

The Sword AND Staff

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

MASS COMMUNICATION, BIBLE SOFTWARE PROGRAMS, AND COMMENTARIES

Editorial Byways...



● By JAMES E. GIBBONS—1535 Fairfield Drive
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WE LIVE in a day of mass communication. There are multiplied ways to record, store, and transfer (and communicate) ideas, information, and thought. Years ago the printing press opened up the Bible to the world and expedited the spread of the gospel. Now the offset press and copy machine have brought the ease of how this

can be done to a higher level. And, furthermore, now we have the omnipresence of radio and television which blanket most of the world in endless output and coverage. With this has come a new wonder, the computer, which can store volumes of information in the smallest sector and on command retrieve it in seconds. And in conjunction with the computer has come the newest offshoot, the internet (so-called information highway). Today, it seems, the potential for communication is almost unlimited.

All of these avenues of communication have the potential for much good. The Bible was the first book to come off the Gutenberg press. There are more Bibles, commentaries, and study materials available today than ever before. Generally, the printing press has been a primary tool that has expedited the literacy of mankind and the advancement of civilization. Radio and television have a tremendous impact. They are used to communicate information relative to the everyday world, as well as getting across a religious message. The computer has found its place as a necessary tool in the ongoing of the everyday, work-a-day business world, as well as having a potential for religious use.

But with such vast means of communication available, and in constant use, the devil is not going to sit idly by. His pronounced purposes are evil, and he is out to work havoc in God's righteous order of things. The printing press becomes the tool to grind out the most unseemly moral and mental garbage; it becomes the means of dispensing error and falsehood. The airwaves of radio and television become

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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). This publication is available in English and Spanish. Please indicate preference. □

—THANK YOU—

Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

A THANKFUL PERSON is a happy person.

Showing partiality is a sin because the command to love your neighbor as yourself is not selective (James 2:8,9).

A meaningful relationship to God will put meaning into all of your relationships.

Push yourself to the limit in getting done that which must be done and then you will find power and resources to go even further.

Honesty is the basic element in good character.

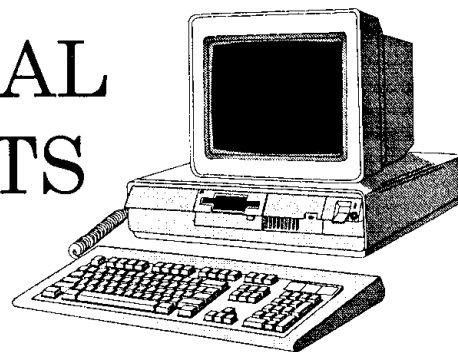
When an object is melted, it flows in all directions; when the human heart is melted by Divine love, there is the outflowing of love toward all of mankind.

Christ died alone so that no one else need ever have to experience this.

The closer we get to God the more is our sinfulness and unworthiness magnified by the brilliance of the glory of His holiness.

Christians should be people with beautiful feet (Romans 10:15).

EDITORIAL COMMENTS



SOUND LIVING AND SOUND DOCTRINE

WE LIVE IN a society that is preoccupied with physical fitness and health, and that is not bad. The apostle John wrote to Gaius, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (III John 2). But there is something more important than the physical, as recognized here when he said, "even as thy soul prospereth." The apostle Paul acknowledged this when he wrote, "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but 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). Although men getting up in years might not have a healthy body, Paul exhorted, "That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, *sound in faith, in charity [love], in patience*" (Titus 2:2). "Sound" means to be healthy; as we would say, "a *sound* body." To be in a good spiritual state of being is important above everything else.

It has been said that we are what we eat. The right food and a balanced diet are important to our physical well-being. Contaminated food brings on disease and ill-health. Paul recognized these things and used this figure spiritually. In I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus he repeatedly makes use of this term "sound" (meaning healthy or wholesome) in talking about doctrine, or teaching, as well as applying it to right living. Notice I Timothy 1:10; 6:3; II Timothy 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1,8. Timothy was to "hold fast the form of sound words, which thou [he] hast [had] heard of me [Paul], in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (II Timothy 1:13). Let us be satisfied with nothing less than the pure Word of God in its fulness as our spiritual food. It will nurture us, build us up, and give us an inheritance in eternity (Acts 20:32).

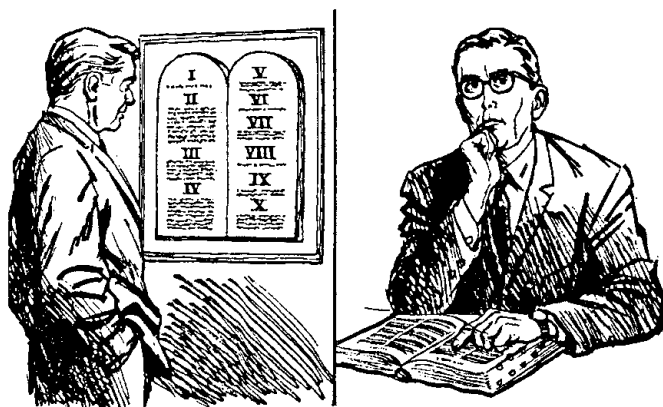
In contrast with this, a false doctrine is a diseased doctrine. And the Word of God watered down will only produce anemic results. False teachings are contagious diseases, and those contaminated by them are to be religiously avoided (except to restore spiritual health). Be careful. Practice good health. □

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION

THIS IS A NOTE of appreciation to those who have been so-minded to help financially in getting out *The Sword and Staff*. This is not a commercial endeavor (that is not our aim), and all such help is deeply appreciated. Getting out this paper is becoming increasingly difficult, and especially since the price of paper almost doubled in six months. But our intentions and resolve remain the same. So again, thank you! □

● One of Three Articles on [1] the Ten Commandments, [2] the Sabbath, and [3] the Lord's Day...

The Sabbath: Shadow or Reality?



Is the Sabbath binding upon us today, some 3,500 years after the commandment was first given? Is the Sabbath supposed to be a reality in our lives today, or was it rather an Old Testament shadow of a better reality in Christ Jesus?

● By DAVID VAUGHN ELLIOTT

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A VERY HUMANITARIAN idea: not only give your body a day of rest every week, but also everybody else in your house. "You shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant." Not only humanitarian, but spiritual: the seventh day rest is a reminder of God's rest on the seventh day. Thus it is a reminder of our Creator.

A day of rest—the Sabbath—the seventh day of each week. "The Sabbath was made for man" to be a physical and spiritual blessing to him. Does that mean it was/is for all men of all times? Is the Sabbath binding upon us today, some 3,500 years after the commandment was first given? Is the Sabbath supposed to be a reality in our lives today, or was it rather an Old Testament shadow of a better reality in Christ Jesus?

Some people think that Sunday is the "Christian Sabbath." However, Matthew 28:1 clarifies: "Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn." Thus, in the Bible, *after* the Sabbath comes the first day. Any dictionary will tell us that Sunday is the first day of the week. Saturday is the seventh. In the Bible, therefore, the Sabbath is Saturday; never Sunday.

TO WHOM WAS THE SABBATH GIVEN?

It was Jesus who said: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:23-28). "For man." But, for what man? In the parallel text (Matthew 12:1-8), Jesus quotes Hosea 6:6: "I desire mercy and not sacrifice." Matthew and Mark need to be studied together here. Jesus was teaching that mercy must be shown on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was made to bless man. Man was not made to serve the Sabbath.

These texts do not remotely touch the question of *which men* the Sabbath was made for. It's like saying the airplane was made for man, not man for the airplane. This statement has nothing to do with who is able to fly. It is simply stating that man is more important than the machine.

To find out which men had to keep the Sabbath, we must turn to the Old Testament. In Genesis 2:1-3, God indeed "blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." However, nowhere in Genesis does God command anyone to keep the Sabbath.

The first time in the Bible that "Sabbath" is mentioned is Exodus 16:23-36. Verse 29 says, "For Jehovah has given *you* the Sabbath." Who is "you"? "The house of Israel," whom God had brought "out of the land of Egypt" (vss. 31,32).

About two weeks later, the ten commandments were given. Note the introduction: "I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 20:2). The fourth command of the ten (20:8-11) gives the well-known reason for resting on the Sabbath: "For in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth...and rested on the seventh day."

In the parallel text of the ten commandments, another reason is given. "Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and that Jehovah your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore Jehovah your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day" (Deuteronomy 5:15).

Later God said: "The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations...*It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever*" (Exodus 31:16,17).

So when Mark 2:27 says, "The Sabbath was made for man," the statement does not refer to all men. Rather, it refers to the men of Israel, to whom the commandment was given and to whom Jesus was speaking at that moment.

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The Sabbath: Shadow or Reality?

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WAS THE SABBATH GIVEN TO THE GENTILES?

The Sabbath commandment included a provision for the stranger “who is within your gates” (Exodus 20:10). The law also made provision for “the stranger who sojourns among you” to keep the Passover and to be circumcised (Exodus 12:48,49). Thus the Old Covenant permitted foreigners to live among the children of Israel and become a part of them.

But there is never a command in the Old Testament like Mark 16:15. God never commanded the children of Israel to go into all the world and preach the law of Moses to every creature. Quite the contrary, God said of seven nations: “You shall conquer them and utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them” (Deuteronomy 7:1-6). Why? “For you are a holy people to Jehovah your God...a special treasure *above all the peoples* on the face of the earth.” Psalms 147:19,20 further adds: “He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and His judgments to Israel. *He has not dealt thus with any nation.*”

There are several O. T. Prophecies which speak of Gentiles turning to God. An example is Amos 9:11,12. In Acts 15:13-20 the Holy Spirit explains that Amos prophesied the salvation of the Gentiles through Jesus. Verse 15 says: “And with this the words of the prophets agree.” In the light of this inspired explanation, when a prophet speaks of Gentiles turning to God, it is probably a prophecy of the Gospel Age.

Isaiah 56 is sometimes cited as evidence of the Sabbath being for Gentiles. This chapter needs to be read in the light of Acts 15. It also needs to be read in the light of the preceding chapters: Isaiah 53 and 55. I believe all agree that Isaiah 53 and 55 are powerful Messianic chapters. Is not the same true of chapter 56? In any case, if Isaiah 56 “proves” that Gentiles must keep the Sabbath (vss. 2-6), it also “proves” they must offer burnt offerings and sacrifices on God’s altar in God’s house (vss. 6,7). Who can accept this?

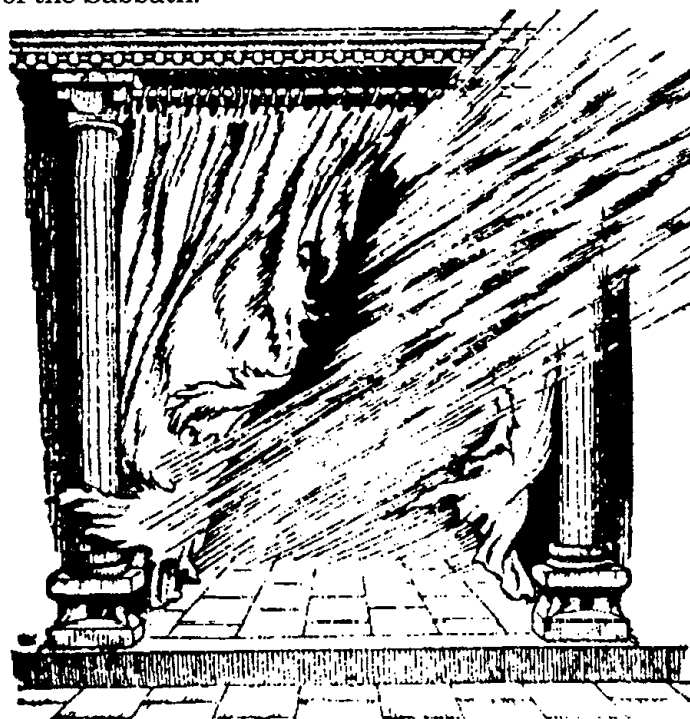
THE LORD OF THE SABBATH

Jesus called himself the “Lord of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:28). Did he mean to imply that he would *always* be the Lord of the Sabbath? A look at a similar case may help to clarify the matter.

Jesus called the temple in Jerusalem “My Father’s house” (John 2:16). Did he mean to imply that this temple would *always* be his Father’s house? Not at all. In fact, when Jesus died on the cross “the

veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom” (Matthew 27:50,51). Was this not an act of God, by which he terminated his ownership of the temple? Since 70 A. D., the temple has not even existed.

What was once “God’s house” is no longer His house. It does not even exist. By the same token, the fact that Jesus was once “the Lord of the Sabbath” *in no way* proves that he would always be the Lord of the Sabbath.



SABBATH-KEEPERS IN 70 A. D.

Some think that Jesus’ statement in Matthew 24:20 proves that Christians would be keeping the Sabbath in 70 A. D. Jesus said: “Pray that your flight may not be...on the Sabbath.” By comparing Luke 21:20, we learn that the (Roman) armies would be attacking Jerusalem. The flight would be to save their lives.

What could be a problem with flight on the Sabbath? Jesus clearly taught that it was lawful “to save life” on the Sabbath (Mark 3:1-6). This means that a Sabbath-keeper could flee to save his life without breaking the Sabbath. So, what would be the problem?

Jesus’ warning does not at all imply that *Christians* would be keeping the Sabbath in 70 A. D. The Sabbath-keepers at that time would be the unbelieving Jews. Jerusalem, like many ancient cities, was walled. When the Jews kept the Sabbath strictly, the gates of the city were closed tight. See Nehemiah 13:19. If the Jewish leaders did the same thing in 70 A. D., it would indeed be a problem for anyone to flee the city on the Sabbath.

In addition, a major conflict between Jesus and the Jews was their claim that Jesus continually broke the Sabbath. When Jesus healed on the Sabbath, “the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him” (Mark 3:1-6)

Jesus warned his disciples that “the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service” (John 16:2). Thus a danger to Christians who tried to flee Jerusalem on a Sabbath is that the Jews could consider them to be Sabbath-breakers and thus refuse to let them out, or they might even try to kill them.

**COULD THE LAW
OF THE SABBATH BE DONE AWAY?**

Exodus 31:16,17 says that the Sabbath is a “perpetual covenant...a sign...forever.” Does this mean the Sabbath was to be in effect till the end of time?

Consider the Day of Atonement, with its animal sacrifice and scapegoat. Leviticus 16:34 says: “This shall be an everlasting statute.” In spite of “everlasting,” no Christian today would think of observing this yearly Day of Atonement. We all know that animal sacrifice is a thing of the past.

Then there is the Passover, which Exodus 12:14 calls and “everlasting ordinance.” But no believer in Jesus keeps the Passover Feast today? Why? I Corinthians 5:7 makes it plain: “Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.” So, the “everlasting” feast came to an end, *not* with the second coming of Christ, *but* with his *first* coming.

Thus, in the O. T., the Passover, the Day of Atonement and the Sabbath, are all spoken of as being “everlasting,” “forever,” and “perpetual.” In spite of this, we all agree that the first two have been done away. Therefore, “forever” is no argument against the Sabbath also being done away. In the light of total New Testament teaching, “forever” in such cases can only be understood as meaning “continuously” “for a long time” **UNTIL** the **FIRST** coming of Jesus into the world. Jesus came to die and thus bring in a *new* covenant (testament) (Hebrews 9:14-17). With his new priesthood “of necessity there is also a change of the law” (Hebrews 7:12).

FOLLOWING JESUS’ EXAMPLE

“Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps” (I Peter 2:21). What does this mean? Are we to do everything just as Jesus did? Must we move to Palestine? Must we become carpenters? Must we fast for 40 days? Must we walk on water?

The answers are obvious. But there are other cases which do not seem so obvious to some people. Consider feet washing. The key is in the very word “example.” Jesus did not say that feet-washing was a commandment. After He washed dirty feet, he said, “I have given you an *example*” (John 13:15). The math student who just copies the examples given, instead of applying them to the problems of the test, fails the test. If I wash someone’s *clean* feet, I have completely misunderstood the “example.” I fail the test! The “example” is one of loving service—whenever and however it is *needed*.

“When the fulness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law” (Galatians 4:4). Jesus kept the Passover, both as a youth and as an adult (Luke 2:41,42; Mark 14:12-14). Because we do not live under the law, we do not follow this example today.

Jesus’ custom, as a youth and as an adult, was to go to the synagogue every Sabbath (Luke 4:16). Today we do not follow this example of going to a synagogue, because a synagogue is a place of worship of the Jews (Acts 17:1). As for the Sabbath, Jesus kept it because he was born and lived under the law. He had to keep all of the law in order to become a sinless sacrifice. His example of keeping the Sabbath is no more binding upon us than his example of doing it in a synagogue.

In short, we are invited to follow Jesus’ example of being a servant, of being loving, of being obedient, etc. But there are many specifics of Jesus’ life that we should *not* imitate. Jesus lived under the old law. He obeyed all the law, including keeping the Sabbath. We live under the New Testament. We properly follow Jesus’ example by keeping the laws which are in force today, just as he kept the laws in force in his day.

**PAUL VISITED
SYNAGOGUES ON THE SABBATH**

Acts, indeed, belongs to the New Covenant. Why, then, does it contain many references to the Sabbath? To find out, let’s look at every text in Acts which mentions the Sabbath. First of all is Acts 1:12. It only refers to a distance according to Jewish tradition: less than a mile.

In Acts 16:11-15, in Philippi, Paul meets with a group of unconverted women who are gathered on the Sabbath. He preaches the gospel. Lydia and her household are converted to Christ. Nothing is said about Christian worship nor about resting on the Sabbath.

In Acts 17:1-4, in Thessalonica, “there was a synagogue *of the Jews*. Then Paul, *as his custom*

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was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that Christ had to suffer." Paul was evangelizing Jews in their synagogue on the Sabbath, "as his custom was."

In Acts 13:13-23, Paul went into the synagogue of Antioch on the Sabbath, to preach Jesus to the unconverted "*men of Israel*." (Of special interest is the expression "after the reading of the Law and the Prophets." See also 13:27 and 15:21. For many generations, since long before Jesus came into the world, the Law of Moses and the Prophets had been read in the synagogues every Sabbath.) This explains Paul's custom. He met with Jews on their weekly day of worship.

Continuing with Acts 13, verses 42-46 say that Gentiles also were present. The next Sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together. As a result, the Jews who did not believe were moved to envy and opposed Paul's preaching. So Paul and Barnabas told them: "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it...we turn to the Gentiles." Here we have it! In every city, it was Paul's custom to enter the synagogues on the Sabbath in order to preach Christ *first of all to the Jews*.

The same pattern is found in Acts 18. Paul "reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks...But when they opposed him," he said, "From now on I will go to the Gentiles." And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man" (vss. 4,6,7). When the Jews resisted the gospel, Paul ceased going to their synagogue on the Sabbath. He started meeting elsewhere with the nucleus of new Christian believers.

The same thing happens in Acts 19. After three months of evangelizing in the synagogue, "When some were hardened and did not believe...he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus" (vss. 8,9).

These are all the texts in Acts that mention the Sabbath. There is no mention of Christian worship on the Sabbath. There is no mention of Christians resting on the Sabbath. There is no command to keep the Sabbath. Paul repeatedly entered synagogues of the Jews on the Sabbath to convert them to Christ, along with any Gentiles present. In each city, once the Jews rejected the message and Paul turned to the Gentiles, the Sabbath is not mentioned again.

HOW MANY SABBATHS WERE THERE?

From Romans to Revelation, there is neither command nor example to keep the Sabbath. In fact, there is only one text in which the word "Sabbath" appears: Colossians 2:16.

Colossians 2:13-17 teaches that we are no longer obligated to keep Sabbaths, because they were taken away by Christ on the cross. Sabbath-keepers reject this truth, claiming that "Sabbaths" in the plural indicates two types of Sabbaths: "annual" and "weekly." They say that only the "annual Sabbaths" were taken away.

First of all, "Sabbaths" in the plural does not prove different *kinds* of Sabbaths, any more than "Saturdays" in the plural would prove different kinds of Saturdays. Look at Exodus 31:12-18. Here God says: "Surely my Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between me and you...work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath...Israel shall keep the Sabbath...it is a sign between me and the children of Israel." In this single text, the 7th day of the week, a sign between God and Israel, is referred to both as "Sabbath" and "Sabbaths."

Secondly, let's look at the major text where "Sabbath" refers to annual holy days: Leviticus 23. Verses 2 and 4 indicate that the chapter deals with "the feasts of Jehovah." Before discussing the feasts, verse 3 clarifies that "six days shall work be done, but the *seventh day is a Sabbath* of solemn rest." From verse 5 to 44, the various annual feasts are described. The text frequently says that no work can be done on these days and the word "Sabbath" is indeed used to describe some of them (vss. 24, 32,39).

As the chapter draws toward a close, verse 37 summarizes thus: "these are the *feasts* of Jehovah..." Then verse 38 begins: "*besides the Sabbaths* of Jehovah." By comparing verses 37 and 38 with verses 1-4, we can confidently state that "feasts of Jehovah" refers to yearly holy days, while "Sabbaths [plural] of Jehovah" refers to the seventh day of each week. If there were ever a text in the Bible to say "annual Sabbaths," this would be the one! But when it groups the annual observances all together, it calls them "feasts" and clearly distinguishes them from "Sabbaths," when it says "*besides the Sabbaths*."

Instructions are given in Numbers 28 and 29 for the offerings "at their appointed time": daily (28:1-8), weekly (28:9,10), monthly (28:11-15), and yearly (28:16-29:39). Even though in many verses it says "you shall not do any work," in NO case are the an-

nual feasts called a "Sabbath," as some were in Leviticus 23. Deuteronomy 16:1-17 also speaks of the feasts listed in Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28,29. It does not call them "annual Sabbaths" nor any kind of "Sabbath." Six times the term "feast" is used.

Yes, the Jews had to cease from labor on various annual holy days. Yes, some annual holy days are once or twice called a "Sabbath." But the Bible *never* speaks of "annual Sabbaths." The yearly holy days are *almost always* called "Feasts."

Turning to the New Testament, Matthew 26:17 does not mention the annual Sabbath of unleavened bread; rather it speaks of "the *Feast* of Unleavened Bread." Luke 2:41, in like manner, speaks of "the Feast of the Passover." John 7:2 speaks of "the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles." The New Testament, like the Old, *never* speaks of "annual Sabbaths." Rather, it many times indicates that throughout the year the Jews had various *Feasts*.

So we see that "Sabbaths" in the plural does not mean there were distinct types of Sabbaths. The expression "annual Sabbaths" is not Biblical. The annual holy days of the Jews were almost always called "feasts."

**THE SABBATH WAS NAILED
TO THE CROSS**

The foregoing explanation of "Sabbaths" and "Feasts" brings us back to Colossians 2:13-17, to examine the text more closely. Colossians 2 teaches that both "festival [footnote: feast day]" and "Sabbaths" were a part of the shadow which was nailed to the cross.

Colossians 2:16 lists three classes of holy days: "a festival [footnote: feast day] or a new moon or Sabbaths." In 2 Chronicles 31:3 we see the same three: "Sabbaths, and the New Moons, and the set feasts." In Ezekiel 45:17 we read of "the feasts, the New Moons, the Sabbaths." In Hosea 2:11, God says to the children of Israel that He is going to put an end to "all her appointed feasts," namely "her feast days, her New Moons, her Sabbaths."

The three-fold classification in these and other O. T. texts is identical to Colossians. Thus, the expression "festival [feast day] or a new moon or Sabbaths," is *not* a new idea to Colossians 2. *Rather*, it was a well-known expression. It was the common way to list ALL the Jewish holy days: the yearly, the monthly and the weekly.

The terms "*feasts*" refers to the *yearly* holy days. This is confirmed in 2 Chronicles 8:13: "the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the *three appointed yearly feasts*." On the other hand, the term "Sab-

baths" refers to the *weekly* holy days. This can be seen in Ezekiel 46. When verse 1 mentions the Sabbath, it is clarified to mean the 7th day: "the six working days; but on the Sabbath..." And note that verses 1 and 9 refer to "the New Moon" and "the appointed feast days," thus giving the same three-fold division of Colossians 2, just more spread out.

So we can plainly see that the holy days of the Jews were divided into three categories. The yearly were called feasts. The monthly were called new moons. The weekly were called Sabbaths. In Colossians 2, the *yearly* holy days are already included in the word "festival [feast day]." So, when Colossians 2 says, "Sabbaths," all that is left to be included is the seventh day of the week.

Colossians 2:14 says of "the handwriting of requirements," that Christ "has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." Verse 16 gives examples of some of those things contained in the handwriting that were nailed to the cross. Among the items listed is "Sabbaths." Colossians thus powerfully teaches that Christ took away the commandment to keep the seventh day of the week. Christ nailed the fourth commandment to the cross, along with all the rest of the law.

THE SABBATH A SHADOW

The Sabbath, along with many things in the O. T., was "a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ" (Colossians 2:16,17). The substance, the reality, belongs to Christ. The Sabbath was a shadow (a figure, a symbol) of that reality. Since the major consideration of the Sabbath was that of rest, we would expect that it foreshadowed rest in the new covenant of Christ.

The text which most goes into depth regarding the shadow of rest is Hebrews 3:7 to 4:11. It speaks of the figure of rest in the Promised Land. What Christian is not well acquainted with this figure? We even sing about it! Hebrews 4 also includes the seventh day in the figure of rest (4:3,4).

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WHAT IS YOUR PRICE?

Still, as of old,
Man by himself is priced.
For thirty pieces Judas sold
Himself, not Christ.

—Selected

The Sabbath: Shadow or Reality?

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One point must be made very clear for the correct understanding of this shadow. Hebrews 4:9 says, "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God." But the rest that remains for the Christian today is *not a commandment* (of the 7th day or of any other day). Rather, according to 4:1: "*a promise remains of entering His rest.*"

The rest for the Christian today is not a commandment, but a promise. The wicked will "have *no rest day or night.*" But as for the righteous: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord...that they may *rest from their labors*" (Revelation 14: 11,13). See also Matthew 11:28-30. The seventh day rest was a shadow. The reality will be our eternal rest with Christ Jesus! Praise His Name! □

A Twisted Adolescent Mentality

A PERSON preoccupied with pornography thus indicates that he has a twisted adolescent mentality, and he needs to grow up, even though he be older in years; sex in the context of morality and marriage is proper, wholesome and natural (and is not something to be reduced to a cheap and burlesque curiosity); so-called "adult" book stores are anything but grown-up and mature.—J.E.G. □

Training Children to Worship

OBVIOUSLY there is a time when keeping a child contentedly occupied is the best a parent can hope for. A quiet toy, paper, pencil, and crayon is the wisest course during that stage.

It might be profitable, as soon as a child can sing nursery rhymes, to encourage them to sing hymns, point to the words as they are sung. Very early, children can be taught to bow their heads during prayer and recognize they are talking to God, and have Bibles open while Scriptures are read.

Children old enough to go to school, but still spending time with toys and coloring books are missing out on several blessings, including the experience of worship, feeling as if they are being treated as "grown up," and training in why people gather for worship.

Some diversion is necessary for children. Begin with a little participation and gradually encourage more. Children can learn to participate sooner than many think. The sooner the better, both for them and their parents.—Selected □

Paid for Being Good

THE LITTLE BOY said the preacher was paid for being good and the church was good for nothing.

—Selected □

Speed and Direction

DIRECTION is very important in getting to our destination, whether spiritually speaking or otherwise; we may be moving along at an accelerated speed, but if we are headed the wrong way, this can take us even farther away from where we wanted to go, instead of closer.—J.E.G. □

BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. Which son of Noah was the line of descent from which the Jewish people came?
2. Where is wheat first mentioned in the Bible?
3. What animal in the Bible is identified with war and was used in battle?
4. For what practical reason did God not immediately drive all of the Canaanites out of the Promised Land for the Israelites?
5. Who was the first wife of David?
6. The children of Israel were come out of Egypt how many years when Solomon started building the temple?
7. How many years was Solomon involved in building the temple and in building his own house?
8. When Solomon dedicated the temple, how many oxen and how many sheep were offered in sacrifice as peace offerings unto God?
9. How much did Solomon have to pay for each chariot and each horse he bought out of Egypt?
10. Contrary to custom, what priest when he died was buried in the city of David among the kings because of the great good he had done for Israel?
11. Which prophet in the Old Testament was appointed by God to be a watchman?
12. Which miracle performed by Christ is the only one that is recorded in all four gospel records?
13. When the Lord said, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," what did he mean?
14. In the New Testament, in what city do we find Lydia, a seller of purple, and what city was she from?
15. Besides being Jewish and Christian, what did the apostle Paul have in common with Aquila and Priscilla?
16. What is said to be greater than faith and hope?
17. What did the apostle Paul say was the root of all kinds of evil?
18. The epistle of I Peter is written to people living where, and how are they addressed?
19. Which New Testament writer says, "God is love"?
20. In the book of Revelation, what are the seven golden candlesticks?

(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. ☐

FLORIDA:

■ "Enclosed please find check to help you continue your work. I always get an extra copy for some reason and pass it on.

"I enjoy the paper so much and thank God for the effort you put forth to keep the truth

"God bless you as you continue in His work..."

SOUTH CAROLINA:

■ "A preacher friend loaned me a copy of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. It is an excellent publication. Please add me to your mailing list."

TENNESSEE:

■ "Thank you for the wonderful work of this publication. And please send a copy of *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*."

KENTUCKY:

■ "Keep up the good work. You are in our prayers. Sometimes this is all we can do. God bless you and all those that help you put out *THE SWORD AND STAFF*."

VIRGINIA:

■ "When I receive *THE SWORD AND STAFF*, I usually read every word before laying it down. I have bought eight volumes. Please send me '93 and '94...The ones I have sent to others have really been appreciated.

"Keep on keeping on as long as God provides health and life."

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■ "Enclosed find \$10.00 for which please send bound volumes 31 and 32. I thank you and enjoy reading

THE SWORD AND STAFF. Continue to preach the Truth."

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OHIO:

■ "Please remove my name from mailing list. Thank you."

ILLINOIS:

■ "Enclosed is a check to help with expenses. Keep up the good work; we enjoy *THE SWORD AND STAFF* very much. Thank you."

IOWA:

■ "Our son has graduated from college and begins a new job...next week. He's wanting to receive good solid Biblical based articles, so I told him I'd write and ask you to put him on your mailing list...Thanks so much for the newsletter. I look forward to it coming. You tell it like it is!"

MISSOURI:

■ "Please take me off your mailing list."

■ "I Thank God for your faithfulness and helpers to get out *THE SWORD AND STAFF*...Keep up the good work."

OKLAHOMA:

■ "I have been reading *THE SWORD AND STAFF* over 10 years, and I love it. Keep up the good work. God will bless you. I thank God for you, and I believe in what you are doing. So keep up the good work. I love the good book, the Bible. That's the book for me. It is hard for me to say what I want to say. But thank you for *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I love it."

NEBRASKA:

■ "...I am pleased that you are now being able to print and mail *THE SWORD AND STAFF* in Spanish. As you wrote, the days in which we live are evil, and the days of our lives are swiftly slipping away from us.

"I feel you are doing a very good work for our Lord and I am pleased to have a small part in it.

"May God bless you and yours as you labor for Him..."

CALIFORNIA:

■ "Thank you for so promptly sending me my first copy of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I read it immediately and enjoyed it so much. May God bless you in the future; I will pass the publication around to others in the church and hope they will get their copy..."

WASHINGTON:

■ "Please take me off the mailing list. Thanks."

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READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

ALASKA:

■ "Thank you for the excellent teaching you provide in *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. It is a great encouragement to me." □

MASS COMMUNICATION, BIBLE SOFTWARE PROGRAMS, AND COMMENTARIES

(Continued from Page 1)

polluted with that which is morally repugnant and false in the name of entertainment and religion. The computer can become the tool of error in dispensing erroneous information, and the net can link into hell's depravity. Yes, we are blessed with such means of advanced communication sometimes to be communicating so little that is worth communicating. The devil is at work.

BAPTISM FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS

In particular, I would like to call your attention to the subtle intrusion of the devil into the religious realm in connection with the computer and the long-standing product of the printing press, books (and in particular, Bible commentaries). There are several programs out for the computer that include the Bible and Strong's Concordance. They are very impressive and speed up Bible study. Type in the word you want, and instantly you have all the Bible verses where it is found on the monitor before you. With Strong's number system being used after each word in the verse in brackets, type in the number of the word you wish to check out, and then the word in the original language and its meaning appear. I found this a great tool until I typed in the number 1519, which brought up the Greek word *eis*. Suddenly I saw the preconceived, theological mindset of those who prepared this software program being imposed upon me. Their dogmatic theological bias puts them in an immovable position where they must deny and "explain" certain Scriptures away.

"Eis" in ONLINE BIBLE

Let us be more specific. Here is the information found under *eis* in ONLINE BIBLE. After first showing this preposition in the Authorized Version (KJV) is translated "into," "to," "unto," "for," "in," "on," "toward," "against," and some other miscellaneous renderings, and giving *eis* the definition of into, unto, to, towards, for, and among (which all sounds good), the writer proceeds with the following statement which arouses alarm in the mind of the informed.

"For (as used in Acts 2:38 'for the forgiveness [remission]...') could have two meanings. If you

saw a poster saying, 'Jesse James wanted for robbery', could mean Jesse is wanted so he can commit a robbery, or is wanted because he has committed a robbery. The later sense is the correct one. SO, TOO, IN THIS PASSAGE, THE WORD 'FOR' SIGNIFIES AN ACTION IN THE PAST. OTHERWISE, IT WOULD VIOLATE THE ENTIRE TENOR OF THE NT TEACHING ON SALVATION BY GRACE AND NOT WORKS." [Caps mine for emphasis]

This Line of Thinking

For those who have not gotten the point of what is being said here, or have not been exposed to this line of thought before, perhaps a word of explanation is in order before we go further. What we are getting at hinges around Acts 2:38. This verse reads, "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]." These people were told to be baptized "for the remission of sins." This goes against the grain of preconceived denominational doctrine, so the proponents of this deny the natural meaning of the expression and say that *eis* in "for the remission of sins" means *because of* the remission of sins; that the remission of sins has already taken place before baptism. So, the undertones of this line of thought are vented in ONLINE BIBLE, which said, "In this passage, the word 'for' signifies an action in the past." They say that baptism can't be for the remission of sins because "it would violate the entire tenor of the NT teaching on salvation by grace and not works." In reality, to them it can't mean what it says because it violates their system of thought, not the New Testament, as we shall see.

"For the Remission of Sins"

First, notice this expression "for the remission of sins" as it is also found in Matthew 26:28. It reads, "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many *for the remission of sins*." Does this mean that the blood of Christ was shed because their sins were already remitted? NO! Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Hebrews 9:22). It was shed to accomplish the remission of sins. Nor do we know of any translations that would represent Acts 2:38 as saying sinners are to be baptized "because of the remission of sins." Leafing through a dozen translations at arm's reach in my library, in one united voice they say that sinners are baptized for, unto, and to receive the remission of sins.

Acceptance of Acts 2:38

in Harmony with the Rest of New Testament

We have no problem in accepting what is said in Acts 2:38 because it is in harmony with other such references on baptism. Saul of Tarsus had been praying three days and nights, and finally Ananias came to him saying, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be

baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). His sins were to be washed away in baptism; his baptism was "for the remission of sins." Paul wrote to the Colossians, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, *in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with him in baptism*, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Colossians 2:11,12). Here "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh" is tied in with baptism; hence, the remission of sins is involved. Romans 6 speaks of being dead to sin, and that there is the burial of the old man of sin in baptism, whereupon we arise to walk in newness of life. This language clearly implies remission of sins, otherwise there can be no newness of life. These Scriptures harmonize with Acts 2:38, meaning the same.

Preconceived bias is the determining factor in the rejection of what is said in Acts 2:38. A. T. Robertson, Baptist scholar of another generation writing on Acts 2:38 in his *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, says, "One will decide the use here according as he believes that baptism is essential to the remission of sins or not. My view is decidedly against the idea that Peter, Paul, or any one in the New Testament taught baptism as essential to the remission of sin or the means of securing such remission. So I understand Peter to be urging baptism on each of them...on the basis of the forgiveness of sins which they had already received." He likewise denies Acts 22:16, although he calls the language of being baptized to get your sins "washed away" very "vivid and picturesque language." He spiritualizes Romans 6, likewise denying what it says.

Other Scriptures in the New Testament make it plain that baptism is part of the plan of salvation. Honestly, and without bias, consider Mark 16:15,16; John 3:5; Galatians 3:27; Titus 3:5; and I Peter 3:21. These are parallel Scriptures. Therefore, we must regard baptism as essential, and hence it is only natural to accept Acts 2:38 for what it says.

The Great Commission
"Salvation by Grace and Not Works"

Baptism for the remission of sins is in harmony with God's plan of salvation by grace and not works; otherwise, why did Christ command it? It is part of the Great Commission, which reads, "And he 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). In the book of Acts, as the Great Commission was being carried out, their message was always consistent with the Great Commission.

Baptism, Faith in Action

What is the gospel? How do we respond to it? The gospel is the good news of the death, burial, and

resurrection of Christ from the dead and how it relates to sinners (I Corinthians 15:1-4). We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We are all under the sentence of death. We cannot save ourselves. Now the sinless Savior has died in our place. We must personally believe in our hearts and accept these great truths about his death, burial, and resurrection to be saved (Acts 8:35-39; Romans 4:24-5:1; 10:9,10). Not only are we to believe them in our hearts, the Lord's plan calls for us to actively act out our faith in accepting them. Paul said to the Romans, "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have *obeyed from the heart* that form of doctrine which was delivered you" (Romans 6:17). The New Testament speaks of obeying the gospel (Romans 10:16), i. e. obeying the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. This is done when we die to sin in repentance (Christ died), when we are immersed in baptism (Christ was buried), and when we are raised to walk in newness of life (Christ was raised from the dead). Consider Romans 6:1-5. Complimentary to these thoughts, other Scripture speaks of "the obedience to the faith among all nations" (Romans 1:5; 16:26; Acts 6:7). Furthermore, emphasizing the same truths, Colossians 2:12 says, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him *through the faith of the operation of God*, who hath raised him from the dead." Likewise Galatians 3:26-27 says, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Also consider Hebrews 10:22.

The Acceptance of God's Grace

Yes, far from being a work of human righteousness, baptism is a most meaningful exercise of faith in fully accepting and identifying with that which we believe. And in being baptized into the death of Christ, spiritually speaking, our faith brings us into contact with the blood of Christ; thus remission of sins (Acts 2:38). This is not a ritualistic, sacramental experience as such, but one of faith in the resurrected Christ. Therefore, all of this fits in beautifully with the apostle Paul's declaration, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9). And then with what he said in Titus 3:5-7, "Not: by works of righteousness which we have done, but

(Continued on Next Page)

Answers to:
BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Shem, Genesis 11:10f;
2. Genesis 30:14;
3. Job 39:19-25; Proverbs 21:31; Isaiah 31:1;
4. Exodus 23:29;
5. I Samuel 18:27;
6. I Kings 6:1;
7. I Kings 6:38; 7:1;
8. I Kings 8:63;
9. II Chronicles 1:14-17;
10. II Chronicles 24:15,16;
11. Ezekiel 33:7;
12. The feeding of the 5,000;
13. Matthew 16:6-12;
14. Acts 16:12-14;
15. Acts 18:1-3;
16. I Corinthians 13:13;
17. I Timothy 6:10;
18. I Peter 1:1; 2:11;
19. I John 4:8,16;
20. Revelation 1:12,13,20

according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." No, baptism is not at variance with grace, nor is it a work of human righteousness. It is the crowning act of faith in accepting the grace of God.

**"THEM THAT DRAW BACK
UNTO PERDITION"**

There seems to be an endless stream of books, commentaries, and studies on the Bible today. This is a great blessing, and at the same time a curse. Regardless, the devil is always there, ready with his subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, intrusion of error in with the truth. As we have seen, there are those (even sincere people) with a preconceived, theological mindset ready to impose their erroneous views upon us. Many of these commentaries and studies are good, if we know where the writers are "coming from." Then we can overlook what is colored by their prejudice, and continue our study. But if we are uninformed and glib, look out!

I could illustrate from book after book taken from my library shelves, but the following will suffice for our purposes in this article. Kenneth S. Wuest, past professor at Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, writes about Hebrews 10:39 in his *Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*.

"The 'shrinking back' ones are said to be shrinking back to perdition. The word 'perdition' is the translation of *apoleia* which means 'utter destruction,' and in this context means 'the destruction which consists in the loss of eternal life; eternal misery, perdition,' which is the lot of those who would renounce their professed faith in Messiah as High Priest and return to a dependence upon the abrogated sacrifices for salvation. THE WORD OF GOD IS VERY CLEAR IN ITS STATEMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT A PERSON ONCE SAVED CAN NEVER BE LOST. THEREFORE, THIS PERSON WHO DRAWS BACK TO PERDITION MUST BE AN UNSAVED PERSON." [Caps for emphasis]

Around in Circles

Here we go again! Yes, the writer is of that reactionary, dogmatic, and unbending school of thought called Calvinism. To him the Bible can't mean what it says here because that is not what the Bible says. But in reality, he should say it can't mean that for that is not what I believe. Sectarian bias makes a person go around in circles and tangles them in knots (and they don't even know it). How void of sense is the statement, **"Therefore, this person who draws back to perdition must be an unsaved person."** If a person has never been there, is an unsaved person, there is no way that he can draw back to perdition. He is already

there. A person cannot *become* unsaved if he has never been saved. He is already unsaved.

This is all typical and reminiscent of experiences this writer has had in confronting such people in times past. We are told that if you are once saved you can never be lost; "once in grace, always in grace"; or you cannot fall. But people do fall and go back into sin. When this is pointed out, I have had three different kinds of answers given me as these people backed up, regrouping their thoughts, trying to accommodate their belief to the reality of the situation. The answers: (1) They were never saved in the first place. (2) They will come back to the Lord before they die. (3) Their evil works will be burned, but the person himself will be saved (the one who fell away).

Scriptures to Consider

We are not going to develop this point at length, but if you have any question about whether a person can fall, become an unbeliever after having believed, or be lost after having once entered the saved relationship, consider the following Scriptures.

(1) IF Scriptures, showing that salvation is still conditional after becoming a follower of Christ: "IF a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they shall be burned" (John 15:6). Consider the following: Romans 11:21,22; I Corinthians 15:1,2; Galatians 6:7-9; Colossians 1:22, 23; I Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 6:12-15; II Peter 1:10.

(2) A person can cast off faith, can become an unbeliever, can depart from the faith: Luke 8:13; Romans 11:20; I Thessalonians 3:5; I Timothy 1:19; 4:1; 6:10; II Timothy 2:17,18; 4:7; Hebrews 3:12; 4:11; 10:35-39; II Peter 2:2—hence, Hebrews 11:6; Revelation 21:8; 2:10.

(3) Warnings about falling, that it can take place: I Corinthians 10:12; II Thessalonians 2:3; Hebrews 12:15; I John 2:10; II Peter 1:9,10; 3:17.

(4) Names can be blotted out of the book of life: Revelation 3:5; 22:19—hence, Revelation 21:27; 20:15.

(5) People fell from grace: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 6:4-6; 12:15).

**Some Concluding Remarks
Know Your Source of Information**

So, in a day unparalleled in the availability of information and the boundless means of its mass communication, we need to be careful. We are experiencing an avalanche. Whether in the secular world, or that of religious thought, the danger is there. If we are naive, we are in for trouble. Always know your source of information. Where are they "coming from"? Then you can pretty well tell where they are going (tell what they are trying to get across). Be careful. All is not true, nor right. □

Especially for Women Who Want to Please God...

Instructions in Titus 2

• By **SANDRA McLAUGHLIN**

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AS WOMEN we need to study the "WORD OF GOD" diligently to know our roles and how to fulfill them. The following is a study to help each of us to do just that.

In Titus 2:1-5 it speaks of things which are proper for sound doctrine. The word for sound means wholesome or healthy. It indicates a strong state, one that will grow stronger and more sound if taken care of properly. This was and still is God's plan for the church. We as women of the Lord's church need to take an active role in helping to complete such a plan.

When looking at the Lord's body today, a feeling of deep burden falls upon our heart. We observe a different movement in the women that we see. In reading Titus it is found, "The older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine [enslaved to wine], teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers [keepers at home], good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God may not be blasphemed" (vss. 3-5).

Verse three is rather straightforward and fairly easily understood. However, it appears verses four and five need to be looked at more closely. Several of these instructions are what we will, together, look at in this article. We pray that your heart may be soft and that these thoughts may help you to better see God's most perfect plan for this world, through his bride.

Titus 2:4 plainly states the older women are to admonish or teach the younger to love their husbands and children. This seems to indicate that maybe as women we don't fully love our families as God wants us to. This instruction may have been originally stated because of the fact that marriages of old were prearranged. Let us take Isaac and Rebekah for instance. Abraham sent his servant to a far land to his own kindred to bring back a wife for his son. Could Isaac and Rebekah understand the total love that comes from knowing another? In Genesis 24:67 it states that Isaac took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. It also says that he was comforted after his mother's death. Maybe Isaac's love stemmed from the fact that he knew totally that God himself had sent Rebekah to

be his wife. Or maybe it also stemmed from the fact that Rebekah was helping to fill a great void in his life. Whatever it was we are sure that their love grew with time and growing to know one another. This is a continual relationship that takes work on each part.

When we first married we believed we loved our mate more than anything in the world. Now as time goes by we see there is a much deeper love than we once experienced. We have actually learned to love more than we thought was possible. The same goes for our children, whether through natural birth or adoption. Our love continues to grow on a daily basis as we better understand each of our children.

Sometimes we find it hard to love others for one reason or another. What would make this any different within our own families? In spite of the union we have as husband and wife, or parents, a lack of love can still exist. However, Paul in Colossians 3:14 tells us "above all these things put on love which is the bond of perfection." If we want that perfection within our families we must learn to love. Someone must instruct us and God gives that job to the older women.

Paul states in verse 5 of Titus 2 five areas that again need to be addressed as women of God. We need to remember that Paul's words were written to all women through all times, until Jesus comes again. Then and only then will there no longer be a physical existence as we understand it here on earth. The five areas of concern are in being discreet, chaste, homemakers (keepers at home), good, obedient to their own husbands. All of these areas need attention so that the Word of God may not be blasphemed.

Being discreet is very important as a godly woman. We need to be of a sound mind and under selfcontrol. However, these areas can be superficial in nature. We can sometimes play a great game of cover-up, especially as women, so that everyone thinks all is well. Another definition for discreet is "curbing one's desires and impulses, temperate." That definition helps us to look inside of ourselves. We alone know our desires and impulses. Are

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Instructions in Titus 2

(Continued from Previous Page)

they truly under control of self? That is the discretion Paul wants older women to impart to the younger. We as older women must first look within ourselves to see if we have truly examined our hearts and minds on this issue. Then we can help others to examine themselves as well.

As God's holy women are we chaste? Chaste simply means a purity, a state of being immaculate, or pure from carnality. As women we understand something being immaculate. It takes much time and effort on our part to keep anything immaculate. It is no different with ourselves. We need to "clean house" of all the sin and problems we face minute by minute, not just daily or weekly or yearly. Just as dust accumulates before our very eyes, it seems, so does sin. Paul in Romans 8:6 writes to us as Christians, "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Being chaste is being spiritually minded. No carnality can enter and live in our lives while we are women of God. Webster's definition for carnal is very impressive. It states "in or of the flesh; bodily; material or worldly; not spiritual; being preoccupied with bodily or sexual pleasures." May the Lord have mercy on us if this is our lifestyle. As women we can be so easily taken in by things and ways of this world. Do we feel that we need all the latest in "things" for our homes? Many times we try and justify having it all by the amount of time we save. Fine then, how are we using all of our time? Are we spending it with our children? Not just being with them but doing the important instructing they need for their place in the kingdom. Are we creating a sanctuary from the world for our husbands? Are they happy to return home after having been in the world all day? Or are our minds filled up with what can we do with our time for our benefit and enjoyment. Many may feel that we should utilize our time to study God's Word. Great, now do we implement it in our lives? Are we living what we read and study? Are we striving for what we read in Colossians 3? Paul tells us to set our

affections on things above and not those here, to be separate from all that as Christians. We are to put to death the impurities in our lives. This is the way we shall finally achieve a chaste (pure) nature about us. Can someone help us better understand these areas? Surely, God gave that task to older women.

This then brings us to our next point of instruction. We need to be "keepers at home." Let us first define "keepers at home." Strong's number 3626, *oikouros*, says it originally comes from the word guard. It is also one that cares for the house; working at home and taking care of household affairs, a domestic. May we give one more definition? To guard means to keep safe from harm, watch over and protect, defend or to shield.

Sisters, let us wake up. Society has infiltrated the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. We as women are making a dreadful mistake. We are being eaten up by the thinking of this world. Our place as women is NOT outside of our homes. Career does not mean leaving the job the Lord gave us to pursue after what we want. We are being duped into thinking our roles as "keepers at home" is second rate, inferior to a career receiving a minimal monetary reward. Nowhere in these instructions does it tell us to go out and get a job then come home and do the rest.

If we are not doing what the Lord commands, how do we expect Him to bless our lives? Think of this for just one minute. How can we guard something if we are not there to watch over and protect it? This instruction is not simply in regard to our material belongings but our families. Are we guarding against the wiles of the devil in our children's lives? Do we make ourselves available for our children or husbands when they have a need to talk, or maybe just need help with a project? Are we too tired and busy from holding down a job outside as well as those inside our homes?

Why do women work outside the home? Material needs? Are those possibly wants? To have a little extra cash? At whose expense? To fulfill a need within ourselves or to fit in when everyone gets together and discusses their careers? Remember the

only one you will answer to in the end is God. Does God care if we have been a great teacher, secretary, lawyer, doctor or whatever? NO! He will want to know what we did with what He gave us.

How many of us are probably thinking that there are extenuating circumstances. This is true. However, how many of us are in those circumstances? Probably not too many, if we are honest with ourselves. Consider if maybe our circumstances have been brought on by our own wants. Are we making excuses for ourselves? For those truly in these circumstances we need to seek God's direction and counsel for His answers in our lives. James helps us to see we need to count it all joy in various trials. Then we need to seek God's wisdom without doubting in all faith and He will take care of the situation.

Today's society teaches us to seek after wisdom and knowledge. We are told this comes through hours of textbooks and classes. How the world has molded our mindset both for how we are living and also how we are training our children. How much emphasis do we put on our children's education? We believe probably more than God ever intended. The Scriptures speak of wisdom and understanding. Wisdom comes from God Almighty and is coupled with a godly understanding of the things which are most important to our eternal well-being. What is so bad about teaching our daughters to cook, bake, sew, clean, keep order in our homes and lives? We need to teach our daughters to guard over their families. As parents, our children should be the number one souls in our lives to train up and truly convert to the Lord. We need to show our girls God's plan for their lives. We must remember our career in the home was God's plan.

The older women are to teach the younger to be good. What is good? The world certainly cannot give us a clear definition of what good is by the outcome of our society. Let us share some of the definitions for this word from Strong's. He defines it several ways. Consider how your life measures up with this. Good is defined as useful, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy, excellent, distinguished, upright and

honorable. Well how did we do? These words should paint a very pleasant person in our minds. Is that person each of us? Many of these characteristics may be in our lives most of the time but God wants them there all the time. If we need to be instructed in these areas then, as women they just do not come naturally. It will take much work on our part and much admonishing on the parts of our sisters in the Lord to continue in His perfect plan. It can be done with the grace of God.

The last point of instruction is for us as wives to be obedient or in submission to our husbands. To many that hear these words it gives them an instant picture of slavery. That of course is not God's intention. God's plan does not leave out His own Son, Jesus Christ. In 1 Corinthians 11:3 Paul tells us that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man and the head of Christ is God. We can see a chain of authority in God's plan. This chain is there for order as well as accountability. The order is plain and simple. The accountability helps us to keep the order God wants. Have we ever seen a child that is not accountable to his parents? This is prevalent in our country today. In these situations there is no respect. Everyone thinks they are "the boss." It will be a sad day when they find that God is "THE BOSS." Respect and accountability are part of a Christian's life. God says the head of woman is man. Do not look at that as a curse. It really is a blessing. It is like being under a huge umbrella. As long as we are obedient and submissive with a pure heart we stand under that umbrella of protection. If we break the chain we willingly step out from under God's protection and allow ourselves to be exposed to ungodly thinking and examples.

In being in obedience we must die to self. Losing the selfish attitudes we sometimes have helps us to be more obedient in a godly manner.

We must remember God left the instructions to men as far as leading the church and individual families. That was the role He saw fit for man. When we realize God has a role for us as women then we can see how we best fit into the plan.

When we are obedient to our husbands there is an orderliness in our lives as well as the church. We find a peace that can in no other way be explained or compared.

Women realize that you are not a slave in bondage. If a family is truly living like God wants them to, you can then experience a freedom from all the burdens the world can put upon you.

A godly man will ask you how you feel about certain decisions, discipline of children, direction in God's work. Remember, sisters, that your husband still must make the final decisions. Do not usurp his authority and do things yourself.

It does not matter to God what the reasons are that you use. He already knows if your husband is making the wrong decision, if he did not pray earnestly enough, if something is a want instead of a need. You do not need to intervene and make the "right choice." This is again where self comes in and must again be put out.

Sisters, we are not saying that in every situation this will always be easy. However, if you seek to please the Creator of our universe and the one that gave himself to die in your place then you will find obedience a much simpler task.

Every situation again is not always the same, but God still expects obedience out of His children. Would you continue to let your children over-rule you in every decision in your family? Of course not! Neither will God allow it in His family. Just as you would have to discipline your children, one day God the Father will discipline us. It may be now or it may be at the Judgment. We pray it does not take that long before we realize the importance of our place in God's plan.

Paul finishes these verses by stating "that the Word of God may not be blasphemed." As examples for Christ it is our responsibility to conduct our lives in such a way as to give no one reason to speak evil of the things of God. Isn't that the kind of example we want to be for Christ?

In the Old Testament book of Proverbs in 31:10 God states, "Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies." That virtuous woman has all of the qualities

mentioned in Titus 2. Rubies were a gem of much value in Bible times. Yet we can be worth much more than these if we are obedient in our place in the family of God.

Proverbs 31:30,31 sum up so well what the blessing from God truly is. "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain but a woman who fears the Lord she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates." Whether these gates are earthly or heavenly, we understand that as women we are here to glorify God and His plan and not entangle ourselves in the things of this world.

We pray that these words may encourage each of you as women. Several years ago when our children were younger we tried to remind others that being older individuals they needed to be godly examples to our younger ones. Today we teach our children this principle. We as women need to remember, we are older women to some others in the church as well as younger to some of the rest. Be ready to give and take what God has planned in these instructions to each of us. □

Nothing Can Take It's Place

NOTHING in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan "press on" has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.

—Calvin Coolidge

HOPE

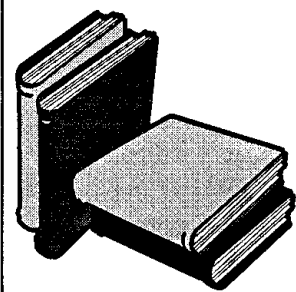
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That calms our fears and makes
us bold.*

—J.E.G.

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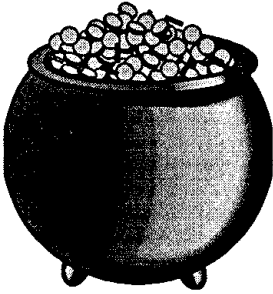
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ACTING out a lie can get you into trouble, as this story illustrates.

Joe, the butcher, was just about to close his shop on Saturday night, when his best customer, Mrs. Brown, came in and asked for a nice roasting chicken. Joe had only one chicken left, so he got it out of refrigeration, put it on the scales and said, "There! Two pounds and twelve ounces; that'll be \$2.17."

"That's a bit small," said Mrs. Brown. "Haven't you got one a bit heavier?" He returned to the refrigerator, and emerged again—with the same chicken. He put it on the scales and said: "Just three and a half pounds. That will be \$2.77."

After a moment's thought, Mrs. Brown said, "I think I'll take both of them!"—Adapted ☐

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