

# The Sword AND Staff

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

## A Simple Exegetical Study of Hebrews 2:1-4



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**T**HE HEBREWS epistle is a profoundly interesting and profitable New Testament book to study. Someone has said, "Hebrews begins like an essay, proceeds like a sermon, and ends as a letter." Another person said, "From the standpoint of doctrinal contribution and literary excellence it is without peer among the books of the New Testament." The first three verses of the first chapter declare profound and overwhelming truths about Christ that set a high and dignified tone for what follows. Then throughout the epistle there is held before us the superiority of Christ to all things pertaining to the Old Testament religion. That is the theme. Each time the writer brings out a great truth relative to

this, he takes time out to sermonize and exhort his readers as he goes along.

In the first chapter we see that Christ is superior to angels (Hebrews 1:4-14). God had given the Old Testament law to Moses through the inferior instrumentality of angels. Angels are servants of God, but Christ, through whom the New Testament religion came, has a more excellent name than the angels, being the very Son of God (and God Himself). Thus, by inference Christ and the New Testament are superior to the Old Testament. That is the writer's line of reasoning.

Now in chapter 2, he takes time out to exhort and show the resultant responsibilities coming from

this great truth. Let us zero in on Hebrews 2:1-4 for a simple exegetical study.

1 **THEREFORE** we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to his own will? (KJV)

### Verse 1.

The word "THEREFORE" in verse 1 is connective, having reference to what has been said in the chapter before. On the basis of what has been said, the writer now makes his application and exhortation. It is a very serious matter. Christianity is superior to the Old Testament that came through angels. Although that system of religion was inferior, people who broke the law, whether by transgression or disobedience, were duly punished. And now because Christianity is superior with greater privi-

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—THANK YOU—

## Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

*THE WORK ETHIC will not work unless you do.*

There is nothing more reassuring than truth and sometimes nothing more disconcerting.

*Knowledge without love does not come from above.*

You will have no problem in getting the last word if the last word is an apology.

*Christianity is ordinary people living extraordinary lives.*

According to the Bible, only a fool says all that he thinks (Proverbs 29:11).

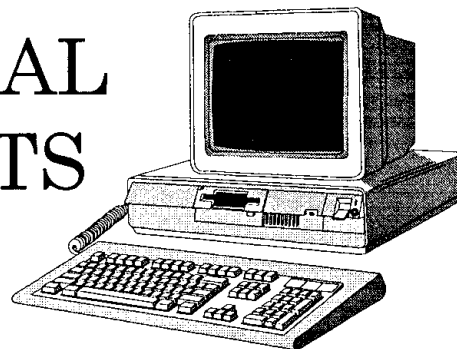
*To fall asleep in Jesus is to awake unto eternal life.*

Faithfully preach the doctrine of Christ, and the question of the right church will take care of itself.

*It is not self-righteous to hate sin and to have a righteous indignation about it.*

We must declare our spiritual bankruptcy before we can receive the riches of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3). □

# EDITORIAL COMMENTS



## THE PROBLEM OF ACCEPTING WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT BAPTISM

**I**T SEEMS THAT some people have a problem accepting what the Bible has to say about baptism (Mark 16:15,16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:1-6; Galatians 3:27; I Peter 3:21; etc.). We dealt with that in an article in the last issue of this paper. The problem doesn't seem to be in understanding the wording of the Scriptures as much as it is in actually taking them at their face value. The real problem involves hypothetical cases, or actual cases, where people have died without being baptized, although they were believing, or even religious, people. This is hard for them to handle. How are we to deal with it?

Here are some of these cases. What about those "believers who were apprehended and martyred before baptism" in the early centuries of the church? What about someone in an airplane "accepting" Christ, and then the plane crashes before he can be baptized? What about the person believing on his deathbed who is not baptized? And then what about these situations where there are whole religious denominations who do not practice baptism (baptism in the New Testament sense as to mode and purpose)? Yes, what about these cases?

First, let us say that we are not God. We did not write the New Testament, nor are we the Judge. Christ, who declared that he had "all authority," gave the Great Commission which included baptism (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16). The gospel was to be preached. Believers were to be baptized, then taught to observe "all things" that Christ had commanded. Only in doing this could they claim the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world [age]." The early church carried out this commission faithfully. For those who believed and repented, baptism was for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). It was part of God's plan of salvation by grace through faith. And faith not only involves believing in the person of Christ, but believing what that person said (Luke 6:46; John 3:5; Mark 16:16).

The apostle Paul said, "We have this treasure [the gospel] in earthen vessels [human messengers]..." (II Corinthians 4:7). As messengers of God, the only thing that we can do is to deliver the message that we have been given (we are only the containers that carry it). If people do not accept it, that is between them and God; that is their problem. In no sense of the word do

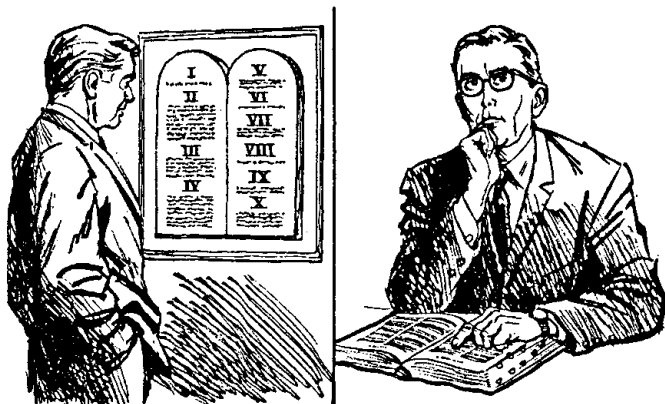
we have the authority or right to alter the message. God gave the message; He knows all and His judgment will be according to truth and righteousness. That is His department, not ours. He knows all of the extenuating circumstances, and we gladly leave it in His hands. No one will question the perfect judgment of God in that day. Let us not play the part of God now. Let's deliver God's message.

However, we will say this. The degree of responsibility and accountability is different between those who know and those who do not know the will of God. The apostle Paul, writing about himself, said, "I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief..." (I Timothy 1:12-16). Christ said in a par-

able, "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:47,48). We do not know all that is involved here, and leave it in God's hands. But we do know that the people who know what the Bible says about baptism, and then won't accept and practice it, will be held doubly responsible. Therefore, we humbly and lovingly admonish you. Don't reject God's Word. Accept it. □

● *One of Three Articles on the Ten Commandments, the Sabbath, and the Lord's Day...*

## Is Sunday "THE LORD'S DAY"?



● By **DAVID VAUGHN ELLIOTT**  
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**W**HERE DOES the expression "the Lord's Day" come from? Does it refer to Saturday or to Sunday? What importance did the day Sunday have in the church of the first century? Was it an ordinary day? Or was it a special day? What meaning does Sunday have in each of our personal lives today?

### WHAT IS THE FIRST BOOK OF THE NEW TESTAMENT?

Any Bible student knows there are 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 in the New, making a total of 66. Right? Even small children know that the first four books of the New Testament are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Right?

But, wait a minute. Do the four Gospels really belong to the New Testament? Does the New Testament really begin with the birth of Jesus? The most obvious answer is to be found in the very word "testament." A last will and testament is a document which goes into effect after a person dies.

Hebrews 9:16,17 says: "For where there is a tes-

tament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator...it has no power at all while the testator lives." Christ Jesus had to die before his New Testament could take effect.

But the New Testament did not enter into force the very moment Jesus died. Even with human wills, there is a period of time and certain legal procedures, after the death of the testator, before the provisions of the will can be carried out. The same is true with Jesus' "last will and testament."

### FIVE THINGS NECESSARY

The basis for the Gospel is "that Christ died for our sins...that He was buried, and that He rose again" (I Corinthians 15:1-4). Verses 14-19 teach powerfully that without the resurrection, Jesus' death was in vain. So the New Testament could *not* start as soon as Jesus died. He had to rise!

But there is more!

Jesus is High Priest. Hebrews 7:24,25 says he "has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore he is also able to save to the uttermost." Priesthood involves saving us. But, when did Jesus become High Priest?

Hebrews continues: "We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens...If He were on earth, He would not be a priest" (8:1,4). For Jesus to become our High Priest (and thus Saviour), he had to return to heaven.

But even Jesus' ascension was not enough. Shortly before his death, Jesus told the twelve: "I still have many things to say to you...when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:12,13). Then before ascending, Jesus told the apostles "not to depart from Jerusalem,

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but to wait for the promise of the Father...you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:4,5).

Jesus' promise was fulfilled ten days later (Acts 2). Baptized with the Holy Spirit, the apostles had divine authority to preach the Good News. For the first time, men and women entered into the New Covenant of Christ Jesus.

In summary, 5 things were necessary for the New Testament (Covenant) to actually enter into force: 1) the death, 2) the burial, 3) the resurrection, 4) the ascension, and 5) the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. It is in Acts 2, then, that the New Testament in reality begins to function.

### A TIME OF TRANSITION

The four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) do belong to the New Testament in the sense that they detail the earthly life of Jesus. Keep in mind that Jesus came to earth to do what was necessary to bring in the New Testament. However, the four Gospels *do not* belong to the New Testament in the sense that the New could not enter into force until after the things they record took place.

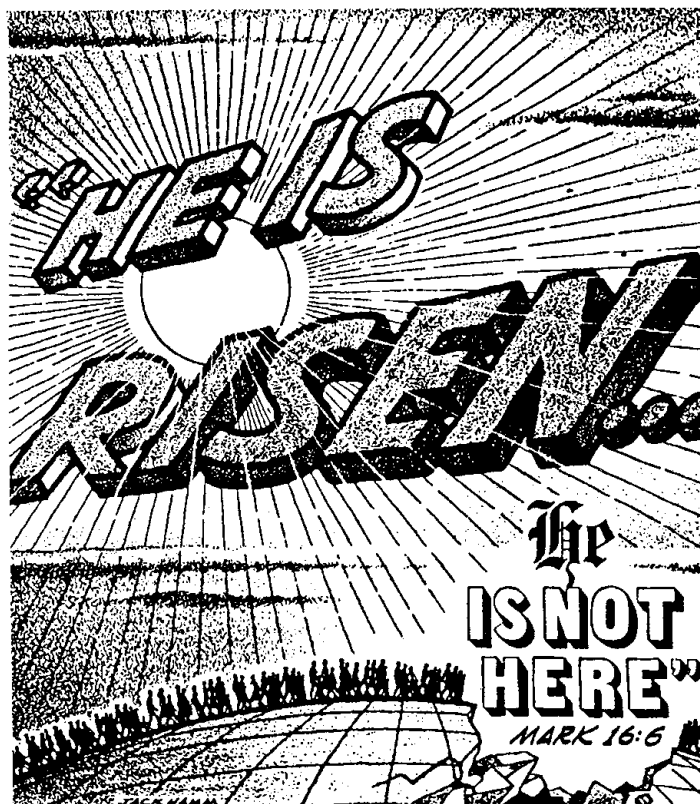
The four Gospels, therefore, cover a *time of transition* "between" the two testaments. There are things in the four books which had to do solely with the Old Testament (Jesus was circumcised). There are things in the four which have to do solely with the New Testament ("You must be born again"). And there are things in the four which had to do solely with the time of transition itself (the baptism of John).

Let's see this in relation to the Sabbath. It was Jesus' custom to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath (Luke 4:16). While Jesus walked this earth, he was "Lord even of the Sabbath" (Matthew 12:8). But it must be understood that such statements about the Sabbath are found in the four Gospels because Jesus lived under the Old Testament. "God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born *under the law*" (Galatians 4:4). Living under the law, Jesus had to keep the law.

After Jesus' death, some women "rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment" (Luke 23:56). But, as we have seen, Jesus' death, by itself, did not take away sin. He had to rise! In like manner, his death alone could not end the old law and bring in the new. He had to rise! When the women rested, Jesus was still dead! The time of transition was not yet finished.

By his death, burial, resurrection and ascension, and by his sending the Holy Spirit, Christ made possible his glorious New Testament. Before he completed all this, it could not begin. From Acts 2 forward, we are clearly in the era of the New Testament.

### BAD NEWS BECOMES GOOD NEWS



As Jesus' body hung on the cross, he was the victim of cutting insults: "He saved others; Himself He cannot save" (Matthew 27:42). Jesus' life seemed to be ending in failure and disgrace. The mockers had their own ideas of how Jesus should save himself: "If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross" (vs. 40).

Jesus' disciples also had negative thoughts about his death. Why were the two disciples on the road to Emmaus "sad"? (Luke 24:13-35). "We were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel" (vs. 21). These good men had lost the great hope which they had in Jesus. Their "Redeemer" was dead!

Neither the mockers nor the disciples understood that Jesus was indeed going to save himself! But not according to their ideas. Rather, he was going to *rise from the dead*. The great resurrection chapter, I Corinthians 15, emphasizes the futility of it all if Jesus had remained dead. "And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain...you are still in your sins!" (vss. 14, 17).

But verse 20 triumphantly says, "But now Christ is risen from the dead"! Bad news becomes good news! "Gospel" means "good news."

### RESURRECTION DAY

On what day of the week did Jesus rise from the dead? Some people are confused because Saturday and Sunday are often called the “weekend,” making Monday the first day of the “work week.” But, from the time of the Roman Empire until the 20th century, Sunday has been and is the first day of the week. Just check your English dictionary.

Jesus often prophesied that after his death, he would “be raised again the third day” (Matthew 16: 21; Luke 18:33). *Not* the third day of the week, but the third day from his crucifixion. What day of the week did this “third day” fall on?

Luke 24 tells of events “on the first day of the week” (vs. 1). Verse 13 says two disciples were walking to Emmaus “that same day.” After they mention Jesus’ death, the disciples add, “*today is the third day since these things happened*” (vs. 21). Verses 7 and 46 mention the prophecy Jesus had made “to rise from the dead the third day.” Combining all five verses, we have irrefutable proof that the third day from the crucifixion was the first day of the week. Jesus rose on Sunday!

Matthew 28:1-8 and Mark 16:1-8 are parallel texts in which Mary Magdalene and other women visit the tomb around dawn “the first day of the week.” On the way, they discussed who would roll away the stone, so they could anoint Jesus’ body. As Matthew reads, one can only conclude that Jesus rose from the dead precisely while the women were on their way. When they got to the tomb, the angel told them, “He is not here; for He is risen.” Mark adds, “He rose early on the first day of the week” (vs. 9). Jesus rose the first day of the week: Sunday.

All history pivots around what took place that glorious Sunday. Jesus came out of the tomb never to die again. He *DID* save himself! He did it in a way far more powerful, glorious and meaningful than “simply” coming down from the cross. Neither the tomb nor Hades, itself, could hold him! Jesus conquered death, sin and Satan. This Good News has been proclaimed around the world for almost 2,000 years! Jesus is not dead! He lives! It happened on Sunday.

### “THE LORD’S DAY”

The apostle John says he received Revelation “*on the Lord’s day*” (Revelation 1:10). What day did he mean? There are three possibilities to consider: 1) Saturday (the Sabbath), 2) the Judgment Day, and 3) Sunday (the first day of the week).

As for the first possibility, Jesus was in fact the Lord of the Sabbath while he walked this earth. But John received the Revelation 65 years *after* the

death of Jesus. Jesus in his death “wiped out the handwriting of requirements...having nailed it to the cross” (Colossians 2:14). A few examples of those requirements are given two verses later. Among others are the “Sabbaths.” Jesus nailed them all to the cross! After that, the Sabbath could no longer be the Lord’s Day.

As for the second possibility, various times in the New Testament, “the day of the Lord” refers to the Second Coming of Christ. But in Revelation 1:10, John says, “*I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day.*” Since he is speaking in the past, he cannot be speaking of the Second Coming, which even today is yet in the future.

This leaves only one possibility. John meant that he received the Revelation on Sunday. Sunday is the day on which the Lord Jesus Christ triumphed over all the forces of the evil one, rising from the dead. Sunday is the day he proved he is Lord. The first day of the week is, indeed, “the Lord’s Day”!

Both the Romans of old and we in English today commonly call the first day of the week “Sun-Day.” Not so in Spanish. In Spanish the first day of the week is called “Domingo,” which, coming from the Latin, means “the day of the Lord”!

### The Day the Lord Hath Made (Psalms 118:22-24)

This is the day the Lord hath made;  
Rejoice and in it be ye glad;  
The Stone the builders hath mislaid  
Hath not the corner left unclad.

Rejoice on this the first of days;  
The tomb of Christ is found ajar;  
Come see where Christ the Savior lay;  
Behold the empty tomb afar.

Rejoice the first day of each week  
In memory of this victory great;  
Around his table let us meet;  
Death, resurrection, to partake.

*By James E. Gibbons*

The Lord’s church and his New Testament became a reality on Sunday. It was at the Jewish feast of Pentecost (Acts 2). This feast was set by counting “fifty days to the *day after* the seventh Sabbath” (Leviticus 23:16). The day after any Sabbath is the

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first day of the week. So, Pentecost fell on Sunday. Not only did Jesus rise from the dead on Sunday, he started his church on Sunday. It is the Lord's Day.

Revelation 1:10 speaks of "the Lord's Day" (Sunday). I Corinthians 11:20 speaks of "the Lord's Supper" (communion). The Day and the Supper belong to the Lord. Let's see how they are related to one another.

### "THE BREAD WHICH WE BREAK"

"Breaking bread" has two meanings in the New Testament. In Acts 27:33-35, Paul broke bread for "nourishment." That's the "daily bread" Jesus told us to pray for (Matthew 6:11). In I Corinthians 10:16, the breaking of bread is "the communion of the body of Christ." This certainly is "the Lord's Supper."

In I Corinthians 11:17-22, Paul admonishes the saints for what was happening "when you come together as a church." Using a question, Paul tells them where they should eat their daily bread: "Do you not have houses to eat and drink in?" Reproving them for not doing what they should have been doing, Paul tells them that it should be "to eat the Lord's Supper." Therefore the pattern is: daily bread in their houses and the Lord's Supper when they come together as a church.

At the end of Acts 2, there are two references to breaking bread. A close look shows that they do not refer to the same thing. In 2:46, it is "breaking bread," "daily" and "from house to house." That would be "daily bread." But in 2:42, "the breaking of bread" is part of a list of spiritual matters in which the church "continued steadfastly." It must be the Lord's Supper.

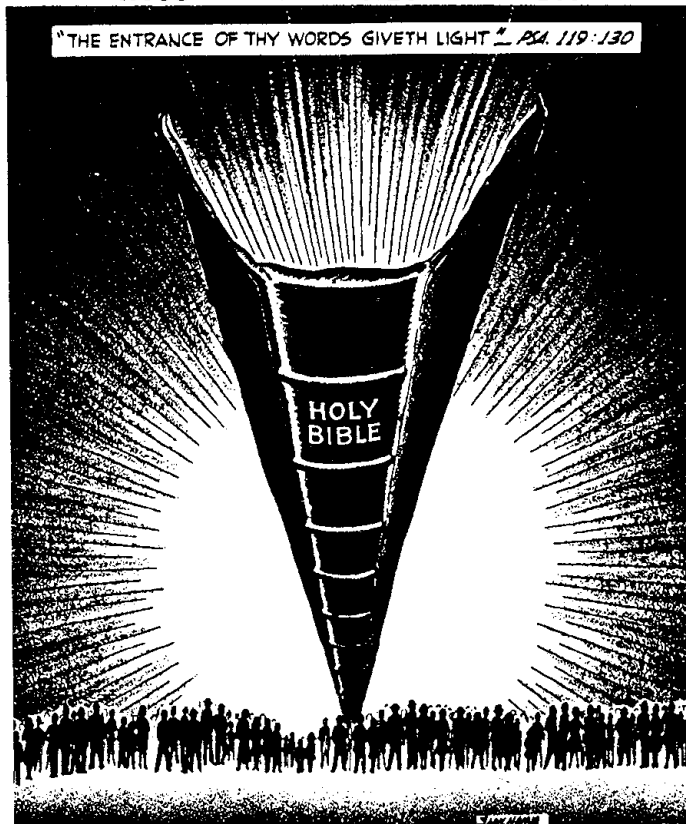
All this should help to interpret Acts 20:7-12. "The disciples came together to break bread." Paul preached a very long message. It all points to a spiritual meeting of the church. The natural conclusion is that the breaking of bread in verse 7 was the Lord's Supper.

But what of the breaking of bread in 20:11? One way to answer the question is to see what day it was. Paul was "ready to depart the *next* day" (vs. 7). That would be the second day of the week. And, he did in fact leave at "daybreak" (vs. 11). So the text is clear that Paul left early Monday morning.

The breaking of bread in verse 11 was *after midnight* (vs. 7), and before daybreak (vs. 11). So it was on Monday. But the breaking of bread in verse 7 was on Sunday. So, verse 11 is a second breaking of bread. The circumstances point to the breaking of

bread in verse 11 as being a common meal, made necessary because Paul preached for such a long time.

### INCOMPARABLE ILLUMINATION



The situation in Acts 20 is very similar to that in Acts 2. In each case the context points to a spiritual breaking of bread in the first mention and a physical breaking of bread in the second mention.

### "ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK"

Common meals are eaten daily. But how often is the spiritual "breaking of bread" to take place? I Corinthians 11:26 says "*as often as* you eat this bread and drink this cup." Acts 2:42 says that they "continued steadfastly...in the breaking of bread." No schedule is given in either text, but the wording leaves the impression it was done *frequently*. But how often?

The text most commonly quoted is Acts 20:7: "Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread." We have considered the evidence that this is the Lord's Supper. This is not a command. It is rather an example under the watchful eye of the apostle Paul. The natural sense of the wording is that this was their custom.

Also consider I Corinthians 11:20: "when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper." Paul is saying they are *not* doing what they should be doing. They are *not* eating the Lord's Supper in the proper manner when they come "to-



*gether in one place.*" The wording gives the idea the Lord's Supper was a *REGULAR PART* of what they should do when they come together in one place.

Does this same book give any idea when that was? Indeed it does! Read I Corinthians 16:1,2. Some people interpret verse 2 to mean the brethren were supposed to set aside money at home. The fact is that scholars have had trouble translating the middle part of the verse. That can be seen by just comparing several versions.

But verse 2 must agree with itself. Scholars are agreed on the latter part: "that there be no collections when I come." Now, if everyone set aside money in his own house each week, then all that money would still have to be collected when Paul came. But that is precisely what Paul wanted to avoid.

Paul wanted the collections made *before* he came. The only meaningful way and place to do that would be "when you come together as a church...when you come together in one place" (I Corinthians 11:18-20). When and how often was this to be done? Scholars have no trouble with the opening words of the verse: "On the first day of the week" (I Corinthians 16:2).

When you combine the information in chapters 11 and 16 of I Corinthians, you come to the conclusion that the early church met together every Sunday. Among other things, they "broke bread" and had a "collection."

#### **DID THE CATHOLIC CHURCH CHANGE THE SABBATH TO SUNDAY?**

Sabbath keepers reject these arguments for Sunday. They claim the early Christians kept the Sabbath. They say the Catholic Church and the Emperor Constantine started worship on Sunday in the Fourth Century. Is that true?

Did the Catholic Church initiate the observance of Sunday? Roman Catholic sources can certainly be found which make that claim. But, we must understand what the Catholic Church means when it says that it changed Saturday to Sunday.

The *Official Baltimore Catechism*, No. 3, published in 1949, under question # 235, says, "The early church changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday on the authority given to it by Christ. The New Testament makes no explicit mention that the apostles changed the day of worship, but we know it from Tradition."

According to this Catholic Catechism, it was the *early* church that changed the day of worship to Sunday. In fact, so early, that it was the apostles of Christ themselves who effected the change. Who can argue with the apostles?

The Roman Church, of course, claims to have been founded by Christ. But, Sabbath keepers agree with us that the Catholic Church did not exist when the change took place, then certainly the Roman Catholic Church did not make the change.

And what about the claim that the Emperor Constantine, in 321 A.D., instituted Sunday as a day of *rest*? Yes, he did. But this is a very different matter from instituting Sunday as a day of *worship*.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Ninth Edition, in the article on Sunday, says of the decree of Constantine: "It was ordered that all the courts of justice, the inhabitants of the cities and the workers in the shops should rest on Sunday." [My source is a Spanish translation, which I have translated back into English.] What does the decree establish? That all "should *rest* on Sunday."

Constantine, for the first time in history, legalized Sunday as a day of rest. This was his idea of how to help the Christians to do what they *HAD ALREADY BEEN PRACTICING* for three centuries: assembling for worship on Sundays.

#### **SECOND CENTURY CHRISTIANS SPEAK**

Let's listen to Christians of the second century, who lived *before* Constantine, and *before* the Roman Catholic Church. They were not inspired, but they tell us what the Christians then believed and practiced.

Ignatius lived from about 50 to 110 A.D. He was a disciple of the apostle John and died a martyr's death about 15 years after John wrote Revelation.

In his *Epistle to the Magnesians*, (long version), chapter 9, Ignatius writes: "Let us therefore no longer keep the Sabbath after the Jewish manner... Let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the resurrection day, the queen and chief of all the days...on which our life both sprang up again, and the victory over death was obtained in Christ."

Notice that Ignatius speaks against keeping the Sabbath. On the other hand, he identifies "the Lord's Day" as "the resurrection day." Earlier we considered the Biblical proofs that "the Lord's Day" is the first day of the week. Now we have a companion of the author of Revelation 1:10, who identifies "the Lord's Day" as the resurrection day, thus the first day of the week (Sunday)!

Justin Martyr is a famous Christian writer of the second century. He was born about 110 A.D. and became a martyr about 165 A.D.

Justin wrote: "But the Gentiles, who have believed on him...they shall receive the inheritance... even though they neither keep the Sabbath, nor are

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circumcised, nor observe the feasts” (*Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew*, chapter 26). Justin thus places Sabbath keeping in the same category as circumcision.

Justin also wrote: “On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memories of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read...when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought... and there is a distribution to each...and they who are well-to-do, and willing, give what each thinks fit ...and in a word takes care of all who are in need. But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because...Jesus Christ our Saviour the same day rose from the dead” (*First Apology*, chapter 67)

Justin is not just writing personal beliefs. He wrote this to the Emperor of the Roman Empire, explaining what the Christians in general were doing 50 years after the death of the last apostle. They were *not* Sabbath keepers. Rather, “Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because...Jesus Christ our Saviour the same day rose from the dead.” Among other things, in the assembly every Sunday, they partook of the Lord’s Supper and had a collection!

Neither Constantine nor the Church of Rome changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday. On the contrary, the church of Christ, from the days of the apostles to the present time, has always gathered together the first day of the week, the day of the Lord’s resurrection, in order to commemorate his death in the Lord’s Supper. Every Sunday. Fifty-two times a year!

## SUNDAY IS THE LORD’S DAY

Sunday is the day our *Lord* rose from the dead. Sunday is the day the *Lord’s* church began. Sunday is the day the *Lord’s* Supper is eaten. Sunday is the day the *Lord’s* people give to help others. Sunday, in a word, is the *Lord’s* Day.

The true church remembers the death and resurrection of Christ 52 times a year. It has done so for 2,000 years! It will continue to do so till he comes!

If Jesus is *your* Lord, you will gather with the Lord’s church to partake of the Lord’s Supper every Lord’s Day. □

**The best evidence in favor  
of Christianity is Christianity.**

# Losing A Foot, A Hand And An Eye, But Not Maimed

Sometimes if we would follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we must cut off a foot; if we would put our hand in the nail-scarred hand, we must sever our own; and if we would see the kingdom of heaven, we must pluck out an eye (Matthew 18:8,9)—*but we will not be maimed in doing this!*—**J.E.G.** □



We are beginning to see the big picture when we realize that we are only a small part of it.

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. Where is the first place and the last place angels are mentioned in the Bible?
2. Who was first called a Hebrew in the Bible, and what does the name mean?
3. Why did the children of Israel not eat the sinew of the hip of an animal that was upon the hollow of the thigh?
4. What two things pertaining to an animal were the children of Israel expressly commanded not to eat?
5. What did king Saul say he would give to the man who killed Goliath, the giant who defied the armies of Israel?
6. How did Solomon show respect to his mother when she came into his presence as king?
7. How many wives and how many concubines (secondary wives) did King Solomon have?
8. What was the other name of Queen Esther?
9. Where does the name Jew first appear in the Bible, and what did it signify?
10. In what two books of the Bible is there no reference made to God (the name of God is not found)?
11. What religious leader when returning from Babylonian Captivity had Israel put away their strange wives and their children?
12. What were the names of Job’s three friends who came to mourn with him and to comfort him?
13. Who in the Bible said that “man...is a worm”?
14. Although it was not God’s plan from the beginning, why did Moses allow the Israelites to divorce?
15. What was the relative value of the sum of money translated a “pence” or “penny” in the KJV of the Bible?
16. What is the significance of the name “Gethsemane”?
17. Where is the only time John uses the word “grace” in all of his writings in the New Testament?
18. What did the apostle Paul tell the Thessalonians would take place before the second coming of Christ?
19. Although many Bible characters of ancient times are mentioned in the book of Hebrews, who is the only person of New Testament times called by name in this book?
20. What are the meanings, or difference in meaning, of the words “transgression” and “disobedience”?

(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:

■ *"Thank you so much for continuing to send me THE SWORD AND STAFF. I enjoy it so much. God bless you in your efforts to send the Word."*

### NORTH CAROLINA:

■ *"Enclosed is a check...You will never know how much I enjoy your work. Please, please keep me on your mailing list. I have never read and enjoyed anything anymore than your paper. Thank you."*

### VIRGINIA:

■ *"We love THE SWORD AND STAFF. God bless!"*

■ *"It has been so long since I have sent you anything toward the printing of your good work. I am glad that you still send THE SWORD AND STAFF to me."*

■ *"I do enjoy your magazine, and I do not know who sent my name in many years ago. I did order 5 of your books of poems...I am sending a very small donation. Thank you."*

■ *"Enclosed is a donation to you. I would like the bound volumes of THE SWORD AND STAFF, 1993-94...5 copies of POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS (I have all the bound volumes from 1971-72 till this one)...Thank you and our Lord most of all for giving you strength for all these years."*

### TENNESSEE:

■ *"I certainly enjoy your SWORD AND STAFF. It is a real inspiration to keep on serving the LORD. God bless you much."*

### KENTUCKY:

■ *"Thanks so much for your paper. I really enjoy it*

*from cover to cover, and it helps me so much with my church newsletter. Keep up the good work, and keep printing the truth.*

*"Please send me one copy of POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS."*

### WEST VIRGINIA:

■ *"Enclosed you will find a check to help in your work. I truly enjoy THE SWORD AND STAFF so much.*

*"So sorry I'm so late getting some help out that way, but do hope the offering will help. I don't want to miss an issue.*

*"Thanks again for all the effort you put in getting it out. May God bless you with the work and the truth."*

### PENNSYLVANIA:

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

### OHIO:

■ *"May our God continue to bless you in your work. When I receive your paper, I sit down and read it from front to back. Thank you for making more clear God's Word."*

■ *"I no longer wish to read your material for I find it to be pungent with the foul stench of legalism that Jesus often rebuked!!! You teach in a manner that leaves little room for forgiveness and mercy. You claim to be about the truth, only on occasion—try re-reading James 2:9-12. I pray that your pharisaical eyes will be opened! Be careful, my brother."*

**(Editor's Comments:** Strange words! [???) While we are at it, may we kindly comment, maybe our correspondent needs to read all of the chapter that he suggested we read a part of, especially the latter part, James 2:14-26.

Also, if we want to talk about the Pharisees, perhaps we should read what our Lord had to say about them in Matthew 5:20, 7:21, and 23:3, the latter reference summing up the Lord's estimation of them, "They say and do not." The Lord's rebuke of the Pharisees was not for keeping God's commands or saying that we should keep them, it was *for saying and not doing*. Obedience, even in the context of grace, as we presented it, seems repugnant to the fuzzy modern mentality, both religious and secular.

Let us say again, baptism is part of God's plan of salvation by grace through faith. Only the erring religionists deny it and muddy the religious stream, making it confusing to the poor lost sinner who needs a Savior and cannot save himself. When the apostle Peter told convicted sinners to "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]" Acts 2:38, it says "they that gladly received his word were baptized..." 2:41.

And the response should be that clear-cut and simple today, but there are those who would object. They

(Continued on Next Page)

## READERS'...Response

*(Continued from Previous Page)*

say that Peter didn't mean what he said when he said what he said in Acts 2:38, and if we tell sinners to do what he said, and for the reason he said, we are legalists and don't believe in the grace of God. Strange!!!)

### INDIANA:

■ *"Thanks for a great little publication which honors Christ and upholds the Word of God! I have been receiving it for about 15 years now and really look forward to getting it each month. The articles—both lengthy and short—are very good. Please keep it coming this way..."*

### ILLINOIS:

■ *"I am really happy for the Spanish speaking Christians to receive this kind of helpful literature..."*

■ *"Hope this check will help you to continue with THE SWORD AND STAFF. We need more writers who teach what the Bible really says where baptism is concerned*

*"Do not grow weary in well doing, for if we faint not, in due season we shall reap the reward."*

### MISSOURI:

■ *"I recently obtained a copy of your publication THE SWORD AND STAFF and enjoyed it. I am writing to see how I might receive it for myself and the church where I minister..."*

### IOWA:

■ *"Thanks for the great articles you publish. We truly love them. Keep up the good work. Thank you."*

### NEBRASKA:

■ *"Please take our name off your mailing list. Thank you."*

### COLORADO:

■ *"Cancel!!!"*

### TEXAS:

■ *"Thank you for continuing to send me this publication. Please accept this small contribution as a token of appreciation."*

### ARIZONA:

■ *"POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS, this is a great book for the minister and elders. I gave mine to the minister. I would like to order at least two more... God bless."*

### CALIFORNIA:

■ *"...Thank God we have a brother like you sending out THE SWORD AND STAFF. We have several of the books now and study them every night and really enjoy reading them.*

*"Keep up the good work always. The world needs these lessons so much."*

### PUERTO RICO:

■ *"...We are enclosing our contribution. We would really like to continue receiving your marvelous magazine, THE SWORD AND STAFF." (translated)*

### AUSTRALIA:

■ *"Thank you for regularly sending me your paper. It is read and enjoyed and is a help and encouragement to me. I am writing to ask if you would please send a copy to my son who has left home to study at university. He enjoyed reading my copy, and I know he would be pleased to have one sent to him."*

### USA, GLOBAL (E-mail):

► *"I want to thank you for your continued prayers. Also for your putting out the issues both in Spanish and English. I just received the latest in English and it has come in very handy. Your lead article on Computer and Acts 2:38, etc. is superb, and I have already used it for a class/sermon..."*

► *"It has been for many years that I have enjoyed your publication. I believe it has been about five years since I wrote and said so. The recent issue made me want to do so again, especially because of your cover article which mentioned using the information super highway for communication. Also, I use ONLINE BIBLE from time to time, and was disappointed to learn about their comments on eis...disappointed but not surprised..."*

► *"Your Editorial [Byways] in reference to the content of various Bible software programs is timely. I have been using the OLB program for many years and my first test of any such applications is to first check Acts 2:38. A new Bible program can be equated to walking into a strange congregation, you just don't know what to expect. I use Advantage Plus, 'The Holy Bible 2nd Edition,' Parson's 'QuickVerse,' and 'The Bible Library' by Elis Enterprise, Oklahoma. The latter three are CD-ROM and contain a plethora of information, some of which is very good. I have found various applications to be helpful, especially the speed in which you can move from one reference to another. I am always very cautious when using writings of A. T. Robertson as well as Charles Spurgeon. In the same vein of thought, shouldn't we always examine that which is being taught?*

*"...Brother Gibbons, your efforts to comply with II Timothy [4:2] and I Peter 5:2 are commendable. God bless you."*

► *"I appreciate the comic with the article on Titus 2 by Sandra McLaughlin. Sometimes we must look at things in a humorous light to keep from crying.*

*"Now, about your editorial. You quote Paul in I Timothy about 'bodily exercise' in 4:8. The NIV translates 'physical training.' Are you trying to say that Paul speaks of exercise, in the way of keeping in shape physically? If so, I will have to take issue with this use. In the*

context Paul is speaking of the asceticism in the church at Ephesus, in the previous verses abstaining from certain foods and marriage. The false teachers were trying to bind these on believers to become 'spiritual' and closer to God. The training has reference to this, a discipline put on oneself to become spiritual. It has no reference to working out at a health club.

"Anyway, enjoyed the issue."

**Editor's Comments:** The context does seem to tie in the "bodily exercise" mentioned here with the man-imposed asceticism prophesied to come in the falling away as stated earlier in this chapter. Our emphasis was that "there is something more important than the physical" as we played upon the words "bodily exercise" in the KJV, whether it be "asceticism" or "working out at a health club." It is self-evident that godliness and spiritual health are more important than the physical, being of eternal consequence.

As a matter of interest, the word translated "exercise" (*gymnasia*) in "bodily exercise" (KJV) properly means gymnastic exercise. It subsequently is from the word *gymnos*, which means naked. From what we can find out, those taking part in the Grecian sports, races, and exercises did so naked. And our word gym or gymnasium comes directly from this word. But this word rendered "exercise" had secondary applications beyond literal gymnastic activity. □

A Simple Exegetical Study of Hebrews 2:1-4



(Continued from Page 1)

leges it is implied that our responsibilities are even greater. The penalty for disobedience is not less. There is no escape if we neglect this great salvation.

Notice he says, "we ought to give the more earnest heed." Using "we" and "us" throughout this epistle, the writer completely and wisely identifies himself with his readers and jointly exhorts himself as he collectively exhorts them. He is speaking to Christians. The Greek word translated "ought" (*dei*) here is represented in John 3:7 with the word "must." So it sounds like what he has to say is imperative (that it is very serious). We need to give "the more earnest heed," and it is to "the things

which we have heard." "Things" particularizes each part of the truth dealt with as being important. He fears "lest at anytime we should let them slip." There is always that possibility which he reiterates in 3:12-14. We can lose that which we have heard, believed, and received. It can slip away from us.

Verse 2.

In verse 2, "the word spoken by angels" clearly has reference to the Old Testament law. Consider Deuteronomy 33:2, Acts 7:38, and Galatians 3:19. The word they spoke was "stedfast." In other words, Israel was held accountable and had to obey it. There was no getting around it. It was to the extent that "every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward." They were held accountable for every infraction of that law. The writer sums it up by saying "every transgression and disobedience." "Transgression" has reference to an active violation of the law, a stepping over the line. Whereas "disobedience" is negative, suggesting neglect in doing that which they should do. Therefore both the sins of commission and sins of omission were punished.

Verse 3.

To ask such a question as found in verse 3, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" is to answer it. It was asked to make a sobering impact upon its readers. We have "so great salvation," which makes us think of John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Because it is a "so great salvation" to neglect it is no small thing. We have been "bought with a price" (I Corinthians 6:20; I Peter 1:18-20), and what a price! It involves grace (unmerited favor), but not cheap grace. It is not a license to sin, but a compelling motive to do right. The apostle Paul asked, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1,2) Although salvation is of grace, it cannot be neglected without disastrous consequences. Paul likewise admonished in Philippians 2:12 to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." It is a great offense to lightly esteem, neglect, and sin against grace. Yes, "how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (It doesn't sound like "once in grace, always in grace," does it?)

The writer tells us that this "so great salvation..." first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." He had earlier said in Hebrews 1:1 and 2 that "God...hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son..." Yes, Christ is the Word that became flesh as God

(Continued on Next Page)

A Simple Exegetical Study of Hebrews 2:1-4  
(Continued from Previous Page)

thereby spoke to mankind (John 1:1-4,14). Time and time again as he went about doing good he opened his mouth and said, "Verily, I say unto you..." The words of eternal truth and verity continually fell from his holy lips. He declared, "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost" (Matthew 18:11), and finally "to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). He spoke of and accomplished our eternal salvation.

Verse 4.

Yes, Christ spoke. He is "the author of eternal salvation" (Hebrews 5:9; 12:2). It "began" with him, and the writer of Hebrews says that "it was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers [diverse, various] miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost [Spirit], according to his own will." This great and eternal salvation has been "confirmed unto us by them that heard him." Who is he talking about when he speaks of "them that heard him [heard Christ]"? The right answer to this subsequently will be helpful in understanding other truth (truth that is sometimes grossly misunderstood today). The answer is narrowed down when it says that they "confirmed" (bore witness to) what they said "with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles..." Those who heard and passed on these great truths about salvation to others backed up the truthfulness of what they said with power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit. They were none other than the apostles.

The twelve apostles were chosen for the express purpose of being the official eyewitnesses of Christ to the people of the world, telling them about this "so great salvation." As disciples of Christ they accompanied him, heard him, and then became eyewitnesses to the fact of his resurrection. Also, God supernaturally bore witness through them by means of the Holy Spirit. Jesus in John chapters 14, 15, and 16 talks to the twelve about the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit...he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:26,27). Then after his resurrection just before he went back to heaven, Jesus said to them, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost [Spirit] is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me..." (Acts 1:8). The apostles were to be and were witnesses (Acts 1:21-26; 2:14,32). With the power of the Holy Spirit "many wonders and signs were done by the apostles" (Acts 2:43). Acts 4:33 plainly sums it

up by saying, "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all."

Besides the "signs and wonders" (and "divers miracles"), it says that God bore them (the apostles) witness with "gifts of the Holy Ghost [Spirit], according to his own will." In reference to "gifts of the Holy Spirit," translators have supplied a footnote which says "distributions" of the Holy Spirit. This simple statement is a key to understanding how that others besides the apostles received spiritual gifts and were able to exercise supernatural powers (although they could not pass this on). Distribution or charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit were made by the apostles according to God's will. In particular this was done by the laying on of apostles' hands and prayer. Acts 8:14-19 and 19:1-6 make this plain. And the gifts were given "according to his [God's] will." After the apostles laid their hands on people, God determined the nature of the spiritual gift or gifts they received. Read I Corinthians 12:4-11. Along with men being apostles (there were only the twelve and Paul in this unique sense), the "gifts of the Spirit" served their extraordinary purpose and are no longer in the church today. The time came when they would cease (I Corinthians 13:8-10). The truth has been confirmed. Apostles and prophets, along with Christ, have been built into the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20). Even as there cannot be another Christ, there are no other apostles. They constitute the foundation; it has been laid. And eyewitnesses have no successors. All of this puts people in a bad light who claim to have these gifts today. They are not needed, and there are no apostles around to impart them.

The rest of the epistle to the Hebrews shows point after point how that Christ is superior to the Old Testament religion. The Jewish readers would see what a great and wonderful thing they had in Christ. Not only is he our Savior, he is our great high priest in heaven. Because of this great truth the writer declares, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). But at the same time let us ever keep the admonition of Hebrews 2:1-4 in mind. Greater privileges are accompanied by a greater sense of responsibility and accountability. Let us not take our religion lightly. □

————— □ —————  
**TO HAVE a negative mental attitude is to negate the purpose and working of God in your life; faith is positive in affirmation and action.** □  
————— □ —————

## Preacher, Are You Up to It?

**PREACHER**, are you *up to it*? To be an effective and faithful gospel preacher you must *study up* to know what to preach, *pray up* to be prepared to preach, *stand up* to preach, *speak up* to be heard as you preach, *shut up* when you have finished preaching, and *follow up* to reap the results of your preaching (as well as *live up* to what you have preached). Yes, are you *up to it*? ☐

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### BARBS... with a Point

**EMPTY** containers rattle.

*A tightwad is an inverted materialist.*

If you are going the wrong way, regardless how careful you may be driving, you are not going to arrive at the right destination.

*A hypocrite is an embodiment of a lie.*

Sometimes having just a little religion, like a shot of vaccine, will make a person immune to the real thing.

*When you leave God out, you really are the one who gets left out.*

It is pretty dumb not to see intelligent design in the physical world all about us (and in the human body), without which there could be no science, but such is the theory of evolution.

*We are tired of pop "theologians" with their jive talk, trying to be "cool" and sound like the world.*

That which many brazenly speak of as their lifestyle today could be better described by the term death, or deathstyle, "for the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

*People who say that truth is subjective are not as likely to subject themselves to truth (or even recognize it when they see it).*

Religious movements that are merely reactionary in nature will run their course and fizzle out; we must be for something, not just against, if we would build for time and eternity.

*Some preachers become so diplomatic in their preaching that they cease being an ambassador for Christ.*

In the political arena, too many times so-called liberals are people who would be liberal with other people's money, and conservatives are those who would conserve their own selfish interests.

*Some people think that having money makes them an authority on everything else.*

We sell our children and young people short by using unspiritual motivation, tactics, and gimmicks, thinking they will not respond to that which is purely spiritual.

*Some people never have reflections unless they are standing before a mirror, and then it is only of themselves.*

We are all brothers and sisters in the family of God; so it is wrong to form cliques in the church, and then treat the rest like they were distant cousins or strangers.

*Indifference to doctrinal difference is devastating to the cause of truth.*

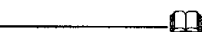
Insecure people are the most likely ones to be "taken in" by the self-seeking person who uses flattery and thus would use them.

*It is hard to walk with Christ if we are caught up in the rat race.*

We have the mentality of a sect when we would try to draw attention to ourselves, as a religious group, instead of to Christ and his Word.

*People who have experienced a change in conversion will put more than change in the offering plate.*

A "loose canon" never hits anything. ☐



## Just a Christian

**WE READ** in I Corinthians 1:12 & 13, "Now I say this, that each of you says, 'I am of Paul,' or 'I am of Apollos,' or 'I am of Cephas,' or 'I am of Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?"

Many who claim to follow Christ have not taken these verses seriously. If they did, so-called Christianity would not have the hundreds of different man-made religious names that serve to distinguish one group from another and show that those in a particular group are following some man or idea in contrast to another. This is not how it is supposed to be.

If a person is really following Christ, he should not claim to be a certain brand of Christian, nor should he call himself by a man-made name that indicates that he follows some particular man or idea. A Christian is to follow Christ and no one else. He must not follow some man's doctrine, nor should he say he is of some man. He is to be of Christ. He is to be just a Christian, Acts 11:26; I Peter 4:16.—**Selected** ☐



## Back When the Atheist Came to Town

**I**T WAS in the city of Chicago way back in the mid 1930's when the atheist came to town. His single appearance was to draw a vast amount of interest in the windy city. The civic auditorium was filled to capacity and a standing room crowd soon closed the door to many waiting outside. This meeting would deal a great blow to Christianity, everyone thought.

Finally the speaker was introduced and the "champion" stood forth. He gave one of the most complete and authoritative presentations of the "God is dead" theory every heard. With rapt attention the audience was held spellbound. The climax was electrifying. In fact, far more so than anyone expected.

Instead of closing with the usual gratuities, the speaker said, with tongue in cheek, "Perhaps there are some believers in our audience who might like to come up and give a brief defense of the Christian faith!" It was obvious that no one would dare rise to such a challenge. It was really a foolish gesture on the part of the speaker. Why he did it, no one would ever know.

The audience shifted about restlessly. A few looked up the aisles to see if anyone might accept. "Come now," the speaker chided, "surely there are some little Davids in this vast audience."

The waiting was tortuous when suddenly it happened. Two little girls, who looked like twins, moved toward the rostrum. Most people discounted them, due to their age, which could not be over nine or ten. Others thought they were just looking for the comfort station.

Yet, up on the stage they went and without so much as looking toward the adversary, they stopped at an adjoining microphone. The audience didn't know whether to laugh or cry. It was unbelievable. A hush moved in every heart. Every eye was fixed on these two little girls.

Then the silence was shattered as they began to sing, "Stand up, stand up, for Jesus, ye soldiers of the cross..." That old battle hymn of the kingdom of God soon began to rise from lips of first this one, and that one, until practically all were standing and singing as this great hymn was finished.

By this time the speaker had moved silently through the side curtains and out the back door. It almost reminds you of the saying, "And a little child shall lead them," or better still, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of God."—*Gospel Light* □

## Dealing With Being Bored

A YOUNG BOY complained to his father that most of the church hymns were boring to him—too far behind the times, tiresome tunes and meaningless words. His father put an end to the discussion by saying, "If you think you can write better hymns, then why don't you?"

The boy went to his room and wrote his first hymn. The year was 1690. The teenager was Isaac Watts.

"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" and "Joy to the World" are among almost 350 hymns written by him. Feeling bored? Let the world remember you for 300 years!—*Selected* □

### God's Kind Care

God hath not promised  
Skies always blue,  
Flower-strewn pathways,  
All our lives thro';  
God hath not promised  
Sun without rain,  
Joy without sorrow,  
Peace without pain.

God hath not promised  
We shall not know  
Toil and temptation,  
Trouble and woe;  
He hath not told us  
We shall not bear  
Many a burden  
Many a care.

God hath not promised  
Smooth roads and wide,  
Swift, easy travel,  
Needing no guide;  
Never a mountain,  
Rocky and steep,  
Never a river  
Turbid and deep:

But God hath promised  
Strength for the day,  
Rest for the labor,  
Light for the way,  
Grace for the trials,  
Help from above,  
Unfailing sympathy,  
Undying love.

—*Annie Johnson Flint*



## Spiritual Food for Thought

By Andrew Gibbons



**WHAT** are you known for?

Babe Ruth, the greatest baseball legend, was known for his home run record even though he also held a record of 1330 strike outs.

Abraham Lincoln was known for successfully ending slavery and bringing this country back together during the Civil War. Yet the average American fails to realize the struggle that went along with the road to the White House. Let's take a look at the road Abraham Lincoln took:

- Failed in business in 1831,
- Defeated for Legislature in 1832,
- Suffered nervous breakdown in 1836,
- Defeated for Speaker in 1838,
- Defeated for Elector in 1838,
- Defeated for Congress in 1848,
- Defeated for Senate in 1855,
- Defeated for Vice President in 1856,
- Defeated for Senate in 1858,
- Elected President in 1860.

Twenty-nine years of heartache and struggles taught Abraham Lincoln lessons that would give him courage to lead this country through one of its darkest hours. May we realize obstacles become stepping stones to victory.

Many think God has promised an easy road for those that follow His ways. Yet let us not be mistaken. God has promised to be with us and to aid and guide us, but no where in the Scripture can we find that He will place a hedge around us and protect us from every unpleasant occurrence of life.

Acts 14:22, Paul exhorted them to continue in the faith, saying, *"We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."*

This is contrary to popular religious belief. Keeping on the straight and narrow is the only way to everlasting life. Those that quit will never receive the reward (Matthew 7:13,14).

What are you known for? Quitting or trying. Keep on keeping on; you can overcome any obstacle through Christ. □

## One Solitary Life

**HE WAS BORN** in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He was not attended at birth by a doctor. He and his mother never saw a hospital.

He grew up in still another village where he worked in a carpenter shop like his step-father before him. When he was thirty, he left home and became an itinerant preacher.

He never had a family or owned a house.

He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never visited a big city. He saw neither the highest mountain nor the largest ocean.

He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where he was born. He did none of the things one usually associates with greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. Some even denied having known him. He was turned over to his enemies for a price and went through the mockery of a trial. False witnesses testified against him.

He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. He asked for water and he was given vinegar to drink. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for his clothing, the only property he had on earth. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave, the gift of a friend's pity.

Nineteen centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race and the leader of mankind's progress. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man as much as that one solitary life. □

—*Author Unknown*



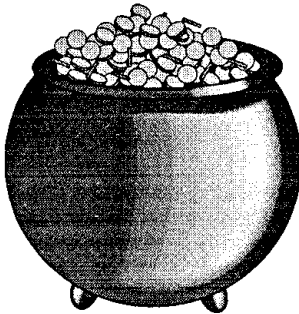
### Answers to:

### BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Genesis 3:24; Revelation 22:6-9; 2. Genesis 14:13; "one from beyond," beyond the river, the Euphrates River; 3. Genesis 32:24-32; 4. Leviticus 3:16, 17; 7:23-27; 5. I Samuel 17:25; 6. I Kings 2:19; 7. I Kings 11:1-3; 8. Esther 2:7; 9. Esther 2:5; it is a clipped form of the name Judah, signifying a person from Judah; 10. Esther and Song of Solomon; 11. Ezra 10; 12. Job 2:11; 13. Job 25:1-6, Job's friend, Bildad; 14. Matthew 19:7, 8; 15. *Denarius* is the name of the coin translated "pence" or "penny"; it was about the size of a dime, but its relative value can be seen in that it was a day's wages for a soldier; also for a laborer—Matthew 20:1,2; 16. It means "oil press" and probably is to be understood in connection with extracting olive oil from the trees on the Mount of Olives; 17. John 1:17; 18. II Thessalonians 2:1-12; 19. Hebrews 13:23; 20. As in Hebrews 2:2, *Transgression* means a going over, doing what is forbidden—sin of commission; *Disobedience* involves not doing what is commanded—sin of omission. □

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