment* delivered unto them" (II Peter 2:21). The Sermon on the Mount serves as a background to this concept of commandment (Matthew 5,6,7), and this is especially true in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19,20). The words "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded" are found here. This was to be done in conjunction with a person's conversion. It refers to the body of the teachings of Christ. Outstanding in this body of teachings is what the Lord said in John 13:34, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you." John later alludes to this in his first epistle, "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (I John 3:23). Paul asserted, "Now the end of the commandment is charity [love] out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned" (I Timothy 1:5). How appropriate then it is to call Christianity the holy commandment.

The Commandments of the Lord

Yes, "the holy commandment" has reference to the teachings of Christ, what he commanded. But some would segment the Scriptures, saying that only the actual recorded words of Christ are the commands of Christ; what the apostles and other writers said must be regarded as inferior and secondary. But Jesus said to the apostles, "But...the Holy Ghost [Spirit], whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). Consequently Paul asserts in I Corinthians 14:37, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowl-

edge that the things I write unto you are *the commandments of the Lord*." And thus Peter admonished his readers, "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour" (II Peter 3:2). The writings of all Spirit-inspired men, as well as the direct words of Christ, constitute the commandments of Christ, "the holy commandment." Let us take these writings seriously.

Importance of Keeping the Commandments

It is important that we keep the commandments of Christ as Christians. Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). John amplifies this truth in I John 5:3 by saying, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous [burdensome]." And the Lord further said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (John 15:10). Again John amplifies this truth with parallel thought in I John 2:3-5, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." Then, finally, those who keep his commandments have a right to the tree of life and may enter into the gates of that holy city (Revelation 22:14). How wonderful!

VI. THE WAY (Acts 9:2)

Background to Use

"The way" is a most interesting way in making reference to Christianity. The way has in mind a road that is traveled on. As quoted by the gospel writer Mark, it was prophesied that John the Baptist would prepare "the way" before Christ (Mark 1:1-4). As the final week of the ministry of Christ was coming to a close, Christ told his disciples, "I am *the way*, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Then, in anticipation of the unfolding developments, a prophecy in Isaiah 35:8 had asserted centuries before, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness..."

In the Book of Acts

This mode of expression in talking about Christianity becomes standardized by the writer Luke in the book of Acts. Saul desired letters of authority to be presented to the synagogues in Damascus so that if he found any of "the way" he might bring them

bound to Jerusalem (Acts 9:2). Years later when as an apostle he stayed two years in Ephesus preaching, "there arose no small stir about *the way*" (Acts 19:23,24) as Demetrius the silversmith led an opposition against Paul. Then later when Paul was in Jerusalem and was about to be carried into Antonio's fortress from the angry Jews, he was allowed

HIGH ROAD—LOW ROAD



to address them from the steps. In telling who he was, rehearsing his background and conversion, he said, "And I persecuted this [*the*] way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women" (Acts 22:4). Following this when Paul defended himself before Felix in Caesarea, it is noted that Felix was knowledgeable about "the way" (Acts 24:22).

The Way Described

We can look upon Christianity from many different perspectives as it appears before us as the way, but each blends into the other. The apostle Peter spoke of it as "the way of truth," in contrast with false teaching (II Peter 2:2). The Lord himself plainly said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13, 14). The prophecy in Isaiah spoke of "the way of holiness" (Isaiah 35:8). Then Peter

also calls it "the way of righteousness" (II Peter 2:21). This is the route we must take and the way we must travel to get to heaven. Heaven awaits at the end of the way.

CONCLUSION:

Other designations, words, and expressions could be pointed out from the Scriptures that would likewise captivate our attention, but this will suffice as an intriguing study. Regardless which one of the expressions we have looked into, they have all pointed to Christ. Christ is Christianity, and Christianity is Christ. Each designation is positive and affirmative in nature. Exciting and vital truths are affirmed. Victory is proclaimed. Consequently, optimism and vibrant purpose in living should prevail among Christians. □

"A Way to Escape"

THERE IS a place in the Hudson River where, as you move along in the current, you seem to be entirely hemmed in by hills. The boat drives on toward a rocky wall, and it seems as if it must either stop or be dashed to pieces. Just as you come within the shadow of the mountain, an opening suddenly comes in view, and the boat passes out into one of the grandest bays on the river.

So it is with temptation. We do not seek it, but there it is. Paul stated in I Corinthians 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." With each victory He will help you some other to win as you go on in victorious living (if you will let Him).—*Adapted* □

It Has Been Said

IF THERE is righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character. If there is beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home. If there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation. When there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world. □

All Over in a Minute

A WOMAN told the preacher that she had a bad temper, but that it was all over in a minute. He replied, "So is the blast of a shotgun, but it blows everything to pieces."—*Selected* □

Humility and Conceit

THE BRANCH that bears the most fruit bows lowest to the ground while the branch with little or no fruit stands most upright. So it is with humility and conceit. Humility carries with it the weight of wisdom while conceit has the light-headedness of pride.—*Selected* □

Two Popular “Cop-Outs”

TWO POPULAR “cop-outs” in dealing with the problem of sin today are to deny it and/or to minimize it; deny it by saying, “I’m O.K. You’re O.K.” (so everyone and everything is all right), or minimize it by saying, “We all are sinners” (so no one should be critical of others, as we continue with the *status quo*).—*J.E.G.* □

Consider the Hammer

IT KEEPS its head.
It does not fly off the handle.
It keeps pounding away.
It finds the point and then drives it home.
It looks at the other side, and thus often clinches the matter.
It is the only knocker in the world that does any good.—*Selected* □

Man of Paul’s Persuasion

A PREACHER asked a dying man, “Brother, of what persuasion are you?” He replied, “I am of Paul’s persuasion.” “You don’t understand me,” he said, “Of what persuasion are you?” “I understand you, I am of Paul’s persuasion.” The preacher, shaking his head, said, “Brother, you still don’t understand. There is a Baptist persuasion, a Methodist persuasion, a Lutheran persuasion, an Episcopal persuasion, etc., but what is the persuasion of Paul?” The man, smiling, quoted the Scripture and said, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that HE is able to keep that which I have committed unto HIM against that day” (II Timothy 1:12).—*Selected* □

“How is It with You?”

ONE of the outstanding preachers of a former generation was Dwight L. Moody. Although he was not formally educated to an advanced degree, he was dedicated and persuasive in what he believed.

At the close of one of his messages, a young man with a notebook in his hand approached Mr. Moody and said, “I appreciated your sermon, but I have jotted down exactly 22 grammatical errors which you have made.”

Looking at the young man straightly, but kindly, Mr. Moody said, “Yes, it is true that my education is deficient, but I am using all the grammar I know in the service of the Lord. How is it with you?”

Well, “How is it with you?” Are we actually using our abilities and honestly doing our very best? Do we love Jesus supremely, and does he have our undivided loyalty?—*Adapted* □

BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. Where did Cain go to live after he killed his brother Abel?
2. What was the name of the land inhabited by Esau and his descendants?
3. At the time of Joseph and the famine when the children of Israel moved to Egypt, in what part of the land did they live?
4. When did the manna cease to be furnished by God to Israel in their exodus from Egypt and journey to the Promised Land?
5. Where were the bones of Joseph finally buried when the children of Israel came into the Promised Land?
6. In considering the twelve tribes of Israel, which two sons of Israel (Jacob) did not have a tribe named after them?
7. Which cities were cities of refuge in ancient Israel, and exactly what was their purpose?
8. What were the requirements of those who took the vow of a Nazarite in ancient Israel?
9. What man during the time of the judges in Israel (before the time of the kings) had himself made king and reigned three years over Israel?
10. In the history of Israel, what men were slain when they couldn’t pronounce a word correctly, and what was that word?
11. To what did the writer of Proverbs compare a beautiful woman without discretion?
12. What was the name of the man who took dictation for the prophet Jeremiah?
13. In the book of Daniel, what was Belteshazzar’s Jewish name?
14. What were the gifts the wise men brought when Jesus was born?
15. Of whom did Jesus say, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile”?
16. In the synagogue of what city did Jesus preach his sermon on the bread of life?
17. Who was the “deputy” (proconsul) of Achaia who refused to hear the Jew’s complaints against the apostle Paul in Corinth?
18. Influenced by the preaching and mighty works of the apostle Paul, in what city did people burn their books worth 50,000 pieces of silver?
19. When Paul was a prisoner at Jerusalem, what did his nephew do that was a great service involving his safety?
20. Of the seven churches in Asia mentioned in the book of Revelation, which two are the only ones with which the Lord does not find fault?

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

READERS'

...Response

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

ALABAMA:

■ "Please keep the good Word flowing. I believe He is soon coming for His Bride..."

NORTH CAROLINA:

■ "Enclosed find our contribution. Please put us on the mailing list of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* for 10 copies please."

VIRGINIA:

■ "Please send me one copy of *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*. We sure enjoy all of your material. God bless YOU as you serve HIM through the printed PAGE."

WEST VIRGINIA:

■ "May God bless you in your work for Him. We enjoy your paper. Not too many like it around anymore."

■ "Love *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. Keep you in my prayers. You are doing a great work. The articles you write are good; I read and enjoy all of them. I print a church bulletin, and we use some of your short ones. Sending you a small check to help with your work. May God bless and keep you."

OHIO:

■ "Thank you for putting out such a fine paper for us to read."

■ "Please send 5 copies of *POEMS OF THE SOULS AND PROVERBS*."

■ "Please put me on your mailing list. I have read old issues of your publication and have found them very informative. I also reaped great benefits from the illus-

trations. I do hope you still put out *THE SWORD AND STAFF*...Enclosed is my contribution."

■ "Please find enclosed my check for...the book, *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*, by James E. Gibbons. The balance of money is for help with *THE SWORD AND STAFF* publication.

"I would like you to know that both my wife and I find *THE SWORD AND STAFF* issues to be very informative, and, helpful in the understanding of the Written Word. We both read our last issue, and then gave same to my mother.

"In closing, I thank you in advance for handling my order and am hopeful that our little donation will be of some help in continuing publication of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*."

ILLINOIS:

■ "Thank you and may God continue to bless you in this wonderful service. Looking forward to bound volumes 31 & 32."

WISCONSIN:

■ "Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

"Please send us a year's subscription to your wonderful magazine, *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. We have never taken it, but others who have taken it have given us theirs when they were finished with it...With all of the false teaching there is in the world today, it is great to read a magazine that is Biblically sound!"

IOWA:

■ "We appreciate your articles and your efforts to get this information out to people. I wish more people were prone to read and think about what's in these messages. Maybe they would if the government didn't consume so much of our time with paper work, although I think people are getting lazy minds—not a lot of real thinkers left, and there aren't very many of us that don't want or have a television which is a main cause for lazy minds and even worse things—right?!...May the Lord help us all to alert more people to the way of Jesus the Christ. Thanks to your helpers too in getting the paper out."

CALIFORNIA:

■ "I enjoy your provocative articles. Please accept my donation."

OREGON:

■ "Please send me thirty (30) of the tracts titled 'What Must I Do to Be Saved?' Thanks for a great publication!"

■ "We greatly appreciate the work that you put into *THE SWORD AND STAFF*...Keep up the good work as it is encouraging to read papers that have some 'meat' to them as *THE SWORD AND STAFF* does.

(Continued on Next Page)

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

Thank you again for your good work, and may the Lord bless you in all your labors for the kingdom."

■ *"Please remove us from your mailing list. We are not interested in reading your publication, and we are changing our address."*

GHANA, West Africa:

■ *"Please put me on the mailing list of THE SWORD AND STAFF to enable me to benefit from your rich knowledge of God's Word..."*

NIGERIA, West Africa:

■ *"...I have been receiving and benefiting from your publication...It has been a tremendous source of spiritual blessing to me—Thanks a lot!"* □

BARBS... with a Point

Some preachers are strong on personality, their own, instead of the person of Christ.

You cannot be a slave of nicotine and a servant of Jesus Christ at the same time.

Too many "gospel" singing groups are characterized by superficiality rather than spirituality, and are more preoccupied with entertaining than proclaiming the gospel of Christ.

A religion that is primarily concerned about making a person feel good, and feel good about himself, without first being good is not any good.

It might impress our colleagues and the worldly wise to go out of our way to quote them and the "recognized" scholarly sources in our preaching, but really what is impressive to the godly person is a "thus saith the Lord" from the Word of God.

That which claims to be the church today is fragmented into denominations because it preaches a fragmented gospel.

Some "churches" represent a system of compromise wherein the truth will not thrive (nor long survive).

When truth is preached in a paranoid sort of way, and people respond to it accordingly, then when the paranoia begins to wear off so will the convictions involving that which they have believed.

Some things for which we contend may be sectarian, artificial, non-issues as far as the Word of God

is concerned; let us get back to that which really matters, that which is basic and godly.

If your disposition is like a keg of nails, don't expect smooth and harmonious relations with others.

You may be buried in the basement of the church (building) and still not get into heaven unless you are in the church of Jesus Christ.

You have to be a good driver, spiritually speaking, to go the second mile with some people because it is a rough road to travel.

It is no surprise that people who do not respect their own sexuality also do not respect what their sexuality produces, other human beings, and see no wrong involved in terminating life in abortion. □

Do We Need to Have a Change of Names?

ONCE a soldier was reported to Alexander the Great as having shown great cowardice on a particular occasion. When the soldier appeared before Alexander the Great, he asked him his name. On hearing that it was Alexander, he upbraided him with the dishonor that he had brought on such a name, and entreated him either to change his name or else act differently. Do we need to have a change of names today? It would be better for the cause of Christ to have fewer Christians, but better ones. □

ABOUT MONEY

HOW odd to call money dough when everyone knows dough sticks to your fingers.

Money may talk but who can keep it long enough to begin a conversation?

Money may talk but you sure have to turn up the volume to hear it.

Stop worrying about the dollar; it's not worth it.

A dollar may not do as much for us as it used to, but then we don't do as much for a dollar either.

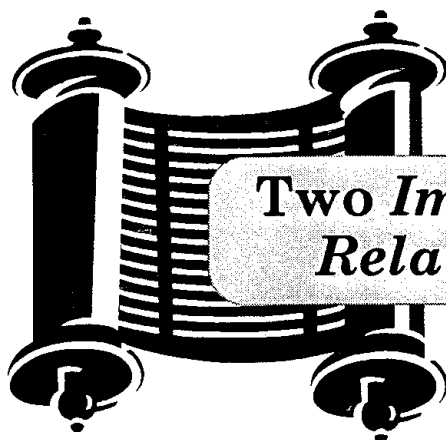
Biologists say that there are millions of germs on a dollar bill; that's ridiculous, even germs couldn't live on a dollar these days.

It used to be only Washington's face on our money; now Washington's hands are on it too.

No matter how low the dollar may fall, it will never fall as low as some people will stoop to get it.

"Good bye" is what money says when it talks.

—Submitted by a S. D. Reader



Two Important and Related Bible Studies

Getting Romans Chapter 14 in Perspective

TO BE correctly understood all Scripture must be understood in the light of its context (setting). There is the immediate context and the larger context of the rest of the New Testament (or even the whole Bible at times). Question marks are raised when we read the 14th chapter of Romans (read it now), then read other parts of the New Testament like the book of Galatians. And especially are our questions compounded when we realize the book of Romans and Galatians were written about the same time.

The 14th chapter of Romans obviously is talking about Christians with Jewish and Gentile backgrounds. In embracing Christianity, Jewish people carried over many unwarranted scruples and hang-ups involving their former religion. Their consciences were guided by Jewish distinctions and pagan associations, the latter having more of a moral basis to it. Gentile Christians had no problem in eating any kind of meat, it seems (in fact, that is the New Testament position, I Timothy 4:4, etc.), but the Jewish Christians were more restrictive, some eating only vegetables. The question of ceremonially unclean meats still plagued them. Then Paul said, "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike..." Some

individual Christians of Jewish descent were regarding Jewish holy days. Although Jew and Gentile seemingly held divergent views,

they were not to be judgmental or despise one another. The judgment was to be left in the hands of God.

Much of this would seem to be at variance with what we read in the book of Galatians. Through the influence of Judaizers the Galatians were brought back to things Jewish, even practicing circumcision and "esteeming one day above another" (keeping Jewish holy days, sabbaths, etc.). Paul sharply rebukes them for the course they have taken, although on the surface Romans 14 would seem to frown upon doing this, and he said, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Galatians 4:10,11). Galatians 1:8 and 5:4 go two steps further.

How are we to understand and explain all of this? How does Romans 14 fit in with the larger context of the New Testament (and especially Galatians)?

Perhaps the key to understanding Romans 14 is found in Romans 14:1 and 15:2. Romans 14:1 reads, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." The word WEAK (in the faith) means "being not strong." The person holding the Jewish position was not on solid ground. He is called weak, and it is worded in such a way as to imply that he is expected to become strong. In the meantime such were to be received as brothers and sisters because Christ had received them, and his grace would take care of them while they were becoming strong.

Coupling Romans 15:2 with this verse, we read, "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to

edification." They were to go along with the weak brother with his Jewish hang-ups, be considerate of his feelings, "for his good to edification." That is the key; that is the whole point. As they were dealing with an individual brother on an individual basis, they were to do this, with the view of helping him become "built up" (i.e., his "edification"), eventually being made strong. They were to help him over the rough places until he could come to the larger Christian view of things. This was not something imposed on the whole church because only individuals were entering into the abstinence and the observing of days, etc.

That is the difference between Romans and Galatians. In Galatia whole churches had accepted the Jewish position. It was being taught as the doctrine of the church, and men were looking to the law of Moses for justification (Galatians 5:4). It was not a matter of individuals struggling with hang-ups, but of whole churches accepting a sectarian position. That is the difference between the situation in Rome and the one in Galatia. To go along with churches now steeped in Judaism was not for their "good to edification." They were not in a context where they could be helped, and it would confirm them in their error. They had turned from the grace, which alone was sustaining the weak ones in Romans 14, and they were claiming justification in what the Romans were looking upon as hang-ups. There is a difference.

Keep these thoughts in mind in dealing with modern day situations which may be parallel to this. Remember this involved individuals in a local church situation. Let us help the weak brother or sister on toward maturity, but at the same time may we not let the church fall into apostasy. We make a grave mistake if we use Romans 14 as a catch-all and a cloak to cover all

(Continued on Next Page)

kinds of divergences and innovations when we have no intentions of teaching the people better. We have the Great Commission and God's completed revelation (read the next study)—it must be taught. □

—J.E.G.

READ I Corinthians 13:8-13, and consider this in the light of its larger context of chapters 12, 13, and 14. Especially let us look at verses 9 and 10 in chapter 13. "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."

This Scripture is quite revealing in the light of what our Lord said in John 16:13, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth..." Earlier Jesus said in John 14:26, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost [Spirit], whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

At the time the apostle Paul wrote the Corinthians, they knew "in part," and they prophesied "in part," and they were looking to the time when that which was "perfect" would come so that the "in part" situation would be done away. The word "PART" here means just what it says: a part, or a portion, in contrast and in relationship to the whole or that which is complete. In reference to the Greek word translated "PERFECT," the *Analytical Greek Lexicon* defines it as "complete, entire, as opposed to what is partial and limited," and it gives I Corinthians 13:10 as an example of this usage.

But what about the *knowing* in part and the *prophesying* in part? Paul, in Ephesians 3:2-5, speaks of the "mystery...which in other ages

was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." We make a mistake if we think of the gift of prophecy only in terms of foretelling the future. Here it means to *forthtell* the truth of God by direct inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

So, Paul is saying, the Holy Spirit was in the process of guiding them into all truth. They did not

**Knowing in *Part*
and
Prophesying in *Part*
Until the *Perfect* is Come**

receive the revelation of all the New Testament truths at once, but in "parts" along (you might say). Their knowledge was not complete, but the time was coming when this could be possible as far as God's revelation was concerned. As we pointed out, when the "perfect" (that which was "complete, entire, as opposed to what is limited," I Corinthians 13:10) was come, the in part situation would be "done away." When the Holy Spirit finished guiding the inspired men into all truth, and it was written down, this was accomplished.

Thereafter the supernatural spiritual gifts, which were transferred by the laying on of the apostles' hands (Hebrews 2:3,4; Acts 8:18; Acts 19:6), were no longer needed. They came to an end. Paul had said, "...whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away" (I Corinthians 13:8). He makes a parallel of their situation in the early church to that of a child: "When I was a child, I *spake* as a child, I *understood* as a child, I *thought* as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (13:11). (Everything

could be known and seen a lot clearer with the completed revelation of God—13:12; James 1:21-25; Hebrews 4:12,13; II Corinthians 3:18).

(It is naive to think that we have the spiritual gifts today. Some say we do, especially emphasizing the "tongues"—how-ever, in the New Testament this was the gift of speaking in another language theretofore unlearned by the person speaking, Acts 2:8; not some jibber-jabber. If we can have one of these spiritual gifts today, we can have all of them in the church. And the most important was the gift of

prophecy, receiving and preaching God's truth in PLAIN language by direct revelation. If this is true [that we have the gifts today], the Bible is not a completed or a closed book, and it could be added to by those who supposedly had the gift. Yes, and we have confusion, denominations, and cults today!).

Now let us notice some ways in which the Holy Spirit guided the apostles into all truth, and how they knew in part and prophesied in part until that which was perfect came.

Even as God gave Moses his basic law, yet some things had to be spelled out more in detail along (Leviticus 24:10-23). This is especially true in the present age as people were making a transition from the Old Testament, which was but a shadow (Hebrews 10:1) of the reality of the New Testament which was to come. The Holy Spirit guided the apostles into all truth, and they preached the truth. However, sometimes they didn't fully comprehend what they were saying, nor realize all of its implications. It took several years for them to get around to putting it into practice.

A good illustration of this is the Great Commission. The Lord had said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). And, as Matthew reads, it was to be taken to "all nations" ("nations," the word that is elsewhere translated "Gentiles"). (Matthew 28:19). The day the church was set up among men (Acts 2; Mark 9:1) people were told to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins for salvation. Then Peter declared, "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). We know that those who were "afar off" refers to the Gentiles (Ephesians 2:11-17).

We are made to wonder what the apostles actually thought Jesus meant in the Great Commission. It seems that Peter did not get the full import of what the Holy Spirit guided him to say on the day of Pentecost. For about eight years or so they stayed in close to Jerusalem and preached the gospel just to the Jews. It took the special prodding of God and the great demonstration of the Holy Spirit upon the household of Cornelius before they would move on out and preach to the Gentiles. It took a persecution before they "went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8).

Although they accepted Christ for salvation, the Jewish Christians had many hang-ups in making the complete transition to simple New Testament Christianity. They thought in terms of the temple, Jewish customs, and days. Perhaps the break in clarity and finality was not fully realized until the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A.D. by the Romans. In the meantime, God led them step by step as these truths were "sinking in." Peter's vision, which led him to the house of the Gentile Cornelius, also taught him that God no longer made distinctions of clean and unclean animals (Acts 10). Then a few

years later, the "council" at Jerusalem concluded that the Gentiles didn't have to be circumcised or keep the customs of the Jews (Acts 15). However, it was another thing with the Jewish Christians. Their clear-cut break was much longer in coming.

During this period of knowing in part and prophesying in part, we find Peter and John going to the temple at the hour of prayer (Acts 3:1). Later in Asia Minor Paul had Timothy circumcised "because of the Jews which were in those quarters" (Acts 16:3). We see that Paul had "shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow" (Acts 18:18). To the Ephesians he said, "I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem" (Acts 18:21). In Acts 20:6, Luke mentions their departure from a certain place "after the days of unleavened bread" (the Passover). In the same chapter it is said that Paul wanted to be in Jerusalem for the "day of Pentecost" (Acts 20:16). Acts 21:20-30 shows some of their problems and indecision in relationship to the Law of Moses.

But, God was leading them into all truth. By the time the New Testament Scriptures were concluded, there is no question mark about these things. Even in the stage of knowing in part, Jewish concepts were looked upon more as hang-ups (Romans 14); especially by Paul as he considered them in relationship to the Gentiles. Although some were still doing things Jewish, they could not connect justification to them. It was more of a matter of individual hang-ups. When such hang-ups were imposed on whole churches as their doctrine (especially among the Gentiles), they were regarded as being in an apostate condition (Galatians).

Yes, the apostle Paul wrote to the early Christians, "For we know in part, and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." (James used

this same Greek word when he wished his readers in their trials to be "*perfect* and entire, wanting nothing," James 1:4, thus illustrating its meaning). We have the full, final, and completed revelation of God. It is "*perfect* and entire, wanting nothing." What advantages we have today! We have all of God's truths that He intended for us. Let us be faithful and diligent in studying that which God has taken the time and trouble to give us. We are a highly blessed people. □

—J.E.G.

God, A Necessity

DURING the French Revolution, Robespierre, himself an inhuman monster, quickly saw that the renunciation of religion would soon bring about the dissolution of all society. He thereupon began to speak in favor of religion, though he admitted that he had been an indifferent Catholic. He ended his first speech in that direction with the words, "If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent Him." God does exist. His Almighty Power and Supreme Intelligence can be seen in nature, and He has revealed Himself more in detail to man through His Word. A society that does not recognize God will suffer dissolution.—*Adapted* □

Do More Than...

- DO MORE than *Exist, Live.*
- Do more than *Touch, Feel.*
- Do more than *Look, Observe.*
- Do more than *Read, Absorb.*
- Do more than *Hear, Listen.*
- Do more than *Listen, Understand.*
- Do more than *Think, Ponder.*
- Do more than *Talk, Say Something.* —*Selected* □

*IF at first you don't
succeed, try, try, try again
and again and again.*

A Story... "BUT YOU HAVEN'T REPENTED YET!"

THE STORY goes about a godly young preacher of the gospel who by some strange working of events became "THE MINISTER" of the very fashionable and prestigious OLD FIRST CHURCH which met on the corner of Worldly Avenue and the Pride of Life Boulevard. Full of a holy zeal, and having the fear of God in his heart, he sounded off the first Lord's day on the subject of "REPENTANCE." He loved the LORD, and you could tell it. You could see it in his face. And it seemed to him that this was what should be preached.


The second Lord's day he announced his subject, and it sounded familiar, "REPENTANCE." Several eyebrows went up, but nothing was said. After all, he was young and inexperienced. Some tolerance and allowance could be made for his preaching. A little time, and with a little experience behind him, he would be as polished as the rest of them.

Another week passed. The young preacher again stood before the OLD FIRST CHURCH. The stately building was full, and the young messenger was full of his message. His eyes were aflame and fixed with purpose as he read the Scripture, then he faced the audience. "My subject today is REPENTANCE." With the fire of a John the Baptist he preached away.


The elders of the OLD FIRST CHURCH were set somewhat aback, and one could easily tell that many of the ladies of the church were not a little disturbed, perturbed, and even disconcerted. What would the visitors think?

The benediction having been pronounced, the chairman of the "BOARD" hastily summoned and called the rest of the "OFFICIAL BOARD" to come together for a special meeting with their young minister. Some of the deacons didn't even have time to finish their cigarettes. And this was not a little disruptive to their dinner engagements.


In the meeting that ensued the chairman wasted no time, getting right to the point, as he addressed the young preacher, "Listen, we know that you probably have a good sermon there. But, after all, we know all about repentance, and this is the third time we've heard it from you. You're running this into the ground, and you'll run people away!"

With the same unpretentious earnestness and straightforwardness that characterized his preaching, the young man of God simply and sincerely responded, "BUT YOU HAVEN'T REPENTED YET!"—J.E.G. 

BACK to the ORIGINAL CHURCH

THE CHURCH of the first century as established by Christ through his apostles was not a denomination, but simply and purely the church and spiritual body of Christ upon the earth. On this most all will agree. But on the necessity of returning to that status, and on the means of doing this, few will agree. Divesting ourselves of denominationalism does not come easy. But, if we really want to be acceptable with the Lord, it is a necessity (John 17:20-22; Romans 16:17; I Corinthians 1:10-13; 3:1-4,17; Ephesians 4:1-6; Galatians 1:6-8). Let us stop trying to justify our denominational organizations and traditions not found in the New Testament. God does not give us the right to believe one thing and our neighbors to believe another. In that Great Day all of us are going to be judged by the same Book, and we know what that Book is. We have no authority from God to form a denomination or invite anyone to join such a denomination (no one has such authority, for it has not been divinely given). In fact, when we truly obey God, we are made one, not a part of any or many denominations (Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 3:15; I Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:38-41,47). Let us search out the old "land marks." Let us humbly return; yes, let us get back to that one church which has already been established in the first century (against such Jesus said the gates of hell would not prevail, Matthew 16:18). There is much divesting and returning that needs to be done today. Are we up to it?—J.E.G. 

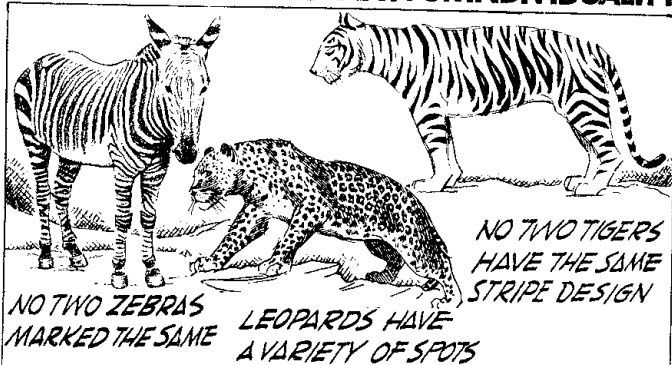
Good Resolutions

1. I will attend church services each week—Sunday morning and night, and also mid-week (Hebrews 10:25).
2. I will win at least one lost person to Christ during the year that is before me (John 15:1-8).
3. I will give more generously to the Lord. It is all God's anyway. (Malachi 3:8; II Corinthians 8:1-7; 9:1-15).
4. I will love my husband or wife and show it by being kind (Ephesians 5:20-31).
5. I will pray daily (I Thessalonians 5:17).
6. I will read my Bible daily and thoughtfully (II Timothy 2:15).
7. I will not gossip about my neighbor. I will not keep hatred in my heart. (Proverbs 6:16,19).
8. I will live pleasantly as God intended. This includes being cheerful and happy. (Galatians 5:22, 23).—Selected 

Spiritual Food for Thought

By Andrew Gibbons

THE CREATOR'S PENCHANT FOR INDIVIDUALITY



"O LORD, HOW MANIFOLD ARE THY WORKS! IN WISDOM THOU HAST MADE THEM ALL." — **PSA. 104:24**



"ALL THY WORKS SHALL PRAISE THEE, O LORD." — **PSA. 145:10**

ONLY ONE of a kind. Many people may share some of the same characteristics, but there are no two people totally alike. Even identical twins are not completely the same.

Aren't you glad God created us differently? You may be thinking to yourself, yes, I couldn't take two of so-and-so, but what about two of you?

Although mankind was created differently, we have the tendency to go with the crowd, to go with the herd instinct or in the clone syndrome. You can see this in styles and fads on in what's in or what's out. This goes for the spiritual realm as well as the social.

Too many of us are afraid to be individualists. We are afraid of being rejected for not going with the flow or doing what is considered the norm, even if it is way out. Remember, going against the flow may mean paddling up stream or taking some heat for being different.

Johnny Appleseed was told many years ago to "know yourself," and because of this he quit his first job working in an apple orchard. He could not find it within himself to cut limbs off apple trees to graft in new varieties of apples. He thought it would be just like cutting off an arm or a leg of a fellow man. Sounds silly, but because of this, Johnny Appleseed carved a name for himself in American folk history.

I will add to the advice given to Johnny: Know yourself and be true to yourself and God.

II Corinthians 5:10, "For we all must appear and be revealed as we are before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive according to what he has done in the body whether good or evil."

Many people believe we are all going to the same place. I believe that too, we are all going to the judgment seat of Christ. Are you ready to give an account? ☐

MISTAKES/CORRECTIONS

TWO MISTAKES appeared on this page in the last issue of *The Sword and Staff*. We are sorry. Mistakes keep us humble.

1. Much of the material under "Spiritual Food for Thought" should have been classified as "selected."

2. In the little article, "A Universal Sabbath Observance?", it says, "A woman was stoned to death in the wilderness for gathering sticks on the Sabbath." It was a man, not a woman. Computer "spell checks" are good, but they do not catch a wrong word spelled correctly.—*Editor*

What is the Cross to You?

TO MANY it is an ornament to be worn around the neck.

To the architect it is a symbol adorning church buildings.

To the scholar it is a goad, driving one on to intellectual pursuits.

To the preacher it is a sermon, filling the need of the hour and eternity.

To the skeptic it is a superstition, clouding the human mind.

To the Roman it was an instrument of execution, obnoxious and hated.

To Constantine it was a sign by which to conquer, turning defeat into victory.

To Paul it was a symbol of glory pointing the way to heaven.

To Mary it was a memory of agony, piercing her soul.

To the motley mob on Golgotha it was a holiday, carnal and horrible.

To one thief it was the door to perdition, horrible and cursed.

To the other it was the gate to paradise, wondrous beyond the work of mortals and angels.

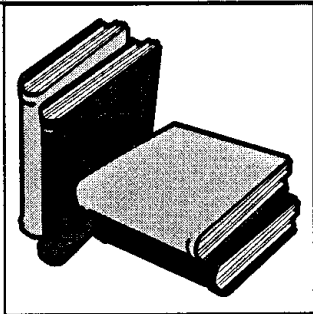
To Christ it was a bier and a throne, a paradox of time, the way of God.

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1. Genesis 4:16; 2. Genesis 32:3; 36:1,8; 3. Genesis 45:9-11; 47:5,6; 4. Exodus 16:35; Joshua 5:10-12; 5. Genesis 50:25,26; Joshua 24:32; 6. Levi and Joseph; 7. Joshua 20; 8. Numbers 6:1-21; 9. Judges 9; 10. Judges 12:1-6; 11. Proverbs 11:22; 12. Jeremiah 36:4; 45:1; 13. Daniel 1:7; 2:26; 14. Matthew 2:11; 15. John 1:47; 16. John 6:32-59; 17. Acts 18:12-17; 18. Acts 19:1,13-20; 19. Acts 23:12-35; 20. Smyrna, Revelation 2:8-11; Philadelphia, Revelation 3:7-12 ☐

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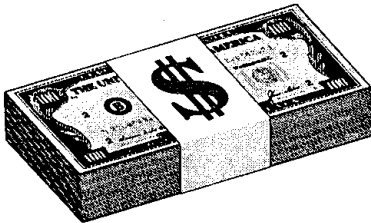


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