# Sword AND Staff

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

PART 2:

# An Examination and An Overview of Ephesians 4:11

"AND HE HIMSELF GAVE

- some apostles,
- and some prophets
- and some evangelists
  - ullet and some pastors and

teachers

FOR

THE EQUIPPING OF THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF MINISTRY, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ... speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

---Ephesians 4:11-13, 15, 16, NKJV

E SUGGEST that you read the introduction to "PART 1" of this article in the last issue of this paper. It would be good even to review the whole article as we move from the first part to the last of Ephesians 4:11. Besides the apostles being the official eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ, the apostles and prophets in their "office" and work have to do with the supernatural and extraordinary, whereas this is not necessarily the case with evangelists and pastors that we are now about to study (although apostles and prophets were and did serve as evangelists and pastors).

By JAMES E. GIBBONS—1535 Fairfield Drive MOUNT AIRY, NC 27030 USA

Even though we have no apostles and prophets in the church on earth today in the more limited sense, as seen in Paul and the Twelve, the impact of their work continues. They are incorporated into the very foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20), and their inspired teachings (Ephesians 3:5) continue to equip the saints for the work of ministry (whether thinking in terms of the evangelists and pastors in their work, or of all the saints in their ministry). We are told in II Timothy 3:16 and 17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in right-eousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."



**Now Evangelists and Pastors** 

Yes, the Lord used the Spirit-guided apostles to bring the church into being (Matthew 16:18,19; Mark 9:1; John 14:26; Acts chapter 2), and then to guide it in its infancy (John 16:13; Acts 2:14, 37, 42; 4:35, 37; 6:2-6; 8:14; 15:2, 4, 6, 22-24; etc.). As the fountainhead of Christ's teachings (Hebrews 2:3,4; Acts 15:2,23,24; I Corinthians 14:37), their authority and influence were felt wherever local churches

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—THANK YOU—

# Proverbially SPEAKING...

**RIGHTEOUSNESS** is doing that which is right.

If you have not personally accepted Christ into your life, he cannot be your personal Savior.

To have good neighbors be a good neighbor.

So live your life that when you die it will be just like saying "amen" at the end of a prayer.

If you cannot forgive, you cannot be forgiven (Mark 11:25,26).

Treat others as you would be treated then you will be treated as you would be treated.

Walk in the steps of Christ, and you will eventually be where he is, in heaven.

BEING CONSIDERATE, COURTE-OUS, AND POLITE are good manners and are by-products of the golden rule (Mt. 7:12).

If you quit when you are ahead, you will soon be behind.

Even as God makes the "sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Mt. 5:45), the storms of life come upon all.



#### THIS AND THAT AND THE OTHER

HE PRINTING of *The Sword and Staff* is not a commercial endeavor. It is published by the editor as an unselfish labor of love for God and truth in association with the church. Financially, all that we are concerned about is paying our bills and keeping on keeping on in what we are doing. To keep cost as low as possible, we have our own printing press, and do all the work from A to Z in getting the paper out. This last issue saw us printing 20,000 (plus) copies of the English edition. As a matter of interest, the cost of mailing that issue alone came to \$3,122.67. This included individual copies, bundles, and foreign mailing of English copies. The mailing list of *La Espada y El Cayado*, the Spanish edition, is over 2000. So, this is not a small project. Be it known that those who help financially, and otherwise, are greatly appreciated.

As we have pointed out, the new address for our web site is http://jgibbons.8m.com

This is very simple and easy to remember, so change your records to access this page accordingly. Here is to be found samplings of *The Sword and Staff*, studies and material that some are finding suitable for their church bulletins. This can be printed out. And in responding to the web page, and other e-mail correspondence, please have your correct e-mail address. We have had the experience of not being able to reply to some correspondence because the return e-mail address was not entered correctly.

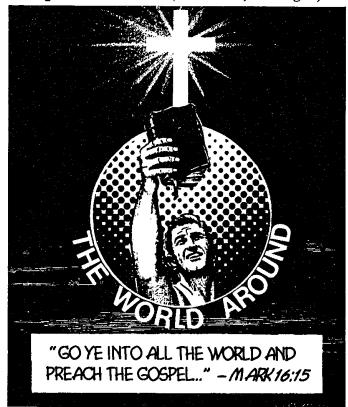
We have been pleasantly surprised in learning of more and more links that have been made to our web site. It would be interesting to compile a list of those who have made a link. It is not necessary for you to tell us if you have made such a link, but it would be nice to know a little more of the extent of our outreach. So, if you would drop a line telling us, it would be much appreciated (as well as encouraging).

#### **BOUND VOLUMES WITH ARTICLES ON PROPHECY**

SEVERAL HAVE WRITTEN wanting the back issues of this paper containing the series involving prophecy by David Vaughn Elliott (because they were starting to get the paper or because they had misplaced their copies). Sometimes single copies may be available and sometimes not. However, back issues can be gotten in the form of bound volumes. Order the bound volumes listed below and they will contain these articles (and the last two years, 1999-2000, will be in bound volume form the end of this year).

- □ 1995-96 bound volume of The Sword and Staff—\$7.75
- □ 1997-98 bound volume of The Sword and Staff—\$7.75

# An Examination and An Overview of Ephesians 4:11 (Continued from Page 1)



were started. But as far as the governmental function of the church was concerned, the organization of the church constituted local, independent entities. This will be more evident as we study evangelists and pastors, with the elders (pastors) being the overseers of the local church. From this perspective it would be more appropriate to study pastors first, but that is not the thrust of Ephesians 4:11. It has to do with equipping the saints for ministry, and this involves conveying the Word of God to them. This started with the men of inspiration, apostles and prophets, and then it was and is further brought about by evangelists in the spread of the gospel and pastors on the local scene.

# "AND HE GAVE...SOME, EVANGELISTS" The Gift of Evangelist

The word "evangelist" is found three times in the New Testament (Acts 21:8; Ephesians 4:11; II Timothy 4:5). This is enough to make us sit up and take notice for in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is to be established. The term simply means messenger of the good news, i.e., the gospel. In the book of Acts Philip is dubbed with this designation (Acts 21:8). Ephesians 4:11 plainly states that Christ gave this position or work as a gift to the church in carrying out its endeavor. While every Christian in a very real sense is to be a messenger of the gospel (Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 8:4; Ephesians 4:12,16; 6:15; Philippians 2:15,16), "evangelist" spe-

cifically constituted an "office" or work in the early church. Obviously, the "grace" that had been given "according to the measure of the gift of Christ" (Ephesians 4:7) made some more adapt at this work than others. Then the apostle Paul in view of the imminency of his martyrdom, and the coming apostasy in the church, charged Timothy to faithfully do the work that he had been set aside to do, that of an evangelist, and thus fulfill his ministry (II Timothy 4:5). The Great Commission was to be carried out to the "end of the world," and there is no indication the work of an evangelist has been removed from the church. Rather, it is imperative.

#### A Look at Timothy

A look at Timothy should help us in determining if indeed the word "evangelist" refers to a specific work in the church or whether the term is used generically. When in the region of Derbe and Lystra Paul saw the consecration and recognized the potential that was in this young disciple named Timothy (Acts 16:1-3). He recruited him "to go forth with him." Evidently the local elders were involved in a formal way with him being sent forth to work with Paul (I Timothy 4:11-16). Thus Paul says in I Timothy 1:18, "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare." Timothy was a fellow-worker with Paul (Philippians 2:19, 22), and I and II Timothy refer to this work in a specific sense. More than once he is charged to do his work in a formal capacity. In such a context he is addressed as a "man of God" (I Timothy 6:11). Although every man who is a Christian generically speaking can be called a "man of God," when Paul in II Timothy 3:16 and 17 talks about the Spirit-inspired Scriptures making "the man of God...throughly furnished unto all good works," he is talking about Timothy as a preacher of the gospel. The expression "man of God" is used like in the Old Testament when the prophet and others were uniquely called a "man of God" (Deuteronomy 33:1; I Samuel 2:27; 9:6; I Kings 13:1; 17:18; 20:28; II Kings 4:7; etc.). Then the next few verses continue in II Timothy 4 with a charge for Timothy to "preach the Word." He was to do the work of an evangelist and thus fulfill his ministry (II Timothy 4:5). This was all in the capacity of him uniquely being a "man of God." This refers to a specific person in his "office" and work. (Also, notice II Timothy 2:24ff).

#### Was Paul An Evangelist?

Timothy, as we have just noticed, was admonished by Paul to do the work of an evangelist and by doing this he would fulfill his ministry. It is interesting to note that time and time again Paul and Timothy are recognized as being engaged in

# An Examination and An Overview of Ephesians 4:11

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work of the same kind. In Romans 16:21 Paul calls Timothy his "workfellow" (co-worker, fellow-worker). Paul wrote in I Corinthians 16:10 that Timothy "worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do." Of Timothy Paul wrote the Thessalonians that he had sent Timothy, "our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith." Paul likewise said to the Corinthians that the gospel "was preached among you by us, even by me, and Silvanus [Silas] and Timotheus [Timothy]..." (II Corinthians 1:19).

Other references could be given. But in the light of all of these statements, are we to conclude that Paul, aside from the supernatural and extraordinary aspect of being an apostle, was simply an evangelist? Being Timothy's senior and an apostle set him apart from Timothy and others like him. especially as an authoritative leader who spoke by divine revelation. But he was nonetheless an evangelist. He and Barnabas, by the direction of God, had initially been sent out by the local church at Antioch (Acts 13ff), to which they returned and reported their labors. Philip is not reported as having the privilege of working side by side with an apostle in his preaching like Timothy. Evangelists today do not have that personal contact either, but they do have the writings of Paul that authoritatively serve in much the same way.

# The Work of An Evangelist Philip the Evangelist

What is the work of an evangelist? Philip as an evangelist preached the gospel to cities (Acts 8:5) and to individuals (Acts 8:27-40). Having baptized the Ethiopian nobleman on the way to Gaza, he came to Casarea (Acts 8:40). Years later Paul visited him there (Acts 21:8-10). Evidently he made Casarea his home and worked in and out of here in doing the work of an evangelist.

#### Paul and His Co-workers

In Paul and his co-workers, which included Timothy and Titus, we can see the work of an evangelist. They were involved in carrying out the Great Commission, winning souls to Christ, establishing and setting churches in order; correcting problems in infant churches. Read the book of Acts. Read Paul's epistles. What they did paralleled, in some respects, with what men do today who are called "missionaries." They were the long arm of the church reaching out into the world to save the lost.

#### I and II Timothy, and Titus

The epistles of I and II Timothy, along with Titus, are very much like a preacher's manual. Here different aspects of the work of an evangelist are seen

(especially in reference to his relationship to the local church in its immature stage). As Paul's coworker, Timothy was to admonish "some that they teach no other doctrine" in Ephesus (I Timothy 1:3). Instructions are given about the public life of the church (I Timothy 3:15). Obviously Timothy was going to be involved in the "ordination" of elders (I Timothy 5:17-22; qualifications, 3:1-7). In the midst of all of this, Paul charged Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:16). He was to deal with erring Christians (II Timothy 2:25,26). In view of coming apostasy, he was to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine..." (II Timothy 4:1-5).

The tenor of Titus is much the same as I and II Timothy. He was to "set in order the things that are [were] wanting, and ordain elders in every city" (Titus 1:5). False teachers were to be confronted and dealt with (Titus 1:9-11; 3:9-11). He was to speak "the things which become [are becoming to] sound doctrine" to people in all stations of life (Titus 1:1-10). Of all that Paul wrote, he enjoined Titus, "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Titus 2:15).

#### **Evangelism Needed Today!**

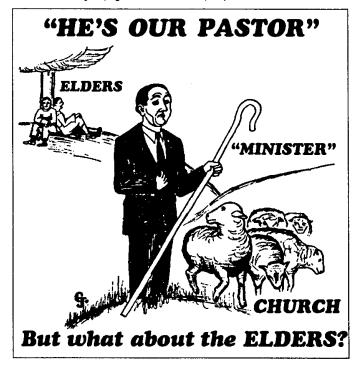
A world is lost in sin. As never before, considering the exploding world population and the enormity of the situation, we need New Testament evangelists to lead out in world evangelism today. But they cannot by themselves do that which all Christians are supposed to be doing as they have their "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15; Acts 8:4). It is by the entire church that the "manifold wisdom of God" (Ephesians 3:10) is to be made known. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17).

# "AND HE GAVE...SOME, PASTORS AND TEACHERS"

#### **Now Pastors of the Local Churches**

In this study we have moved from the initial dynamic and thrust of the men of inspiration (apostles and prophets) to the evangelists who spearhead the spread of the gospel into all of the world. They couldn't keep quiet. Now the last thing that we read in Ephesians 4:11 is that "he gave...some, pastors and teachers." Here "pastors and teachers" refer back to the single "some," describing two facets of the same work. After souls were won, and local churches started, eventually qualified leaders were set over them by the evangelist or evangelists. Now

"pastors" (also called other names, like "elders" and "bishops," which we shall notice) were to lead, teach and oversee the local community of believers. The second part of the Great Commission, as well as the first, must be carried out. But this doesn't nullify the priesthood of believers (I Peter 2:5,9; Revelation 1:6), as all are to be actively involved in "the work of the ministry" (Ephesians 4:12,16).



#### **Elders Ordained in Every Church**

In the book of Acts, that great "book of conversions," we read of the return visits of the preachers Paul and Barnabas to the new churches in Asia Minor. We read that they were "Confirming [strengthening the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith...And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed" (Acts 14:21-23). In another setting, Titus was to set things in order in churches on the isle of Crete and "ordain elders in every city" (Titus 1:5). Paul and Timothy, with the help of some others, had started the church at Philippi. Years later they could write and address the church as follows: "Paul and Timotheus [Timothy], the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Philippians 1:1). Evidently the church had long ago reached that stage of maturity and had been placed into the hands of qualified local leadership. "Bishops," as named here, refers to the same "office" as pastor or elder (which we shall see). ("Deacons" is a different "office" and will be the subject of another study.) Although these accounts tell us the preachers had been involved in setting these men aside to their work, Acts 20:28 says that the Holy Spirit had made them "overseers" of the church. One way this would be done was by them meeting the "must" qualifications as laid down by the Holy Spirit in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

#### Pastors = Elders = Bishops (Overseers)

As we have already said, the terms "pastor," "elder," and "bishop" are all talking about the same person. Denominational usage of these terms today has muddled their original significance and application, creating unscriptural organizations, "offices" and a lot of confusion. Confusion, that is, if you really want to follow the Bible. Let us look at the Scriptures which show that all of these terms refer to the same "office." And in studying the distinctive meanings of each term we will more exactly understand the nature of the work of this "office" (the way the Lord intended it to be).

#### **Elders Are the Pastors**

Ephesians 4:11 states, "And he gave...some, pastors and teachers." The Greek word for pastor is poimen, which simply means shepherd (which is a term derived from a word meaning flock). The apostle Peter wrote in I Peter 5:1-4, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the suffering of Christ... Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof...Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples [examples] to the flock. And when the chief **Shepherd** shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." The elders are told to "feed the flock of God" and to be examples "to the flock." Then he talks about the "chief Shepherd" (Christ) appearing and recognizing them, the elders being subordinate shepherds. The word for shepherd here is *poimen* (with the prefix for "chief" in front of it), the same word that is translated "pastor" in Ephesians 4:11. And the words "feed" and "flock" here come from the same root, indicating taking care of sheep. The identical words are found in Acts 20:28 where Paul instructs the Ephesians elders (Acts 20:17) to take heed to "all the flock" and to "feed the church of God." It is very plain. In the New Testament sense elders are the pastors of the church. "Elder" puts the emphasis on them being older men and pastor upon them taking care of the flock. (Also, it is of interest to note that Peter identifies himself as an elder, as well as being a "witness [an apostle]" of Christ, I Peter 5:1).

#### Elders Are "Bishops" (Overseers)

The word rendered "bishops" in the King James Version of the Bible is *episkopos*. The King James scholars retained many terms used in the Bishop's Bible and previous translations, and this was one of them. The Greek term simply means overseer, and

# An Examination and An Overview of Ephesians 4:11

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has reference to the elders of the local church. The Catholic apostasy made something else out of it, having a bishop over a plurality of churches. But the New Testament teaches a plurality of bishops (elders) over one local church. This is God's plan.

Let us verify our assertion that "elders" and "bishops" refer to the same person. In Titus 1:5 we have already noticed Titus' mission to ordain elders in every city. Then following in Titus 1:6-9 the "must" qualifications of elders are listed by the apostle Paul. In stating them, Paul asserts, "For a bishop must be blameless..." etc. (1:7). Thus, "bishop" and "elder" are used interchangeably referring to the same "office." From another perspective we have already examined Acts 20:28. But now let us quote the whole verse, as Paul is talking to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:17). "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock [all of the local church at Ephesus], over which the Holy Ghost [Spirit] hath made you overseers [episkopous, plural], to feed the church of God. which he hath purchased with his own blood." The word elsewhere translated "bishops" (KJV) is here represented with the word "overseers." And it has reference to the elders of the local church. Elders are the overseers ("bishops") who, in close association with the people, govern the local church. (They are not Diotrepheses, III John 9, and do not "lord" it over their brethren, I Peter 5:3). They lead.

#### Additional Thought: Local, Independent, and Autonomous

All of this points to the conclusion that the church corporately speaking is local, independent, and autonomous as far as its function is concerned. The extent of the elders being overseers was in connection with the ongoing of the local community of believers and perhaps their outreach as evangelists were sent out. Yes, evangelists were sent out. They won souls to Christ and started other churches. And in their infancy these new churches maintained a close relationship with these evangelists (especially as spiritual advisors). But once local leadership was set apart, the local church was to be mature enough to stand on its own feet. They were to be local, independent, and autonomous bodies responsible for their own actions and carrying on the work of the Lord. There were no denominational "bishops" over a plurality of local churches nor organizations binding local churches together into dioceses, districts, or groups.

#### **Leaders Who Teach and Train**

As previously pointed out, in Ephesians 4:11 "pastors and teachers" refer back to the single "some," stressing two facets of the same work. That being the

case, elders likewise must be "apt to teach" (I Timothy 3:2). They are the God-appointed leaders in teaching and training everyone in the established church. And at the same time, since they are the pastors and overseers, all others who teach are responsible to them in faithfully fulfilling their task.

#### The Concluding Thrust of Ephesians 4:11

The crescendo of thought as presented by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:11, and as we have studied, leads to the climax in the verses that follow (4:12-16). (Notice the graphic display of these verses on the front page of this paper). Why did Christ give these special gifts to the church? He did give them. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers..." Why did he give them? The next verse gives the answer as it continues with the preposition "for." It was "for" the equipping of the saints for the "work of the ministry." As the body of Christ, the church is to grow. Everyone who is part of the body is to be involved in this as Paul concludes by saying, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (4:14,15). Amen!

Have we realized the scope and depth of what is found in Ephesians 4:11-16? Let us understand it, accept it, appreciate it, and let the impact of what is taught here move us to put it into practice. It is the Word of God.

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A Series Involving the Bible and Prophecy...

### "THE MAN OF SIN"

### Part III: The Reality

 By DAVID VAUGHN ELLIOTT 36 Oakland Ave, Apt 8 Methuen, MA 01844-3783

OME, THROUGHOUT HISTORY, has been identified by believers as the seat of "the man of sin." Were the early Christians right about Rome? Were the Bible believers of the Reformation right about Rome? Do the doctrines of the Roman Church fulfill the details of 2 Thessalonians 2?

In Part I of this series, the prophecy was examined by just looking into the Biblical text itself. In Part II, the views of Bible believers across the centuries were examined. The probe highlighted the fact that from the Reformation until this century, the prevailing view was that the prophecy was (and is) fulfilled in the "pope" of Rome.

The task now before us is to examine the beliefs and practices of the Roman church and papacy. Do the beliefs and practices of Rome fulfill the details of the "falling away" and "the man of sin" prophecy? Or, do we look for another? In this examination, we do not have to resort to private information, secret accords and hidden agendas of Rome. Rather, the task is to examine the open, public, admitted claims of Rome that can be verified by anyone in many available official Catholic sources.



"He Sits as God"

Central to the whole teaching on "the man of sin" is the fact that "he sits as God." The Holy Spirit said, "who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." To claim the attributes of God are blasphemy (see Mark 2:5,7). Revelation 17:3 says the beast is "full of names of blasphemy." Is the "pope" full of names of blasphemy? Is it true that he "sits as God...showing himself that he is God"? Consider these samples.

- 1 "Pope" means "father." Jesus plainly said, "Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven" (Matthew 23:9). Yet the "pope" of Rome accepts the term "Holy Father." In fact, the very term "pope" means father. The Modern English word "pope" comes from the Old English "papa," which in turn comes from the Late Latin. In the Greek, it's "pappas." This explains the words "papacy" and "papal." Moreover, since the local priests also use the term "father," the one in Rome becomes the father of fathers. Double blasphemy! "Our Father, which art in..." My Father is neither in the local diocese nor in Rome. Mine is in heaven. How about yours?
- 2 "The head of the church": The Roman "pope" claims to be the head of the church. It is often said that he is "the visible head of the church," with the obvious understanding that Christ is the invisible Head. But what does that do to the frequent figure in Scripture of the church being the

body of Christ? Ever see a body with two heads? "No man can serve two masters." A body with two heads is a monster.

What does Scripture say of God's work through Christ? "And He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all *things* to the church, which is His body" (Ephesians 1:20-23). There are not two heads. Jesus is "head over all things to the church." To claim to be head of the church is to make one's self equal to Christ. It is blasphemy.

- 3 "Pontiff": The term "pontiff" comes from ancient pagan Rome. Pontiffs were their chief priests. Since individual leaders in the Roman churches are called "priests," the one in Rome is called the "supreme pontiff." That is just another way of saying "high priest." But according the Gospel of Christ, to call any man "supreme priest" is blasphemy. Such a man claims what belongs only to Christ. Christians know that "we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God...without sin" (Hebrews 4:14,15). To claim to be the chief priest is to claim to be equal to Jesus Christ, the anointed Prophet, Priest and King. To sit as the supreme pontiff is to claim equality with the Son of God, who in turn is equal to God.
- 4 "Vicar of Christ": A common term for the "pope" is "vicar of Christ." "Vicar" comes from the Latin meaning "substitute." Rome claims that the Roman pontiff "is acting for and in the place of Christ." Christ is God. The prophecy says "showing himself that he is God." Since the "pope" claims to be "in the place of Christ," he is showing himself that he is God. Another blasphemy!
- 5 The "pope" claims "primacy." Rome talks much about the "primacy" of Peter, which it claims has been passed on to all the bishops of Rome. The words "primacy" and "primary" are not to be found in Scripture. However, the kindred word "preeminence" is recorded—just twice. First is Colossians 1:18, speaking of Christ: "He is the head of the body, the church...that in all things He may have the preeminence." Second is 3 John 9: "Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us."

Remember that Paul said, "the mystery of law-lessness is already at work"? Among other things, that mystery is the struggle of men to have first place in the church. Diotrephes only sought first place in the local church. Students of church history know that the struggle continued unabated until someone gained first place over all the world's churches. The bishop of Rome won that struggle. He claims "primacy" via Peter. In reality, his primacy is blasphemy against Christ, and fulfills the prophecy. Only Jesus has primacy in His church.

### "THE MAN OF SIN"

### Part III: The Reality

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- 6 The "pope" is a king. The Roman pontiff uses all the trappings of royalty. He lives in a palace. In fact, the Vatican Palace is the largest palace in the world. He has an ornate crown called the tiara. For solemn functions, he sits on a throne. His period of power is a "reign." The cardinals are called "princes of the church" who are subject only to the "pope." In short, though Catholics may not usually use the term, some do plainly say that the "pope" is a king. Blasphemy! Jesus is our only King.
- 7 This king has three crowns. The tiara can be traced back to 1100 A.D. By 1300 A.D., it contained, not one, but three jewel-bedecked crowns, one above another on this rounded cone headpiece. Authorities do not fully agree on the explanation of the three realms which the "pope" rules over, but it is obvious that he claims all kinds of kingship, spiritual and temporal. Though John Paul II does not physically wear the tiara, he has in no way renounced the tiara and what it represents. Quite the contrary, the tiara appears today on his papal seal and the Vatican flag. Thus, the "pope" still presents himself as a thrice-crowned monarch. Jesus on earth had only one crown. Remember what it was made of?
- 8 Above the law: So like God does the Roman Pontiff make himself that he places himself higher than the Son of God. When Jesus was upon earth He voluntarily submitted to taxation (Matthew 17:24-27) as well as to the Jewish council, the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate and the Roman soldiers. He had the power to resist, but He did not.

The "pope" of Rome, however, submits to no man! The "pope" is head of Vatican City, an independent nation also called the Papal State. Vatican City has its own coins, postage stamps and water supply. The Vatican receives ambassadors from about 170 nations (now including the United States—shame!). It is true that Vatican City is tiny compared to the land holdings of the "popes" of the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, it is big enough to furnish the "pope" with absolute independence from all human authority. The reason openly stated for the existence of Vatican City is that the "pope" "cannot rightly be made subject to any temporal power on earth." Did any man ever "sit as God in the temple of God" more than this?

The Apostle Paul wrote to the very church in question, the church in Rome, during the reign of the infamous emperor Nero. In that setting, Paul commanded the brethren in Rome, "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities" (Romans 13:1). The "pope" of Rome refuses to obey this command of God. He sets himself outside of and above all earthly authority. In so doing, he sets himself above the very Son of God, who did submit.

#### "The Falling Away"

"The man of sin" is only one person (at a time). But 2 Thessalonians 2 prophesies of the entire system over which "the man of sin" rules. It prophesies "lawlessness," "falling away" ("apostasy"), "unright-(Continued on Page 10)

## **BIBLE QUESTIONS**

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

- To what city or town did Lot flee when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah?
- 2. What was the name of the wife Abraham took after Sarah died?
- 3. In what chapters of which books of the Bible are all of the Ten Commandments found in their entirety?
- 4. What finally happened to the brazen serpent that Moses made for the children of Israel to look upon to be healed of their snakebite in the wilderness?
- 5. Which judge of Israel had thirty sons who rode upon thirty donkeys?
- 6. Why was a child given the name Ichadbod, and what does this name mean?
- 7. What prophet confronted King David and rebuked him for his sin of adultery with Bathsheba?
- When God reassured Elijah that he was not the only one left serving, how many people did God say had not bowed the knee to Baal?
- 9. What wicked queen in the Old Testament died a violent death and was eaten by dogs?
- 10. The daughters of what man in the Old Testament are noted as being beautiful?
- 11. Which gospel account tells that there were two demoniacs in the tombs who met Jesus, and two blind men at Jericho who received their sight, and not just one?
- 12. What were the only two miracles performed by Jesus that involved destruction of property?
- 13. On what three occasions did Jesus take Peter, James, and John with him and allowed them to witness phenomenal things?
- 14. What did Jesus tell his disciples to do when a city or town would not receive his teachings?
- 15. What did Jairus' daughter, who was raised from the dead, and the woman with an issue of blood have in common?
- 16. What New Testament writing, in addition to the gospel accounts, later tells about the transfiguration of Christ?
- 17. While on one of his preaching tours, where was the apostle Paul stoned and left for dead?
- 18. Where in the apostle Paul's writings does he use the literary form of satire in dealing with church problems?
- 19. How many times and where is the saying, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," found in the New Testament?
- 20. What was the occasion once that prompted the apostle Paul to rebuke the apostle Peter?

(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:

- "Please remove us from your mailing list..."
- "Thanks so much for THE SWORD AND STAFF."
- "This is the best magazine. Helps me every day to live closer to our dear Lord."
- "Please send me a complimentary copy of THE SWORD AND STAFF and information about subscribing..." (E-mail, web page response)
- "Tm looking forward to the next SWORD AND STAFF. Hope this will help to keep it coming to all who enjoy it as much as I. Thanks for your wonderful effort."

#### **GEORGIA:**

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#### SOUTH CAROLINA:

■ "Please accept this gift, and keep up the good work of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ..."

#### NORTH CAROLINA:

■ "Thanks for standing firm to the New Testament teaching of God's Word. Enclosed find check...to help pay postage or whatever needed."

#### TENNESSEE:

■ "Keep me on your mailing list and keep up the good (God's) work!"

#### KENTUCKY:

■ "Keep up the good work. I really enjoy THE SWORD AND STAFF. Please add the following names to your mailing list..."

#### VIRGINIA:

■ "We believe every word that you print and enjoy re-

ceiving it. Please keep up the good work."

- 'I do so appreciate THE SWORD AND STAFF. I've been receiving it since the late 60's and early 70's. I have all of the bound volumes from 1972. Thank you so much for these great Christian facts…"
- "I have just recently read your latest issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF. Having enjoyed reading this, I would like to be put on the mailing list. I have enclosed a check for the bound volumes from 1985-98 and some to include future issues. May God continue to bless you as you strive to tell the Bible in its fullness and truth."

#### PENNSYLVANIA:

■ "Just a note from Pennsylvania. Please keep up the good work. We read it from front to back. May God continue to bless you."

#### **NEW YORK:**

■ "I came across your web page via another link and have been really blessed reading your articles which are Scriptural and to the point! I would like to receive your newsletter and my address follows...I look forward to receiving your newsletter. Be encouraged!" (E-mail, web page response)

#### OHIO:

- "I received a copy of your newsletter from a friend and found it to be very interesting. I would like to receive a copy of my own..."
- "Thank you for your continuous upholding of The Word through the publication THE SWORD AND STAFF. The Editorial Comments in Volume 38 Number 1 were excellent. Please continue to send to the above address as shown on the enclosed label."
- "Enclosed is my check to help your publication of THE SWORD AND STAFF plus my mailing label.

"Each issue is so good and I look forward to receiving them.

"Vol. 37, # 3, had the article entitled, 'Unique Expressions and Great Truths from the Apostle Paul.' It was excellent and especially [part] IV—Philippians 4:7! I learned so much...

"God bless you and your family."

#### INDIANA:

- "I enjoy your paper. It tells the truth."
- 'I will be looking forward to Part 2 about 'An Examination and an Overview of Ephesians 4:11'..."
- "Please send vol. 1997-1998, THE SWORD AND STAFF. Looking forward to Part 2 on Ephesians 4:11. Enclosed is a bit to help. The Man of Sin' series is outstanding."
- I enjoy your paper very much. I am a preaching elder and use your material often in sermons and meditations. Please continue your great work for the kingdom. "Your web site is also very good. All the work you do is

"Your web site is also very good. All the work you do is much appreciated. I'm sorry I have not written sooner to tell you of your great witness. Such a voice that you express is much needed in our world and unfortunately

### READERS'... Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

in many of our churches... [We] stand alone in a community that believes anyone who loves Jesus will be saved and is a Christian, no matter what their response has been to God's Word...

"I have enclosed a check to help in your ministry. May God continue to bless your efforts."

#### IOWA:

■ "Please remove us...from your mailing list. Thank you."

#### MISSOURI:

- "I appreciate your paper very much! Keep up holding up the truth!"
- "Just a note to say I appreciate your hard work and I appreciate the newsletter each time. Thank you."
- "The Lord bless you. Sure do get a lot of good out of THE SWORD AND STAFF. Keep up the good work..."
- "Thanks for another fine issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF. Thank you for your many faithful years of teaching the Word of God with honesty and integrity. Also, thank all those brethren who labor in putting together each issue. Enclosed you will find something to help with the expenses of getting out your publication."

#### TEXAS:

■ "Please send me bound volumes of THE SWORD AND STAFF 1987-88, 1989-90, 1991-92, and 5 copies of POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS

"I have enjoyed your work and my prayer is that it will continue to glorify God.

"Thank you. I am sending a check to cover the above order. May God continue to bless you."

#### **CALIFORNIA:**

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#### **MONTANA:**

■ "Please send me your complimentary issue!...Thank You!!!! God Bless!!!!!" (E-mail, web page response)

#### **OREGON:**

- "We do appreciate your issues of THE SWORD AND STAFF. Much needed in this world of turmoil and stress."
- "I enjoy THE SWORD AND STAFF very much. I have especially appreciated the articles on prophecy by brother Elliott. God bless you in your ministry."

#### WASHINGTON:

■ 'I have appreciated your publication THE SWORD AND STAFF sent to me through the years..."

#### **UNITED STATES:**

- "Enjoyed your site. Just a note to say Preach the Word". (E-mail, web page response)
- "Enjoy your page so much, brother. Keep up the good work; am passing the page on to other Christians so that they can also keep up on the great articles." (E-mail, web page response)

- "Sorting through the many shallow teachings on the Internet, I was pleased to come across your document... This is one of the few good definitions of phileo/agapeo I have seen on a personal web site. Congratulations, brother...Grace and peace to you in Christ Jesus." (Email, web page response)
- "I found your site via CrossSearch.com. I like what you did on your site for His glory. I'm also working [on a site for Vietnamese people around the world]...I liked the flowers you posted. If I may ask, may I use these refreshing flowers to display randomly on each page of my site?"..."I read one of your poems, "Trust in God"... May we post this poem on our site?"..."[Also] may I translate this poem into Vietnamese and Chinese?" (E-mail, web page response)

#### **CANADA:**

- "[Please send] complimentary copy of THE SWORD AND STAFF..." (E-mail, web page response)
- "Please send me a list of the articles on prophecy by David [Vaughn] Elliott! I was certainly blessed by reading what is included in your home page." (E-mail, web page response)

#### **MEXICO:**

■ "Dear brother Gibbons, many brothers and sisters in...[Mexico] weigh anxiety to get your LA ESPADA Y EL CAYADO; this is the reason that we need more. Can you add more when you send them to us? In these days of confusion we need a magazine like yours to light the understanding of the Bible and true values. Thanks for your generosity to bless our lives with your ministry."

#### **GHANA:**

■ "It has been such a blessing to receive THE SWORD AND STAFF journal. The content of the message is so wonderful and thrilling to read, and it is enhancing my knowledge of salvation in Jesus as we labor in his vineyard..."

### "THE MAN OF SIN"

### Part III: The Reality

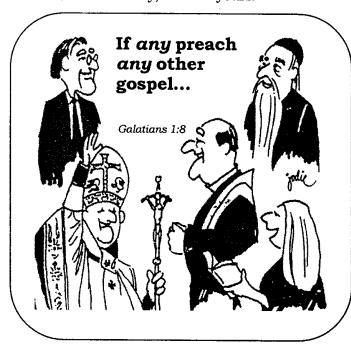
(Continued from Page 8)

teousness," "deception," "strong delusion," and "the lie." Keep in mind that since this is a "falling away (apostasy)," it cannot be fulfilled by brand new religions, like Buddhism or Islam. Rather it is a departure or falling away from the true Gospel—keeping parts, omitting parts and changing parts—an unholy mixture of truth and error.

High on the list of these unrighteous deceptions are the numerous mediators that Rome places between man and God. At the uncontested top of this list of mediators is "the virgin."

#### Does God have a Mother?

The "Mary" of Rome is not the Mary of the Bible. While it is true that some teachings and practices of the Roman Church have edged closer to Bible truth in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it's doctrine of "Mary" is not one of them. John Paul II, indeed, has dedicated his pontificate to "the virgin." He has everywhere tried to increase devotion to her, himself visiting most of the Marian shrines in the world. His motto is "Totus tuus sum Maria: Mary, I am all yours."



Rome makes a goddess out of their "Mary." The teaching goes this way: 1) Mary is the mother of Jesus; 2) Jesus is God; therefore, 3) Mary is the mother of God. The problem with this supposedly logical argument is the second point. Yes, Jesus is God; but Jesus was also man. As Romans 1:3 puts it, "Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh" (bold emphasis supplied). By the same token, Jesus was the son of Mary according to the flesh.

Reminds one of the question little children (and materialistic philosophers) ask: "Who made God?" A mother is always before a son. Thus, if Mary is the mother of God, then she is before God and she is god. That is blasphemy. John clarified, "In the beginning was the Word...And the Word became flesh" (John 1:14). Yes, Mary was before Jesus in the flesh; but Jesus was before Mary in the spirit. Mary is not the mother of God. Rather, the Lord Jesus Christ is Mary's Master and Maker!

Time fails to speak of all that is involved in Rome's teaching on "Mary." They say she was a perpetual virgin even though married. They say she was absolutely sinless like Jesus. They call her "queen of heaven" (see Jeremiah 44). Since God is King of heaven; that makes "Mary" a goddess. They call her the Mediatrix. Since Jesus is the Mediator, that places her as equal to Jesus. As a matter of fact.

in praying the rosary, for every "Our Father," there follow ten "Hail Mary's." Ten to one. The teaching of Rome is "to Jesus through Mary." The teaching of the apostles is "to the Father through the Son" (John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5). Two different gospels.

#### Other Examples of Lawlessness

The Holy Spirit says, "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2). Rome says, "a bishop must *not* be the husband of one wife." God requires pastors to be family men. Rome requires pastors to be single.

God's Word says, "as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup" 1 Corinthians 11:26). Rome says, "the common members may **not** drink the cup." Rome has the audacity to withhold from its members one half of the Lord's Supper.

The Word says, "as often as you eat this bread." Rome says, "You do not eat bread; you eat the actual body of Christ." Now when Jesus changed water into wine, it no longer looked like water nor tasted like water. The feast master said, "You have kept the good wine until now!" (John 2:10). A miracle of changing one thing into another does just that—it changes one thing into another. Rome claims that the "host" is transformed into the actual body of Christ, even though it still looks, smells and tastes like bread. This is not a miracle. This is a bold-faced lie. Since so many millions world-wide believe such an obvious falsehood, it clearly fulfills the prophecy regarding "strong delusion."

Time fails to even name all the falsehoods of Rome. This is not just minor errors of a doctrine or two. This is "the falling away," "the apostasy." Among other things, Rome teaches that the people must confess their sins to a sinful priest rather than to Jesus the pure High Priest. Rome teaches that the mass is a sacrifice in which Christ, in an unbloody manner, offers himself to God via the officiating priest. Rome teaches the baptism of ignorant, sinless infants by means of sprinkling rather than immersion. Rome fosters the veneration of images, including kneeling and praying before them, burning candles before them, and carrying them in street

(Continued on Next Page)

#### Answers to: BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Genesis 19:17-25; 2. Genesis 25:1; 3. Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5; 4. Numbers 21:4-9; Il Kings 18:4; 5. Judges 10:3-5; 6. I Samuel 4:19-22; 7. Il Samuel 12:1-14; 8. I Kings 19:1-18; 9. Il Kings 9:4-10, 30-37; 10. Job 42:15; 11. Matthew 8:28-34 (Mark 5:1-20); Matthew 20:29-34 (Mark 10:46-52); 12. Mark 5:13; Matthew 21:19; 13. Mark 5:35-43; 9:2-13; 14:32-42; 14. Matthew 10:11-15; 15. Luke 8:41-56—Notice verses 42 and 43; 16. Il Peter 1:16-18; 17. Acts 14:8-20; 18. I Corinthians 4:7-14; 19. Two times, I Cor. 5:6 and Galatians 5:9; 20. Galatians 2:11-14.

### "THE MAN OF SIN"

### Part III: The Reality

(Continued from Previous Page)

processions. Rome condones church-sponsored gambling, dancing and drinking on the one hand and the Charismatic speaking in tongues on the other.

#### Antichrist?

Is it proper to call the "pope" "antichrist"? The term "antichrist" appears only in the epistles of John, who says that many antichrists were already existent in his day. The texts in question are 1 John 2:18-22; 4:3; 2 John 7:

"As you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come...They went out from us...Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son...and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world...For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

Item 1 - John states that they had "heard that the Antichrist is coming." John does *not* deny that. He only clarifies that there are other antichrists besides "the" future antichrist.

Item 2 - "They went out from us." This agrees perfectly with "the man of sin" prophecy, which predicts "a falling away." Both texts thus speak of a development coming out of the true people of God.

Item 3 - "This is the spirit of the Antichrist which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world." John agrees with Paul, who said, "For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work." With good reason, the translators have added "spirit." The Greek says, "This is the of the antichrist." "The" what? Starting with 4:1, the word "spirit(s)" appears 5 times. Read for yourself and you will see that when you come to "the of the antichrist," "spirit" is the only sensible word to supply. Therefore, John is saying that "the spirit of antichrist is coming and is already in the world." That is just another way of saying that "the mystery of lawlessness is already at work,"—before "the man of sin" or "the" antichrist actually appears.

Item 4 - "Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ?" "Christ" means the anointed Prophet, Priest and King. The "pope" does not directly deny that. However, by claiming the same attributes for himself, he in effect does deny it. The "pope" claims to be the infallible "chief teacher [prophet] and ruler [king] of the entire church," as

well as "supreme pontiff [high priest]." As "vicar of Christ," he takes the place of Christ on earth." Thus he does deny that Jesus alone is the Christ.

Item 5 - "He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son." Does this describe the "pope" of Rome? There are many ways to "deny" God. Paul wrote, "They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him" (Titus 1:16). The "pope," by receiving the title "holy father," denies that we have only one Holy Father. By attributing to the "pope" and the "virgin" so many titles and characteristics of the Father and the Son, the Word is fulfilled in them that "They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him."

Item 6 - "Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God...For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." Certainly Rome does not deny that Jesus came in the flesh. Or, does it?

Put briefly, Rome teaches 1) that all men inherit original sin, 2) except Jesus and Mary. Rome is thus saying that Jesus and Mary did not have the same flesh as we do. But God says of Jesus, "For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest" (Hebrews 2:16,17; bold emphasis supplied). To become our High Priest, Jesus had to be made like us.

Why did Rome invent the myth of the "immaculate conception" of Mary? Because Rome, to its credit, realized that if sin is inherited, then Jesus was born a sinner. That is impossible. So, either you reject the doctrine of inherited original sin and total depravity or else you invent a special miracle to overcome it for Jesus. But when you invent that special miracle, you deny that Jesus came in the same flesh we come in; you are antichrist!

#### "Powers, Signs, and Lying Wonders"

Again, the Roman religion fulfills "the man of sin" prophecy with its "powers, signs, and lying wonders" (2 Thessalonians 2:9). Who has claims of miracles like unto Rome? In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the "virgin" appeared to Bernadette in Lourdes, France. A whole century later, the shrine built there attracted 200,000 pilgrims a year. Many are the claims of miraculous cures.

Other outstanding locations of supposed apparitions of "the virgin" are Fatima in Portugal, Knock in Ireland and Guadalupe in Mexico. All such places become shrines and centers of pilgrimages. Multitudes are the claims of miracles. The average

(Continued on Page 14)

#### In Christ We Have...

A love that can never be fathomed;

A life that can never die;

A righteousness that can never be tarnished;

A peace that can never be understood;

A rest that can never be disturbed;

A joy that can never be diminished:

A hope that can never be disappointed;

A glory that can never be clouded;

A light that can never be darkened;

A happiness that can never be enfeebled:

A purity that can never be defiled;

A beauty that can never be marred;

A wisdom that can never be baffled;

Resources that can never be exhausted.

-Selected



IF YOU KNOW Jesus, others will know it.

If God is not in the picture, then everything else is out of focus.

God made us for Himself, and we are not right until we are right with Him.

The Bible is a closed book for the person who has a closed mind.

A half-hearted religion will not even take you half way to heaven; in fact, it won't even get you started.

Freedom without accompanying responsibility is self-destructive.

Godly sorrow breaks the ground of the hardened heart for the gospel to be planted, and tears water the soil, making the seed germinate and grow.

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

Much of modern religion that is preoccupied with making man feel good instead of being good is not any good.

People who play church need to wake up and realize that it is for real.

God is preparing us for greater service when we get the rough edges knocked off of us (if we don't let the experience crush us).

If you spend all of your time trying to be politically correct, you will probably end up dead wrong.

The philosophy of "live and let live" may sound good, but the opposite side of the coin, "die and let die," doesn't sound all that great.

Many whose views of the Bible seem cut and dried really are all wet.

It is strange, but some people when they are blessed, whether it is spiritually or physically, become arrogant and proud instead of humble and thankful before the Lord.

Beware lest we think that our stinginess is the practice of frugality.

When you feel like your "get up and go" has got up and gone, it's time for you to get up and go to move things along.

Sometimes people who talk the most and the loudest have the least to say.

If you indiscriminately give handouts, there will always be someone there with their hands out.

Formality in worship appeals most to them to whom religion is but a form.

Some people when confronting the problems of life go all to pieces, and when they finally get it back together again, they are not the same people for some of the pieces are missing.

Some people like preaching to the point until it points at them.

Apostasy is a mind-set, or lack of one, as much as anything else; if our mind is not set on pleasing God and following His Word at any cost, we are already in a state of apostasy.

It may cause further disorder when you try to set some churches in order.

If a person cannot see anything wrong with denominationalism, he doesn't know much about the Bible or about denominationalism.

# The Value of Time

TO REALIZE the value of one year—ask a student who has failed a final exam.

To realize the value of one month—ask a monthly magazine who has been scooped on a major story.

To realize the value of one week—ask an editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realize the value of one hour—ask the student who is waiting for a class to end or a mother waiting anxiously for a child to arrive home late at night.

To realize the value of one minute—ask the person who has missed the train, bus or plane.

To realize the value of one second—ask a person who has survived an accident.

To realize the value of a millisecond—ask the person who has come in second in the Olympics.

Time—it waits for no one. Treasure every moment you have.—Rod Houter

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### "THE MAN OF SIN"

### Part III: The Reality

(Continued from Page 12)

Catholic believes in many more miracles than the hierarchy is willing to "authenticate." However, it does "authenticate" many.

To discuss all the miracles claimed by the Roman Church would require a book. I think there is no Pentecostal church that can begin to compete with the Roman Church when it comes to claims of the miraculous. And it has been going on for centuries. Rome clearly fulfills this part of the prophecy.

#### The Value of this Prophecy

The "man of sin" prophecy is valuable to us today in at least three ways.

This prophecy is a warning. We are all in danger. Satan can deceive us. Just as he did with Eve, Satan continues to mix truth with error. His arguments seem plausible. He offers benefits. He offers "the pleasures of sin for a season." This prophecy is a warning of false religions and apostate churches. It is a warning that Satan has power to work signs and wonders. It is a warning that there are lies and strong delusion all around us.

Many conservative evangelicals do not heed this warning. For example, many Charismatics today, disregarding all other doctrines, bind themselves together with one common denominator—the supposed baptism of the Holy Spirit with evidence via speaking in tongues. "Spirit filled" Pentecostals have great fellowship with their "Spirit-filled" Catholic brethren. Never mind that the latter still go to the sacrifice of the Mass, still pray to "the virgin" and still give allegiance to the pontiff of Rome.

This prophecy is an explanation. How often do people ask, "Why are there so many religions?" "Can you trace your church back to the day of Pentecost?" This prophecy offers some of the answers. It shows that Jesus did not have any illusions about what was going to happen to His glorious church. Tragic as it is, it is a reality that cannot be swept under the rug.

This prophecy is a promise. Verse 8 contains the promise, "the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming." There is victory in Jesus. "The man of sin" will not triumph in the end. Christ will. Jesus will return. He will destroy His enemies. He will reign victoriously. If we reject "the man of

sin" and cling close to Jesus, we will be on the victory side.  $\Box$ 

(Scripture in the preceding article is taken from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.)

# The Church and What It's Really Trying to Do

THE CHURCH is not made up of people who believe they are better than others, but rather it is made up of those who realize that they should be better than they are and must continually strive to always do better. The church is not made up of people who never make mistakes, but those who often acknowledge their mistakes and then forsake them. Never must we seek to justify them or continually make the same mistakes over and over again. The church is not trying to withdraw from everyone so much as it is trying to draw everyone into its fellowship and love; and to encourage them to walk in the light where God the Father and Christ the Son are found. The church is not trying to set up arbitrary rules to hinder anyone, but rather to show the rule of Christ, which helps everyone. The church is not trying to make you feel ugly, but rather it is trying to instill the beauty of holiness in your life. The church is not trying to separate you from your money, but rather trying to keep your money from separating you from Christ. The church is not trying to become the master of your life, but rather is trying to get you to master yourself as you let the Lord Jesus Christ be the master of your life.—Selected

### "O God, Make Me A Child"

 $\Omega$ 

Last night my little boy confessed to me Some childish wrong;
And kneeling at my knee
He prayed with tears,
"Dear God, make me a man
Like Daddy—wise and strong.
I know you can."
Then while he slept
I knelt beside his bed,
Confessed my sins,
And prayed with low-bowed head,
"O God, make me a child
Like my child here—
Pure guileless,
Trusting Thee with faith sincere."

—Author Unknown

# DIAKONOS = "Deacon"

# "deacon"

(TECHNICAL USE)

### "servant"

(NON-TECHNICAL

# "minister"

USAGE)

• "OFFICE" in the church (I Timothy 3:8,12; Philippians 1:1)



• King's SERVANTS (deacons) in parable (Matthew 22:13)

- Household SERVANTS (deacons) at wedding feast (John 2:5,9)
- Any man SERVANT (deacon) of Christ (John 12:26)
- Greatest to be SERVANT (deacon) of all (Matthew 23:11)
- Phebe **SERVANT** (feminine of *deacon*) (Romans 16:1)



- "Great" among disciples to be MINISTER (deacon) (Matthew 20:26)
- Officers of government called **MINISTERS** (deacons) (Romans 13:4)
- Jesus himself called MIN-ISTER (deacon) (Romans 15:8; Galatians 2:17)
- Apostle called MINISTER (deacon) (Ephesians 3:7)
- Preachers called MINIS-TERS (deacons) (I Corinthians 3:5; Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 1:7; 4:7; I Thessalonians 3:2; I Timothy 4:6)
- False teachers called Satan's MINISTERS (deacons) (II Corinthians 11:15)

THE SCHOLARS of the King James Version of the Bible translated the Greek word diakonos in three ways. When the word was used in a technical sense, having reference to an "office" in the church, a transliteration of the word was used, "deacon." In all of the other places when they considered the word to be used in a generic, non-technical sense, diakonos was represented by the words "servant" and "minister." Even more so, the word "ministry" is used generically in the New Testament, simply meaning to serve in almost any capacity.

However, today in the religious world the term "minister" is used in a very special or technical sense. It is used as the name of an "office" (a specific position) in the church. In particular, the person who is usually thought of as preacher is called "THE MINISTER" and has been "ordained" to "THE MINISTRY."

In the light of what we know about the Bible (notice chart), this is confusing, and it brings several other questions to mind. Using the term in such a technical or official sense is inappropriate, unless it has reference to the "deacon"

in the local church. To compound the confusion many churches who have "MINISTERS" also have deacons. Then if we profess to be using "minister" in a general sense when we speak of a preacher as "THE MINISTER" of the church in such a pronounced way, it still has an unscriptural ring. The New Testament teaches the priesthood of believers, and every Christian is a minister in the general, non-technical sense. No one is "THE MINISTER."

Therefore, we conclude that the modern office of "THE MINISTER" is an unscriptural position not taught in the Word of God. In view of what we read in God's Word, the modern MINISTER is somewhat of an EVANGELIST-ELDER-MEMBER hybrid (plus some more). He is a clergyman who has taken over the job of a defunct eldership and that of an inactive membership (and he and they love to have it so). He is "paid" to do the job God intended others to do. In the meantime, a recognition of and the work of a New Testament evangelist is not being done.

These thoughts may be totally new to some. Think on them. Much restoring needs to be done.

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AFATHER on his deathbed called his sons. They gathered around him and to one he said, "Good night, son," and to the other he said, "Good-bye, son."

The second boy noticed the difference and asked his father, "Dad, why did you say 'good night' to my brother and 'good-bye' to me?"

The dear old man who loved both of them said, "Son, your brother is a Christian; I will meet him in the morning of eternity. So it is just 'good night' to him. But you, son, are not a Christian. I will never meet you again unless you change. It is good-bye, son, throughout all eternity."—Adapted

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He is a work of God not finished yet; He is the sculptured stone still in the rough And molded clay whose form takes time to set, Or leather in the raw that needs some buff.

But now you look and see one like God's son, Transformed, renewed, and changed from day to day;

For more and more like Christ he has become, A sculptured work in living stone and clay.

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