Sword AND Staff

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

"Neither Give Place To The Devil" (Ephesians 4:26,27)



● By JAMES E. GIBBONS—1535 Fairfield Drive Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030 U.S.A.

HE MESSAGE of this article is very simple.
(1) There is a devil. (2) He wants a place in your life. (3) Don't give him a place.

Having made this summary statement, let us look into and develop each of these points.

I. THERE IS A DEVIL

Just as there is God, there is a Devil. There are so many things we don't know about the Devil. Some hint as to his background may be found in Revelation 12:7-9, "And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Some see pride and arrogance involved in the Devil's fall,

pointing to one of the prohibitive qualifications of an elder in I Timothy 3:6, "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil", i. e., the same condemnation the Devil fell into. This is interesting, but there is so much that we do not know.

Regardless of what all is involved, it is obvious that the rebellion, sin, and depravity of the Devil is so complete that he cannot be redeemed. The Day of Judgment will find these words being said to those who are lost, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). Therefore, the Devil, knowing that he is beyond redemption, is out to work havoc in God's creation. And since he cannot prevail against God Himself, he aims his assault against a lower form of God's creation, man, who is made in the image and likeness of God. It is as the apostle Peter warned, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8). He gets back at God by seeking man's destruction.

What the Devil Is Called

Revelation 12:9 speaks of "that old *serpent*, called the *Devil*, and *Satan*…" Each one of these terms is quite revealing and makes an interesting study.

Serpent. Speaking of the Devil in terms of a serpent no doubt had its origin in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3). The apostle Paul wrote in II Corinthians 11:3, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Eve in her naivety, being newly created and completely inexperienced, fell to the wiles of the Devil as he approached her through the ser-

(Continued on Page 11)

THE SWORD AND STAFF Post Office Box 147 Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030 U.S.A.

E-Mail Address: 102100.1727@compuserve.com

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). We do not assume responsibility for material as other sources and writers beyond the which appears in this paper. This publica tion is available in English and Spanish. Please indicate preference.

-THANK YOU-

Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

KEEP the faith, but not to yourself.

People who are reconciled to God are likewise people who are reconciled to one another.

Real Christianity should spread spontaneously.

When a person is on fire with the message of God, but does not find suitable material for this flame to ignite, he may soon burn out.

When life hands you a lemon, you can either become sour like the lemon or make lemonade.

Sometimes there is as much faith involved, if not more, in accepting an undesirable thing in your life as in believing that God will take it away (II Corinthians 12:7-10)

In a multitude of words is a multitude of trouble; therefore, speak sparingly and wisely.

The things that really matter in life are the things that don't have to do with matter.

We cannot be YOU-NITED without YOU.



GOD, TIME, AND OUR HUMAN PREDICAMENT

speaking, we are made to think about time. When we think about time, our thoughts center upon God and man. The 90th Psalm puts God and man in sharp contrast. God does not exist in the context of time, but in timeless eternity. He is "from everlasting to everlasting" (which is hard for us to grasp). Man, in sharp contrast, is a creature of time hemmed in by days, months, and years which will eventually end in death. A sinful, fallen being, his life is short and filled with hardships. Job well exclaimed, "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble" (Job 14:1). The Psalmist said, Psalms 90:10, "The days of our years are threescore and ten [seventy years]: and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years [eighty years], yet is their strength [in their boast is only] labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

How are we going to respond to our human predicament and situation in which we find ourselves? There are three basic ways in which we can respond.

- (1) We can become sour and embittered that this is our human lot (or, at the best, stoically endure it). We can despair of life and become cynical. The word "cynical" comes from a Greek word that indicates a dog, a canine, and consequently to be cynical is to be like a snarling dog. And that's about how some people look at life.
- (2) We can embrace what has been called the Epicurean philosophy—eat, drink, and be merry. Live for today. Cram all the worldly pleasure into your life that you can while you can. "You only live once," we are told. And so many people today, whether consciously or unconsciously, seem to have embraced this philosophy. But this is very, very foolish. A rich farmer thought this way in Luke 12:15-21 as he said to himself, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou has provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Paul warned about this philosophy in I Corinthians 15:32-34.
- (3) We can take heed to what the Psalmist said, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom" (Psalms 90:12). This was said after considering the frailty and brevity of human life in contrast with the Almighty God of

eternity. In view of our mortality we need to become time conscious and "apply our hearts to wisdom." We are told the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10). Today is the day of salvation (II Corinthians 6:2). "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). Get right with God while we can (II Peter 3:9), and live right (Ephesians 5:15-17; Romans 13:11-14). In getting ready to die, and dying to self, we learn how to live (Romans 6; Galatians 2:20; Matthew 16:25). We are getting ready to live for eternity.

Then with the Psalmist we can look to God and say, "LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place [refuge, hiding place] in all generations" (Psalms 90:1). Then what we do has a sense of permanency. With the Psalmist, who looked to Him who is "from everlasting to everlasting," we can pray, "And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it" (Psalms 90:17). Only one life will soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last.

EDITORIAL **Byways**

"TIME TO BREAK THE SILENCE" AND OTHER LETTERS

HE SWORD AND STAFF has a diverse reading audience. Therefore, when we write on different subjects, a diverse response is to be expected. Most of the response usually is favorable and appreciative, but not all. We are presently in receipt of some long letters with a negative flavor from Texas, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and New Hampshire. Time doesn't allow us to be tied up in a long interchange of correspondence. Our aim in this paper is not to be involved in debates, but to present what we assuredly, sincerely, and humbly believe to be the truth in articles of a positive nature (filled with the Word of God).

However, following is an excerpt from one of these letters, and reference to other things written, which was critical of the short study we had on Hebrews 2:1-4. The other letters are mentioned. We have numbered each criticism, so that in our comments you can know what we are talking about. Please consider these words with the same sincerity and love in which they are written.

Excerpts and References

Dear Mr. Gibbons.

I have been reading THE SWORD AND STAFF in silence for some time, but I now feel it is time to break the silence. There are so many areas to be challenged that it is difficult to determine where to begin, but let's deal with Volume 33, Number 4, "A Simple Exegetical Study of Hebrews 2:1-4" and the faulty exegesis found in the article.

[1] On page 1 (49) you make the statement "by inference Christ and the New Testament are superior to the Old Testament." This is the same as saying that God. through the agency of the Holy Spirit, inspired inferior words in the Old Testament. That would also mean that Paul the apostle lied about the Old Testament being "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Since the New Testament wasn't even complete, we know the term "scripture" has to refer to the Old Testament as is its consistent meaning in the New Testament. Nothing is inferred by this passage, there is just the statement that Christ is superior to the angels. I would also challenge you to show proof that the Old Testament came through angels, which is contrary to the clear statements of the Old Testament (Exodus 20:1) unless you mean the human messengers, i.e. Moses...

(Editor: Because of the length of the letter we will summarize the other disagreements.)

- [2] Criticism is made of our saying that the gifts of the Holy Spirit were given by the laying on of the apostles' hands and prayer, Cornelius being cited as proving otherwise.
- [3] Criticism is made for our saying that the apostles and "gifts of the Holy Spirit...are no longer in the church today."
- [4] Criticism is made of our referring to I Corinthians 13 and saying that the "time would come when they [the supernatural spiritual gifts] would cease"; criticism is made of our applying "that which is perfect," to the New Testament. The writer asserts that the New Testament Scriptures are not perfect, that they are something less than reliable, and that Christ is the only thing that is perfect.
- [5] Further finding fault, our critic says, "I could venture into other areas like baptismal regeneration" [a term not used by us, and we are at a loss to know what he means. We do not believe in so-called baptismal regeneration, but we do believe what the New Testament says about baptism—Editor].
- [6] Other letters, mentioned, found fault with what we taught from the Scriptures about baptism and expressed belief that the supernatural spiritual gifts were still a part of the church today. Also the latter part of Mark 16 was cited as Scripture we should look at if we are going to take God's Word at "face value." Verses 17 and 18 were pointed out, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils [demons]; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay

EDITORIAL Byways

(Continued from Previous Page)

hands on the sick, and they shall recover." The writer thinks this is of universal application today.

[1] Inferior Words, Scripture, and Angels

Our critic, who would "break the silence," finds fault with us saying that the Old Testament is inferior to the New Testament. He says that we are saying that God inspired inferior words. Perhaps our critic needs to think a little bit more about what he has said.

Inferior Words?

Yes, God inspired the Old Testament. And, yes, it was (is) not inferior as to its purpose, but it is inferior as to its content in contrast with the New Testament. Since the fall of man, God's revelation to man has been in progressive stages. The first stage or period, from Adam to Moses, is characterized as the period without law. Moral concepts were not as clear and defined, although sin was there. The second period, from Moses to Calvary, is the period of law (law involving ceremony, morality, and the nation of Israel as such). All of this was preparatory, getting man ready for and pointing to Christ and the New Testament. God accomplished His purpose in what He was wanting to get across.

The apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 3:24 and 25, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." The writer of Hebrews states in Hebrews 10:1. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." Read the verses that follow. Verse 11 even says that these sacrifices could "never take away sins." (If this is not an inferior circumstance, what is inferior?) Read Hebrews 9:8-17. Thus the Hebrews' writer says in 7:19, "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did [the New Testament, Christ]; by which we draw nigh unto God." John in his gospel account states, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). The Old Testament served its purpose in proving that man needed the New Testament.

Any way that you look at it, it sounds like the Old Testament is inferior. Otherwise, why did Christ have to come into the world and die on the old rugged cross? The Galatians were going back under that law. Paul wrote, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4). He accused the Galatians of going back to "the weak and beggarly elements" (Galatians 4:9). (It sounds like Paul strongly regarded the law as being inferior!) Even in the days of Jere-

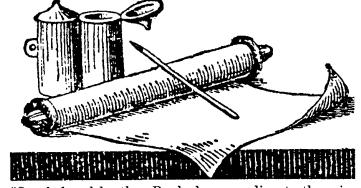
miah when he prophesied of a new covenant (New Testament) to come (Jeremiah 31:31ff), the writer of Hebrews, looking back, offers this commentary, "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away" (Hebrews 8:13). (It was so inferior that it was ready to pass away, even in Jeremiah's day, and it did when Christ came!).

Somehow we believe there must be a misunderstanding on the part of our critic. Surely he didn't understand or mean what he said when he said what he did in his correspondence.

What Scripture?

Our critic says, "That would also mean that Paul the apostle lied about the Old Testament being 'profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness'." These words ring out unreasonably strong, even harsh, as he relegates all reference to "Scripture" in the New Testament to the Old Testament. And perhaps he doesn't fully understand what all can be involved in Paul's statement that all Scripture is "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (II Timothy 3:16).

For the most part, we find ourselves in agreement with the thought that reference to "Scripture" in the New Testament has the Old Testament writings in mind. But this is not totally true. The apostle Paul wrote in I Corinthians 14:37, "If any man think himself to be prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." The apostle Peter publicly recognized the writings of Paul as Scripture when he said,



"Our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (II Peter 3:15b, 16). (The word "scriptures" literally means writings). And then when Paul wrote in II Timothy 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousnees," this was at the end of his ministry. This was the last epistle

written by the apostle Paul. Thus all of his other writings, and most of the other New Testament Scriptures, had been in circulation for a long time. This expression "all scripture" (since it says "all") would include the New Testament as well as the Old Testament.

Even if we limited "all Scripture" being profitable to the Old Testament, that does not negate what we said about it being inferior to the New Testament. Although the Old Testament was not God's complete and final revelation, it served its purpose at the time. And even now, looking back, it certainly is "profitable for doctrine [teaching], for reproof [proving again], for correction [discipline], for instruction [training] in righteousness." In its direct prophecy, in its symbolism, and even in its deficiency, it all points to Christ. It had a "shadow" of good things to come (but was not the very reality) (Hebrews 10:1; Colossians 2:14-17). It was a "schoolmaster" to bring us to Christ (Galatians 3:24, 25). Then its lessons in the context of history ever remind us to be faithful (I Corinthians 10:1-12). Yes, even as Paul said, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

Angels and the Law

We are challenged by our critic "to show proof that the Old Testament came through angels." Exodus 20:1 is cited as evidence that angels were not involved.

We have learned long ago to be very humble in approaching God's Word. The Bible is not an ordinary book. Ephesians 3:10 speaks of the "manifold wisdom of God." There are many folds to the teachings of the Bible. To see one fold and say "this only" is not very wise. This is the problem of people today who teach that we are saved by "faith only." There are many Scriptures that say other things are involved in our salvation.

As recorded in Exodus 20, God spoke audibly from Mt. Sinai to the children of Israel. The ten commandments were initially given. The people were so terrified that they said to Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Exodus 20:19). Moses would later go into the mountain and spend forty days and nights with God. John 1:17 says that "the law was given by Moses..." Twentytwo times in the Bible the Old Testament is called the "law of Moses." However, Stephen, in his defense before the Sanhedrin, said that the Jews had "received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it" (Acts 7:53). Paul, in Galatians 3:19, says that the law "was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." The word "disposition" in Acts 7:53 is a noun, and "ordained" in Galatians 3:19 is a verb, coming from the same root word in the Greek. According to the lexicons. the action involved is "to arrange, appoint, prescribe." The close relationship of angels to God and His law is

represented by the cherubim facing each other on the top of the ark of the covenant. So, we conclude that in some sense the law was given through the agency of angels in connection with the LORD God and Moses. Is the theophanic representation of God meant (the "angel of the LORD" who spoke in the first person for God) surrounded by the heavenly host of other angels? We don't know, but whatever is involved it was inferior to the Son of God and the New Testament which came through the Son of God.

"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. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; 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?" (Hebrews 2:1-3)

[2] [3] [4] [5] [6] Summary Teaching on the Charismatic Outpouring and the Regular Gift of the Holy Spirit

Instead of giving a rebuttal to the other sections we have numbered, we present the following information. This is sort of a summary of what we humbly believe is the New Testament teaching on the charismatic outpouring and the regular gift of the Holy Spirit. This should satisfactorily answer the criticism.

The charismatic outpouring of the Holy Spirit as seen on the day of Pentecost, the household of Cornelius, and the laying on of the apostles' hands had nothing to do with salvation. It was not to save man. However, the regular giving of the Holy Spirit which comes with being born again, and is common to all conversions, is essential to salvation. We can't be saved without it.

THE CHARISMATIC OUTPOURING The Day of Pentecost

The apostles received the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. They were already disciples of Christ and had been commissioned to tell the world what to do to be saved. They were already saved people (can anyone doubt this?). The outpouring of the Holy Spirit had nothing to do with saving them. The coming of the Holy Spirit was to initiate the establishment of the church (Mark 9:1) and to endue them, as the apostles of Christ, with power to do their great work as the official spokesmen and eyewitnesses of Christ (John 15:26,27; 14:26; 16:13—these words were spoken to the apostles; Acts 1:1-8,21-26; 2:1-43; 4:33).

The Household of Cornelius, "As on Us As at the Beginning"

An outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place in the 10th chapter of Acts that was in certain ways like (Continued on Next Page)

EDITORIAL Byways

(Continued from Previous Page)

what happened on the day of Pentecost (Acts 11:15). It involved the household of a godly Gentile named Cornelius. These people were unsaved, but the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them was not to save them. The angel had instructed Cornelius that Peter would "tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:14), or as Acts 10:6 reads, "He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." Before Peter could tell them, the charismatic outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place. He later told the Jerusalem church, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost [Spirit] fell on them, as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). The beginning was Pentecost, a few years before. This implies that what happened here was not a common, universal experience. Why say "as at the beginning" if this happened with every conversion? It didn't, and it was unusual. It didn't have to do with salvation. The early church during its first several years had preached the gospel only to the Jews. Now God intervenes directly from heaven to let them emphatically know that they should be going to the Gentiles also. This special charismatic outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the household of Cornelius proved beyond doubt that the Gentiles should be receiving the gospel too (Acts 10:44-48; 11:17,18; 15:7-9; also notice Acts 10:9-16, 28, 34, 35). If the Holy Spirit moved the mouths of Gentiles to speak God's Word, surely God wanted their hearts to be receptacles of this Word. The church got the message. Thereafter the gospel was preached to the Gentiles, to all men, as God intended.

The Laying On of the Apostles' Hands

The extraordinary phenomena of the charismatic working of the Holy Spirit can also be seen in the laying on of the apostles' hands. God bore the apostles witness with signs, wonders, and miracles. Not only were the apostles able to do this, they bore witness with "gifts [distributions] of the Holy Ghost [Spirit] according to his [God's] will" to others (Hebrews 2:3,4). The charismatic distribution or gifts of the Holy Spirit took place when the apostles laid their hands on other people (Acts 8:17-19; Acts 19:6), and the gift, or gifts, the person received was determined by God (Hebrews 2:4: I Corinthians 12:11). Again, let us emphasize, this charismatic phenomena had nothing to do with a man's salvation. People were already Christians when they experienced it. People who are called "brethren" in I Corinthians are advised concerning receiving different spiritual gifts. They had become "brethren" before receiving the gifts.

And because of the very nature of the situation, gifts or distributions of the Holy Spirit that came by the laying on of the apostles' hands ceased when the last apostles and those on whom they laid their hands died. Apostles were eyewitnesses of Christ (his per-

sonally selected and official eyewitnesses to the truths of the gospel). Eyewitnesses can have no successors, contrary to what some denominations teach. There are no apostles in the church today. So the gifts that came through their hands are not in the church either.

All of this being inferred, we are not surprised to read in I Cor. 13:8, where Paul speaks representively of the gifts, "Charity [love] never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge [supernatural knowledge], it shall vanish away."



"I Will Pour Out of My Spirit Upon All Flesh"

All of this being said, how are we to understand Acts 2:16 and following? The great outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost has occurred. Cloven tongues as of fire rests upon all who have received the Holy Spirit, and all who have received the Holy-Spirit are speaking. The apostles are the ones speaking. Peter said, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh..." How are we to understand this statement?

Let us further consider this statement, "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh." Questions arise as to what is meant by pouring out of the Spirit and by "upon all flesh"? Is he talking about the charismatic phenomena as happened on Pentecost per se? or charismatic outpourings in general, including the laying on of hands? The expression "all flesh" raises the question as to whether this is a universal experience for all of mankind or not. Would all hear the sound of a mighty rushing wind, have cloven tongues as fire sat upon them, and speak in languages they had never learned before? (He did say "this" was what was spoken by the prophet Joel). Would all have charismatic, miraculous powers? He did say that "your sons, and your daughters shall prophesy." What about this?

Obviously from the charismatic viewpoint what happened on Pentecost has not been a universal experience. There is no record that Pentecost per se was

ever repeated (the sound of the mighty rushing wind, cloven tongues as fire, etc.). There was only a similarity (Acts 11:15). Even in the early days of the church, not everyone had the spiritual gifts.

But what does he mean by "all flesh"? Some have seen this as meaning representative of all flesh, i.e., Jewish and Gentile flesh. We are told that on Pentecost we see the outpouring on Jewish flesh and with the household of Cornelius, Gentile flesh. This is true, but he includes sons and daughters prophesying, young men seeing visions, and old men dreaming dreams. "All flesh" takes in all kinds of people. It seems to be more general than Pentecost and the household of Cornelius.

All of this would happen in the "last days." Some see this as the last days of the nation of Israel. True, but in another sense we have been living in the "last days" ever since Christ came (Hebrews 1:2). Everything considered, we have come to the conclusion that the expression, "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh," includes the charismatic outpourings of the Holy Spirit and the regular giving of the Holy Spirit. We live in the age of the Holy Spirit. The kingdom came with power (Mark 9:1; Acts 2; Hebrews 2:3,4). It was initiated with the supernatural, miraculous outpourings of the Holy Spirit, but now continues with the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian has been born of the Spirit and has His indwelling presence.

THE REGULAR GIFT OF THE SPIRIT The Birth of the Spirit

This brings us to our climaxing thought. As there was the charismatic outpouring of the Spirit in the early days of the church that served its extraordinary and passing purpose, there is the continuing presence, power, and gift of the Holy Spirit that are absolutely essential to salvation today. The apostle Paul wrote, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:9). The reality of our conversion, or whether we bear fruit as a professed believer, is determined by whether we have the Holy Spirit or not.

Before the Holy Spirit can come into our lives to live, we must be born again. In fact, the Holy Spirit produces the spiritual life. Jesus told Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Jesus further made emphatic this necessity by saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). In being born again, we become children of God. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6).

Verses of Parallel Thought

It is interesting and helpful to examine other verses that are parallel in thought to this subject. The words of the apostle Peter in Acts 2:38 and I Peter 1:22 and 23 are almost like a commentary on John 3:5. Here we see how a man is born again. On the day of Pentecost Peter told those who cried out what they ought to do, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ve shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]." Then later on he wrote in I Peter 1:22 and 23, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Paul gives us parallel thoughts in I Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Then in I Corinthians 6:11, he says to the Corinthians, "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

(NOTE: What was commanded and promised in Acts 2:38 is not of a temporary nature for he said in the next verse, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This is for all coming to Christ for all time).

The Indwelling of the Spirit

Like he said in Acts 2:38, when we repent and are baptized, we receive the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Forgiveness has taken place, the unholy spirit has been expelled (Ephesians 2:1,2), and now the indwelling of the Holy Spirit becomes a reality (II Timothy 1:14; I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19,20). Our faith and obedience determines the extent that this takes place (Ephesians 3:16,17; Acts 5:32). We must walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:1-Read the entire 8th chapter of Romans). We must not grieve the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). We must sow to the Spirit, "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:8). Yes, the Christian life begins and ends with the Holy Spirit. Looking to eternity, Paul said, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [make alive] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11). How wonderful!

The Most Beautiful Fruit

The works of the flesh are put in contrast with the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:16-26. As we walk in the Spirit and sow to the Spirit we will find the fruit of (Continued on Next Page)

EDITORIAL Byways

(Continued from Previous Page)

the Spirit produced in our lives. We will become more and more like Christ who had the Spirit without measure. Paul said, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering [patience], gentleness, goodness, faith [faithfulness], meekness, temperance [self-control]..." (Galatians 5:22,23). This beautiful fruit is spoken of in the singular with a singular verb, yet with many representations, love heading the list. The Corinthians were told that love is the abiding fruit of the Holy Spirit that would not fail when the charismatic gifts had long ceased. Paul further highlights the fruit of the Spirit in Ephesians 5:9, when he said, "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." How beautiful! How excellent!

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Perhaps there are a few more loose ends we need to tie up before we finish this article. One has to do with "that which is perfect" in I Corinthians 13 and the other Mark 16:17 and 18. Let us notice these references.

"That Which is Perfect"

Read I Corinthians 13:8-10. Here Paul says that love will never fail. But in contrast with this, he pictures prophecy, tongues, and supernatural knowledge as coming to an end. They are representative of the spiritual gifts. Then Paul said, "For we know in part, and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." The word "part" here is used in contrast with "perfect." The word "part" means just that, a part of something in contrast with the complete or the whole thing ("one of the constituent parts of a whole"). The word translated "perfect" means to be complete, to finish, to have reached the goal. The word translated "end" in the New Testament comes from the same root. The revelation of the New Testament did not come all at once. It came in parts as the Holy Spirit guided the apostles and prophets into all truth (John 14:26; 16:13; Ephesians 3:5). That was prophesying in part. The spiritual gifts would last until the New Testament revelation was completed. Then the ability to exercise the gifts would cease, and the "in part" situation would be done away.

This does not mean just mechanically receiving all of the New Testament Scriptures, but the completed revelation of the New Testament truths (a full laying out of the new covenant and its particulars). Although the New Testament could have been fully revealed before the last Scriptures were written down, it was not solidified in permanent form for us to see until then.

To say, in reference to "that which is perfect," that the perfect is Christ, and that the prophesying in part continues today is a dangerous position. We would have to say that the Bible is not a completed book, and that Scripture is still being written today. There are some sects that claim revelations today, and what confusion and chaos we have!

The pronoun is impersonal in "that which is perfect," not that "who" is perfect. It does not refer to a person. (Continued on Page 10)

BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

- 1. In particular, why were the children of Israel condemned to wander forty years in the wilderness (why forty)?
- To whom was it said, "Be sure your sin will find you out," and what was the circumstance?
- 3. What were the mountains from which the Israelites were to pronounce the blessings and the curses when they entered the Promised Land?
- 4. What tribes were to be on the mount of blessing and what tribes were to be on the mount of cursing?
- 5. What blood relation was Joab, the commander of David's army, to David?
- 6. How did Joab come to be the commander of David's army?
- 7. What sea-going venture undertaken by king Jehoshaphat of Judah proved disasterous?
- 8. Where is the only reference to the horse in the Bible where he explicitly is not connected with war?
- 9. What O.T. prophet walked about naked and barefoot for three years as a sign of how the king of Assyria would lead people away captive?
- 10. How long was the city of Jerusalem besieged before it fell to the Babylonians?
- 11. In particular, why were the Jewish people condemned to be seventy years in Babylonian Captivity (why seventy years)?
- 12. What finally happened to the "molten sea" (the colossal brass basin) that Solomon had made for the temple wherein the priest washed before ministering in the temple?
- 13. In his early ministry when Jesus read from Isalah in the synagogue in Nazareth, and said the Scripture was fulfilled in their ears, how did the people react?
- 14. What is the only recorded incident of Jesus ever writing anything?
- 15. Who advised his fellow Jews that it was better for one man to die for the nation than for the whole nation to perish?
- 16. How many days were there between the resurrection of Christ and his ascension?
- 17. From what church were Paul and Barnabas sent out to preach the gospel?
- 18. Whose name is jointed with Paul's in the salutation of I Corinthians?
- 19. In which epistles of the New Testament is the name of Timothy found jointly with the apostle Paul in the opening salutation?
- 20. In the book of Revelation what was John told not to write down?

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



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:

■ "Thanks to you and your staff for THE SWORD AND STAFF we enjoy so much. Keep up the good work..."

GEORGIA:

"Please remove my name from your mailing list."

NORTH CAROLINA:

- "Please put me on your mailing list for THE SWORD AND STAFF. I will send some money as soon as possible. Your paper is one of the best I have read. Keep up the good work."
- "Thank you for sending us THE SWORD AND STAFF. My husband and I read everything in every paper, and agree with what we read...

"Thanks for the good job you are doing. I have been a Sunday School teacher since 1949, and I know the truth when I see it."

VIRGINIA:

- "Please stop sending this magazine to my address. I would appreciate your cooperation."
- "It has been a long time since we have had any communication. I have enjoyed THE SWORD AND STAFF very much, and it has been a long time since I have sent a contribution. Please accept this check to use in whatever way you need it..."
- "I am enclosing a small offering to get on your mailing list. Also for one of the bound volumes. I hope to obtain all of these volumes in the future, and to be able to send a small offering from time to time. I find your printed material very helpful in understanding portions of the Scriptures."

KENTUCKY:

■ "Just a note to let you know that I enjoy your publication very much. I have great respect for your stand on the Bible. There is so much wishy-washy preaching going on in our country today that it's refreshing to be able to hear good sound doctrine.

"I would appreciate it if you would send me the bound volumes and also the poems I have requested. Thanks. Also I would like for you to send THE SWORD AND STAFF to..."

WEST VIRGINIA:

■ "Dear brother Gibbons, received your wonderful paper today. I look forward to each issue and wish you could print this paper more often. May God continue to bless and keep you. Enclosed is a contribution. Use it as you need to. I do pray for good gospel preachers and writers."

PENNSYLVANIA:

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

OHIO:

- 'Please cancel."
- "Enclosed please find a check for...to help with the publishing of your paper. We really enjoy THE SWORD AND STAFF."
- "...I always read the letters in READERS' RE-SPONSE...Much to my surprise, I see the letter that has caused me to write to you, from a person in Ohio.

"Wow! Evidently it would appear to me that someone has a personal agenda that you folks are shedding a little too much light on...

"Some of your readers have not yet found the courage to do the right thing. But most certainly none of the blame can be heaped on you and the other nondenominational Christians you align yourselves with. You and the rest of your small band of defenders of the truth are the only thing besides the Scriptures that keep some of us non-Christians from giving up the idea entirely.

"Keep up the fight and thanks."

Editor's Comments: Thank you for your letter. You have a most commendable attitude. You are not far from the kingdom. "One thing thou lackest..." We encourage you to take your stand for that which you know to be the truth and right. Be just a simple, undenominational Christian after the New Testament order, a member of the Lord's body, His church, and that alone. You will be glad that you did this.

MICHIGAN:

■ "I am writing to let you know I have moved. Above is my old address label. Below is my new address. I want to thank you for your publication. It is an excellent way for me to better understand God's Word. Continue your good work. May the Lord continue to bless your work."

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

INDIANA:

■ "T'm ashamed to say how long it's been since I've last written. Please continue in the fine work of proclaiming the truth. Your writings are appreciated."

IOWA:

■ "Thank you for your good articles. We enjoy them and hope people of various groups you send the paper to will read with a hunger for truth. Truth is lacking in so many places. May the Lord help us all uphold it as we go about day by day..."

MISSOURI:

■ "I just realized I need to renew my subscription to THE SWORD AND STAFF which I really enjoy reading. It is very informative, and it also hits the weak spots. I wish that more people were of the truth than what are. I'm sending...for the renewal and...for the POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS..."

NEBRASKA:

■ "Please accept this tribute to your publication of God's message! I look forward to each edition of THE SWORD AND STAFF! My bound editions are wearing with study, most valuable references. Continue on in the Lord's work. The Body of Christ's church is in debt to your strong and powerful preaching! Thank you!"

OKLAHOMA:

■ "I am employed by the Hertz Corporation here in...
Our company has decided to accept homosexual couples in the same manner as a husband and wife. Here is a paragraph from the memo issued December 1st of this year. 'A domestic partner is defined as a partner of the same or opposite sex (not a relative) who permanently resides at the same address as the renter as validated by the addresses listed on the driver's licenses.'

"I would like to ask patrons of Hertz to call them and voice their opinion on this matter."

Editor's Comments: This is alarming! Several other major companies are doing the same thing. This country could become Sodom and Gomarrah all over again and seems to be moving in that direction. The president of this country helped create a climate in which such deviate behavior is accepted and can thrive. If the practice of homosexuality is right, then there is no such thing as right and wrong! Wake up, America!

TEXAS:

■ "I received the last issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF today and as usual it is the best in print. I usually read it through twice. First time to enjoy its richness, the second time to let it sink in. Thanks be to our great and glorious God. His TRUTH is still powerful and inspiring..."

GHANA, W. Africa:

"I am a member with the above church. I was privileged to read THE SWORD AND STAFF, a volume 33 1995 issue from a Christian brother in a nearby town. It was helpful to me in my Christian life. I am requesting you to do everything in your power to send me some of your issues to read for we have never got such helpful paper to read in Ghana and in our area. This paper has helped me a lot in my Christian life..."

USA, GLOBAL (E-mail):

- ▶ "I am an elder...I also teach an adult Sunday school class. I really appreciate your magazine and use many articles for communion meditations, class material, etc. ...Again, keep up the great work, so many are not as dedicated to remaining in the Word as you. God said it and that should settle it, but sadly men add or subtract their own sayings. I came out of a large denomination 30 years ago into the simple truth of God's Word. Please continue the work of restoration!!"
- ► "I wish to thank you for sending THE SWORD AND STAFF to me. I really enjoy reading the articles. I am always saddened when I read of one who requests cancellation of their subscription. How tragic it is when man no longer wants to face Truth. The tragedy is however that the same Word they reject here will judge them on that great day...I was raised in the denominational world and the liberalism that is plaguing the Body of Christ today is very disquieting to me. Your publication helps keep the perspective. Thanks again for sending it to me. If I can be of service please let me know..."
- ► "I want to thank you for sending me your paper here in Minsk...God bless you and your work."

EDITORIAL Byways

(Continued from Page 8)

"These Signs Shall Follow Them"

One of our critics says that if we are going to take Scripture at "face value," we should take Mark 16:17 and 18 as such. Here it says that "these signs shall follow them that believe..." Then it speaks of casting out demons, speaking with new tongues, taking up serpents, drinking any deadly thing, and laying hands on the sick (the miraculous being involved with all of these things).

All right, what is the "face value" of this Scripture if we are going to take it at just what it says? To correctly understand any Scripture we must know who is speaking and to whom he is speaking. We must understand the Scripture in the light of all other Scripture on the same subject.

Let us back up to the 14th verse of Mark chapter 16 and get the full picture. Here we see that Jesus is speaking to all of the apostles minus Judas. He personally commissions them to go into all the world and preach the gospel. The people who believed and were baptized would be saved. Then he said, "And these signs shall follow them that believe..." And they did. Just read the book of Acts. First, they followed the apostles who preached. It goes on to say here, "And they [the apostles, verse 14] went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following" (Mark 16:20). Second, the signs followed those who believed the immediate preaching of the apostles because they laid their hands on them and imparted the spiritual gifts (Acts 8:17-19; 19:6; Hebrews 2:3,4). What is so hard about that? This is taking this Scripture at "face value." We are not even included in the scope of what is said here in this matter.

Another thought. Notice it said these signs would "follow them that believe." If God wanted the signs to be there, they would be there. It would be up to God, not us. The signs would "automatically" follow. But that is not what we see today. People are following after supposed signs, artificially trying to produce and reenact them. Even handling snakes. Something is strangely amiss.

These are our comments. We trust they have been worth reading. \Box

"Neither Give Place To The Devil" (Ephesians 4:26, 27)



(Continued from Page 1)

pent. Thereafter the serpent is used to symbolize the Devil.

Devil. This is the basic term used in referring to the evil one. The Greek word for Devil is diabolos. Breaking the word

diabolos down, we see that it is a combination of two words dia + bolos, dia meaning through and bolos, coming from ballo, meaning to throw. Therefore, it is easy to see that the name "Devil" means an accuser or slanderer, one who verbally assaults you, throwing accusations and insults at you (even through you).

It is interesting to notice that the apostle Paul in giving the qualifications of the wives of elders and deacons said, "Even so must their wives be grave, not *slanderers*, sober, faithful in all things" (I Timothy 3:11). "Slanderers" is a literal translation of the

feminine word for Devil in the Greek. Their wives are not to be devils.

Satan. This word, having reference to the Devil, is of Hebrew origin and means an adversary or enemy. Satan is our avowed adversary. He is our arch enemy, and is in a constant state of hostility toward us and against us. A person is anything but wise who would be on friendly terms with such a being.

Other Terms for the Devil

Apollyon. The purpose of this article is not to deal with the symbolism of Revelation, but obviously Apollyon is an appropriate appellation for "the angel of the bottomless pit" (the Devil himself) (Revelation 9:11). Apollyon simply means destroyer. The name of the preacher Apollos meant the same thing. The purpose of the Devil is to disrupt and destroy God's righteous order of things. And especially does he level his unending assault against man. He cannot be saved, so he wants man to suffer the same fate that awaits him.

Beelzebub. The Pharisees, trying to counter the influence of Jesus, said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils [demons], but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils [demons]" (Matthew 12:24). This seems to be an adaptation of the name of the god of the Philistines, Baalzebub (II Kings 1:2). Evidently the Jews changed it to Beelzebub and applied it to the Devil. Some think the name means god of flies; others, god of dung or manure. Regardless of its exact meaning, it is used as a word of contempt for the prince of darkness.

The Devil is A Spirit

When we talk about the Devil, we are not talking about a flesh and blood being. Paul admonished the Ephesian Christians, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [wicked spirits] in high places..." (Ephesians 6:11,12). In this same epistle to the Ephesians Paul likewise called the Devil "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (2:2). And, as such, he is called "the god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4). Yes, he is that supernatural wicked spirit that works havoc in this world.

II. HE WANTS A PLACE IN YOUR LIFE

The warning, "Neither give place to the devil," clearly shows that the Devil wants a place (and he will seize it if given the chance). We have already-told you why. So that he can disrupt God's righteous

"Neither Give Place To The Devil"

(Continued from Previous Page)

order of things. So that he can work havoc and destruction. So that you will be lost. If you give him the least opening, he will come in. Then he will take over the driver's seat in what you do. A trail of destruction will be left behind.

The Devil Given a Place

Man's first experience with the Devil shows that he wants a place in our lives. Read about it in Genesis 3:1-19. Here Adam and Eve listened to the Devil and gave him a place in their thoughts. We know the sad story. And in the wake of giving the Devil a place, sin, destruction and death have followed. The floodgate was opened wide. By the time of Noah things were so wicked the world had to be destroyed because of sin. The history of mankind is one of giving a place to the Devil.

A Vacuum Gives Him a Place

The first place belongs to God in our lives (Matthew 6:33). When God is left out, there is a vacuum. This vacuum creates a place for the Devil. He rushes in to fill this vacuum. Paul mentioned this vacuum in Ephesians 4:17-19 when he warned "that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity [emptiness or vacuum] of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." The vacuum is filled with all kinds of ungodliness. Paul relates the same thing happening in Romans 1:20-32. "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient [proper, seemly]; Being filled with all unrighteousness..." (Romans 1:28). Read the verses before and the rest of this chapter to see how the Devil came into their empty lives void of God. If we leave God out, the Devil will come in. We will become depraved in our nature. We have made a place for the Devil.

Places in Particular

Besides temptation and succumbing to sin in general, there are more detailed matters that we should be aware of lest we "give place to the devil." In other words, by doing certain things, or being in certain circumstances, we set ourselves up for other things. We give the Devil an opening that he can (and will) exploit later on for his evil purposes.

Anger Uncontrolled

An example of this is found in the Scripture used as a title for this article. The full context reads, "Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil" (Ephesians 4:26,27). If anger is not brought under control, you are giving place to the Devil. You may do things more rash than being angry.

Bitter Envying and Strife

James 3:14-16 shows us that certain attitudes make us open to all kinds of other sins and problems. It reads, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." (And how beautiful in contrast with this is "the wisdom which is from above" that is next dealt with. "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure. then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" James 3:17,18). The church at Corinth (I Corinthians) was a living example of "where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." Let us not give room to the Devil.

Partiality, Envy and Jealousy

The Bible in more places than one teaches that we are not to show partiality. Paul instructed Timothy, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality" (I Timothy 5:21). James deals with partiality in James 2:1-4. Then in 2:8 and 9 he sums it up by saying, "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors."

(Continued on Page 14)

Answers to: BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Numbers 14:33,34; 2. Numbers 32:23 (Numbers 32:1-33); 3 Deuteronomy 11:29,30 (Notice 27:14-26 and chapter 28); 4. Deuteronomy 27:12,13; 5. I Chronicles 2:13-16; 6. I Chronicles 11:4-6; 7. I Kings 22:48; 8. Isaiah 28:28; 9. Isaiah 20; 10. Jeremiah 39:1,2; 11. II Chronicles 36:20,21; Leviticus 25:4,5; 26:33,34 12. II Kings 25:13; 13. Luke 5:16-32; 14. John 8:6-8; 15. John 11:47-51; 16. Acts 1:3; 17. Acts 13:1-3; 18. I Corinthians 1:1; 19. II Corinthians; Philippians; Colossians; I and II Thessalonians (also Silvanus, or Silas, is named here); 20. Revelation 10:4.

Let Us Be Like God

DON'T be afraid to love everyone freely. Don't show partiality, acting as if there wasn't enough love to go around. Real and unselfish love is of such a nature that the more we love the greater our capacity to love becomes. Consider God's love. Although He loves everyone the same, it is as if He loved only you. God is no respecter of persons. Let us be like God.—J.E.G.



THE MAN who uses flattery would use you.

Sour grapes are not the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

People inordinately preoccupied with making a "buck" usually pass the "buck" when it comes to their responsibility in spiritual matters.

You can't be levelheaded with your nose in the air.

When churches start losing interest in the Word of God, they start putting the emphasis upon people and human personalities rather than God's Word.

People who live it up have a hard time living it down.

If you are not on speaking terms with fellow Christians and your fellowman, you can likewise be sure that you are not on speaking terms with God.

Stumbling blocks do not make good stepping stones.

There is something worse than religious division, and that is religious apostasy; beware of any religious union or "unity" based on compromising the Word of God.

We can throw the baby out with the bath water when we are more concerned about the dirt than we are the baby.

Some people when they become religious exchange one pride for another, a worldly pride for a self-righteous, religious pride (but it is still fleshly and worldly).

Genuine "Christian unity" comes as a by-product of being united with Christ and does not have to be sought artificially.

People who worship the god of materialism, Mammon, become high-minded whereas people who worship the most high God of heaven become humble and lowly.

What some preachers lack in ability, charisma, diligence and hard work, they try to make up for in gimmicks, contests, and entertainment.

When we are genuinely attracted to the "pearl of great price" (Matthew 13:45,46), and fully recognize its great value, our attraction to such in the world is relinquished (I Timothy 2:9,10).

If you aren't getting anything out of the worship, maybe you should ask yourself if you are putting anything into it.

Speaking from a non-political viewpoint and perspective, there is something grossly immoral about the government (politicians) running up a staggering and an astronomical national debt to artificially produce a higher standard of living now which will have to be paid for later by unborn generations (if it is ever paid at all), who themselves will have to experience a lower standard of living in the process.

Some preachers who seem to be so deep, in reality, just don't know how to express themselves.

Creation implies purpose, purpose implies responsibility, and responsibility implies accountability (so that's why some people rather believe in evolution?).

Let there be no pretense in you; be what you are, and may what you are be good.

Lost, Frightened, and Lonely (But We Are Not Alone)

ONE EVENING in a large department store a little boy about three years old had become separated from his father. I first noticed him as he was weaving around those isles stacked high with merchandise. There was panic in his voice as he kept calling, "Dad!" He was trying bravely not to cry, but with each call for Dad it was becoming more difficult.

I approached him as he was about to break into a run. I took his little hand in mine and said, "Wait a minute. I will help you find your dad. We will go to the desk and ask the lady to call him. Then he will come and find you."

This reassured him and calmed him. It worked out as I had told him it would. The voice over the amplifier could be heard over the entire store: "Will the father of a little boy named Paul please come to the information desk and claim him?" Father and son were reunited.

Afterwards I thought, "How like us, and life, and God!" We are frightened, dismayed, discouraged, we panic. We call for help through our Intercessor and God finds us! All is well. We are not alone.

There are many lost, frightened and lonely people in the world today. There are others who could and should tell them of the help that is always available. We are not alone.—*Eleanor Shermer*

"Neither Give Place To The Devil"

(Continued from Page 12)

Showing partiality not only is a sin, in doing this we are leaving the door open to the Devil and other sins. We see this in the story of Joseph and his coat of many colors. "Now Israel [Jacob] loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him" (Genesis 37:3,4). We know the rest of the story. It was one of envy and jealousy, and how they sold their brother into slavery. One sin begets another.

How foolish it is today, whether in the context of the home or the church, that partiality is shown. We are just setting ourselves up for the Devil. We have all heard of the "teacher's pet" (and maybe seen it). Adults should exercise more wisdom than they many times do. Hard feelings and lingering problems abound when they don't.

Love of Money

The apostle Paul wrote, "And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be [will to be] rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men into destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all [kinds of] evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Timothy 6:8-10). Using our imagination, we can think of all kinds of sins and problems coming as a result of an inordinate love of money. Let us "neither give place to the devil" in this matter either.

An Idle Mind

It has been said that an idle mind is the Devil's workshop. When we have an idle mind and idle hands, we "give place to the devil." Paul spoke of some, saying, "And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not" (I Timothy 5:13). Read II Thessalonians 3:6-12.

Other Ways

There are so many ways that we can give the Devil a place.

By being given to strong drink (even "moderately") we "give place to the devil" (how he can come in and work untold havoc when a person is under the influence of alcohol!).

A person by being preoccupied with style, keeping up with the Jones, and being "cool" is a sitting duck for the Devil.

If you set yourself in front of a television set, you set yourself up for the Devil.

By dating non-Christians and having ungodly friends you are making room for the Devil.

By forsaking the assembly you are giving "place to the devil."

Problems in your life and in the church not dealt with become the source of bigger problems.

Other things could be listed, but all of them are time bombs waiting to go off.

Let us not "give place to the Devil."

III. DON'T GIVE HIM A PLACE

As we continue what we have been hammering away at in this article, again we strongly admonish you, DON'T GIVE PLACE TO THE DEVIL! If you leave the door ajar, he will come in (invited or not). Then you will be sorry. He will mess up your life. He will break up your marriage. He will create ill will, divide the church, and lead it into apostasy. Behind him will be a trail of destruction, heartache, and tears. Let us be mindful of his tactics.

Lies and Deceit

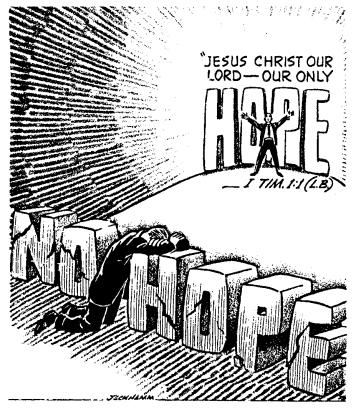
The Devil gets into our lives and accomplishes his purposes through lying and deceit. This happened in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3). It is still happening today. He doesn't say, "I'm the old devil; come follow me, and let's go to hell." Jesus said that the Devil was the father of the lie (John 8:44). That is the way he works. The only reason the Devil will tell you the truth is to get you to believe a lie. So, be on your toes. Don't give him a place.

Revelation 12:9 presents the Devil as the one who "deceiveth the whole world." Yes, sin initially entered the world through deception, and those living in sin now are pictured as being deceived. The apostle Paul graphically depicts the situation by saying, "For we ourselves also were sometimes [at one time] foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another" (Titus 3:3). That was before Christ came into our lives.

But even now the warning must ever be before us, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). Then I Corinthians 6:9 and 10 reads, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate [homo-sexuals], nor abusers of themselves with mankind [sodomites], Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Paul deals with similar sins in Ephesians 5:3-6, then says, "Let no man de

Spiritual Food for Thought

By Andrew Gibbons



EVERYDAY

Everyday the sun comes up,
Renewing strength and life and light
To give each man another chance,
To live and learn,
To work and fight,
To make amends for past mistakes
On looms of hope fresh threads to spin,
The uncompleted task to finish,
And a new one to begin

"Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your Faithfulness. The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, Therefore I hope in Him'."—Lamentations 3:22-24

As I read the poem "Everyday" my mind recalled the above Scripture in Lamentations. Though the captivity of Judah was underway and God's judgment was coming to pass, the prophet Jeremiah was still able to write words of hope!

Do you have such hope even when the bottom falls out?
Do you understand the true mercies of the Lord enough to lean on them?

Can you comprehend God's compassions?

Do you see it anew every morning?

Are you faithful like the Lord?

Is the Lord truly your portion?

Do you have hope?

Let us take action to be renewed with hope as we consider the words of king David.

"I would have lost heart, unless I had believed, that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord!" (Psalms 27:13,14).

Isn't it time to seek the Lord before it is too late?

"Neither Give Place To The Devil"

(Continued from Previous Page)

ceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

Whether it be about sin of any stripe or one of another kind, falling into false teaching, this warning is repeatedly found in the New Testament, "Be not deceived." The lie and deception are the Devil's primary tactics. Don't be naive!

No Vacancy

Then if you really want to keep the Devil from having a place, that place must be filled with God. In Matthew 12:43-45, Jesus said, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first..." Using this as an illustration, it is obvious that our lives must be filled with the Holy Spirit; then the Devil can't come in. It is hard to put anything else into a container that is already full. This is the best way to not give place to the Devil.

And as you are filled with the Holy Spirit your mind will be filled with good things. With your mind filled with good things, including truth, it will not be open to the lies and deception of the Devil. Paul admonished the Philippians, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8). What Paul said is true, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6).

Resist the Devil

So, we solemnly urge you. Not only recognize the Devil's tactics of deceit, and not only hang out the "no vacancy" sign, but actively engage and resist the Devil. Take heed to the admonition of James, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you..." (James 4:7,8). Don't give place to the Devil. Be a victor, not a victim.

That is our message.

THE BEST WAY to kill time is to work it to death.

Sword AND Staff

Treasure

MANY who love the Word of God have discovered Treasure much to their liking when they obtained the bound volumes of *The Sword and Staff*. If you like this current issue, you will likewise be thrilled with the back copies in book form. Notice those still available (while



they are still available), and place your order now for good reading. Make them part of your library and part of your life. You will be glad that you did.

Φ-----

WHEN SENDING A CHANGE OF ADDRESS, ALWAYS SEND YOUR OLD ADDRESS TOO. THANK YOU!

Take a Stand—Be God's Man!

If you really want to preach and be God's man
Then God requires of you to take a stand
For truth, for Christ, his church and right, and their
defense;

Also the wrong you are to be against.

You are to preach and teach the fullness of God's plan, Not tone it down so as to make it bland;

And in the preaching of the cross take no offense; There's nothing like a preacher on the fence.

The world could not withstand the truth of God's command

If all would take their stand and be God's man; But compromise, pretense? There is a consequence! There's nothing like a preacher on the fence!

-By James E. Gibbons

(CLIP AND MAIL\OR WRITE)
Gentlemen:
Enclosed find my contribution. Please put me on the
mailing list of The Sword and Staff. 🗆 New 🗅 Renew
Name:
Address (with zip):
[
(Check for bound volumes of The Sword and Staff)
☐ 1985-86 bound volume of The Sword and Staff—\$6.95
☐ 1987-88 bound volume of The Sword and Staff—\$7.25
☐ 1989-90 bound volume of The Sword and Staff—\$7.25
☐ 1991-92 bound volume of The Sword and Staff—\$7.25
☐ 1993-94 bound volume of The Sword and Staff—\$7.50
Dems of The Soul and Proverbs (by James E. Gib-
hand 65.00. 5 on more copies \$4.00 each

Do You Have Your Copy Yet?

Poems of the Soul and Proverbs

By James E. Gibbons

THIS different approach in expressing truth makes for interest and appeal. Many people have ordered and keep ordering this little book of poems and proverbs by the editor. Here are some ways it is being used.

● For personal reading ● For personal gifts to family and friends ● To give to whole churches ● To use in preparing church bulletins ● To give to senior citizens groups ● To give to the sick, the shut in and people in hospitals

It is suggested that you send \$5.00 for a single book, and if you order five or more, \$4.00 per book to help with the printing and mailing cost. Thank you!

Order Today

Prayer in Reference to Trials

I PRAY that when trials come that I will not be tried and found wanting, and that I may realize that God has let the trials come, or even "sent" them in a sense, knowing that He will be glorified in my suffering. If He has chosen me for this purpose, I feel honored, and I pray that I will live up to this honor; that I will not let Him down.—J.E.G.

□

Ω.

UNLESS there is within us that which is above us we will soon yield to that which is about us and do that which is beneath us.

• HELP US REACH OUT TO MORE PEOPLE AND CHURCHES WITH THIS PUBLICATION. Thanks!

Telephone: (910) 789-1044

THE SWORD AND STAFI
Post Office Box 147
Mt. Airy, N.C. 27030
U.S.A.

Von-Profit Organ
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 25