

# The Sword AND Staff

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

## The Sermon on the Mount

● By JAMES E. GIBBONS—1535 W. Fairfield Drive  
Mount Airy, NC 27030 USA

### *Introduction:*

1. The Sermon on the Mount is recorded in Matthew, chapters 5-7 (and the Sermon on the Plain in Luke 6:17-49 being similar, perhaps the plain being a level place in conjunction with the mountainside from where the Sermon on the Mount was spoken).
2. The earthly ministry of Christ was well under way when he gave the Sermon on the Mount.
3. John the Baptist had preached until he was cast in prison, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2).
4. Christ took up the same message (Matthew 4:17) and sent out his disciples to preach the same thing (Matthew 10:5-7).
5. Now in the midst of His earthly ministry in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus sets forth many of His teachings that had to do with His coming kingdom.
6. Some key verses to the Sermon on the Mount:
  - (1) Matthew 5:3, key verse to the preliminary part of the Sermon on the Mount.
  - (2) Matthew 5:20, key verse to the main part of the Sermon on the Mount.
  - (3) Matthew 7:21, key verse in the summing up of the Sermon on the Mount.

### I. KEY WORDS IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

#### A. "The Kingdom of Heaven"

1. Places where this is found.
  - (1) Matthew 5:3
  - (2) Matthew 5:10
  - (3) Matthew 5:20
  - (4) Matthew 6:9,10
  - (5) Matthew 6:33
  - (7) Matthew 7:21
2. The significance of "kingdom of heaven"



- (1) As pointed out, it was something that was "at hand" (Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7), and his disciples were to pray for it to come (6:9,10).
- (2) Jesus taught his disciples in parables about this kingdom (Matthew 13:10, 11, 24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47; etc.).
- (3) In Matthew 16:18,19, the terms "church" and "kingdom of heaven" are used interchangeably.
- (4) Jesus had before said that the least in the kingdom was greater than John the Baptist (Matthew 11:11); a spiritual birth is greater than a natural birth (John 3:3,5).
- (5) At another time Jesus said one had to be converted and become as a little child to enter this kingdom, indicating that it was spiritual (Matthew 18:3).
- (6) Matthew was written initially, it seems, for a Jewish reading audience, and he is the only gospel writer that uses the expression "kingdom of heaven"—since the

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**THE SWORD AND STAFF**  
Post Office Box 147  
Mt. Airy, NC 27030 USA

E-Mail Address:  
[jamesgibbons@earthlink.net](mailto:jamesgibbons@earthlink.net)

Web Site Address:  
<http://jgibbons.8m.com>

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—THANK YOU—

## Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

**PRAYER** opens the veil to the Holy of Holies.

Being good involves more than just feeling good about ourselves.

*The lazy person is the next of kin to a great thief.*

Religious truth presented without the twang of sectarianism is refreshing to the soul.

*Your values are reflected in what makes you sad, mad and glad.*

Forsaking sin is not a matter of Christian growth, but of repentance and getting right with God.

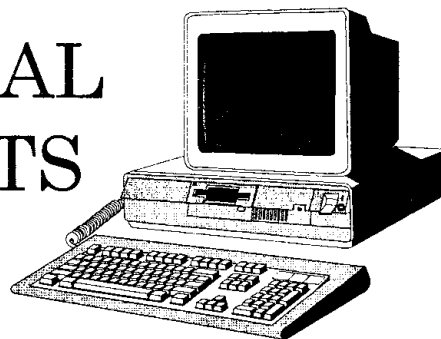
*It is easier for the humble person to endure and persevere.*

If you approach the Bible like you have never read it before, and study it as if you have never studied it before, you will learn truths that you have never learned before.

*People have little interest in that which they have little invested.*

Doctrine is the bone structure to which the muscles of faith are attached, whereby our spiritual life is lived and moves and has its being.

# EDITORIAL COMMENTS



### "A GOOD MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST"

**P**AUL, using the term "minister" (*diakonos*) simply in a non-technical sense as a servant of Christ, plainly told Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:6, "*If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ*, nourshed up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained." In "remembrance" of what? The verses right before in this chapter are the antecedent to what he says here. He foretold and warned of a departure from the faith (1 Timothy 4:1-6). This was of deep concern to the apostle Paul. In fact, verse 3 of chapter one of this epistle tells us why that Timothy, an associate evangelist with the apostle Paul, had been left at Ephesus. It reads, "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine." "If" (that's the word Paul uses) Timothy was to be found faithful as a servant of Jesus Christ, taking heed to this injunction was absolutely necessary.

Yes, carrying out the Great Commission involves delivering a message decidedly with a positive thrust (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16). The word "gospel" itself means good news, and a mistake is made when the negative is dwelt upon in an inordinate way. But even in heralding forth the good news of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ and how it relates to our salvation, the negative has to be dealt with. In preaching Christ, Paul asserts, "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect [complete] in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28). Sinners must be brought to repentance. And genuine repentance can only be realized when they are brought face to face with their sins.

And the negative must be dealt with in other ways, too, although many would back away from doing this. We have heard preachers say that their job was to bring people to Christ and it was His job to take care of them thereafter. But the instrumentality through which Christ does this is the leadership of the church (and other Christians). To not teach and warn new converts is to leave them like babes in the woods to fend for themselves. Jesus said there would arise false Christs and false prophets. The prospects of false teaching and apostasy was a continual burden upon the hearts of the apostle Paul and other New Testament writers like Peter, John and Jude (and they didn't hesitate to write and talk about it). Check out their writings. But today in a multicultural society preoccupied by what they call the "positive," and with being politically correct, this is a "no! no!" It is either, "I'm okay. You're okay." Or, we are all sinners, therefore it behooves

none of us to raise our voices and talk about the rest of us. So, no one says anything in a negative way about anyone or anything (except politicians running for office).

On another occasion when Paul was gathered with the Ephesian elders, reminding them of how he had preached to them the Word of God from the beginning, he said, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26,27). Then he admonished them to "take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock..." (20:28). With this said, he soberly continues, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (20:29-31). Paul practiced what he preached (1 Timothy 4:6). Paul conversed with the leaders of the church, warning them. (To be forewarned is to be forearmed). It was not just with the elders of the church alone. For "three years," he said, "I ceased not to warn *everyone* night and day with tears." Would that we had leaders who loved the truth of God and the Lord's church that much today. (Where are the tears? Where is the concern?) But some preacher's "imbalanced" preoccupation with the positive makes them tongue-tied. Consequently, Christians are never warned about false teaching, and so many don't even look upon "false teaching" as being all that bad, or even false, nor do they notice questionable infractions slipping into the church that are leading straight to apostasy.

In conjunction with 1 Timothy 4:1-6, the big picture immerses before us in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 (one of Paul's earliest epistles). Paul warns of a massive falling away from the true church with the appearance of the man of sin, who exalted himself as God. The Protestant reformers had no trouble in understanding this as referring to the papacy. Here it says that he "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped: so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." From the New Testament perspective, the temple is the church. The pope would usurp the position of God, being called Lord God the pope (and Holy Father) (Ephesians 4:6; Matthew 23:9), and usurping the position of Christ, being called the head of the church (Colossians 1:18). And with this, the Scripture in 1 Timothy 4:1-6 paints a picture of celibacy and asceticism, all

perverted tenets of Catholicism (and kindred bodies). With the onslaught of the Dark Ages, this apostasy came into being in its fullest. Even Protestant denominations, which appeared in time in protest, were unable to fully loose themselves from the shackles of this apostasy (carrying over many of their errors and now gravitating back to their origin). We live in the aftermath of this great apostasy, but its representation is still with us in denominationalism. Add to that the modern apostasy of unbelief (even in the ranks of professing "churches") and moral decay, there should be "big time" concern for the well being of the Lord's church. With many who are supposed to be the church of Christ, adherence to the simple concept of the nondenominational church of the New Testament is outdated.

These things being heavily upon Paul's heart, he repeatedly wrote about them, as well as teaching and personally talking with Christians about them. He loved the Lord, he loved the church, and he loved the truth. People needed to be informed. In 2 Thessalonians 2:5, he said, "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things." To the Ephesians elders, he said, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31). To Timothy he wrote, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be *a good minister of Jesus Christ*, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained" (1 Timothy 4:6). Notice such Scriptures as 2 Timothy 4:1-8.

Preachers, elders, we individually ask you. From the viewpoint of the apostle Paul, are you a "good minister of Jesus Christ nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine"? Indeed, we are living in perilous times. Let us watch and pray. □



## EDITORIAL

# Byways

### THE MODERN, NATURALISTIC WAY OF LOOKING AT THINGS

**R**ECENTLY while teaching the book of Exodus, I did a little supplementary reading. We were studying the ten plagues and the exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt. Aside from my regular study, I casually perused this book that had somehow gotten into my library, but had hardly been looked at over the years. In the book, the writer gives a concise statement of his thoughts on the

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# EDITORIAL *Byways*

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plagues and Israel's exodus from Egypt. It mirrors modern man's way of looking at things, trying to explain everything, even the Bible, on a naturalistic basis. The supernatural and divine must be downgraded, if not wholly left out of the picture. The Bible can't be trusted, yet to these people there is a grain of truth behind what may have happened (in "residuum"). The events were embellished by later generations of these ancient and simple-minded people. This is how this writer looked upon the ten plagues, reflecting the deep-rooted bankruptcy of modern "thought."

"That the actual events were heightened in retrospect is obvious, but there is no need to doubt a residuum of fact. A modern writer might say that Egypt had a run of bad luck, a common-enough occurrence. That it happened when it did and facilitated the escape of the Hebrews from bondage was to them a clear proof of divine intervention. The plagues are all intensification of natural phenomena and they seem to follow in the expected sequence. The water of the Nile, coloured by the red marl brought down from the mountains of Abyssinia in the summer, becomes undrinkable. It overflows and, as the flood recedes, leaves behind a multitude of frogs. Stagnant water breeds clouds of mosquitoes. Skin diseases break out in the hot season. The barley harvest is destroyed by a hailstorm in January, the wheat escaping since it matures a month later. Finally, at the beginning of spring, the time of the Passover, comes a great epidemic, killing off many children, and the Egyptians, depressed by an unprecedented sequence of disasters, are glad to let the Hebrews go, genuinely scared by the wrath of the god who seems to have caused them."

*(W. K. Lowther Clarke in CONCISE BIBLE COMMENTARY, The MacMillan Company)*

You get the picture, don't you? This mentality is in league with how some would try to explain the miracle of Jesus feeding the 5,000. Actually others had their food all along, we are told, but were made ashamed when the little boy made his loaves and fish available to all. So, ashamedly, they brought forth that which had been concealed, and then everyone was able to eat. And thus a miracle that is found in all four of the gospel accounts is explained away on a naturalistic basis. So one right after another of the miracles, even the resurrection, fall to their ax of unbelief.

We briefly mention this in passing. This subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, way of presenting the miraculous in religion as a naturalistic phenomenon

confronts us at every turn in the public media. Beware lest the Biblical concepts are corrupted in your mind and your faith undermined. God being God, there is nothing unusual about the miraculous (especially during the revelatory period of time). □

## The Sermon on the Mount

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Jews thought in terms of an earthly kingdom, does he purposely say "kingdom of heaven" to emphasize the spiritual nature of his kingdom for those who had and have an improper conception of it?

### B. "Righteousness"

1. Places where this word is found
  - (2) Matthew 5:6
  - (3) Matthew 5:10
  - (3) Matthew 5:20
  - (4) Matthew 6:33
2. The significance of "righteousness"
  - (1) It is something to be intensely hungered and thirsted after (Matthew 5:6)
  - (2) It is something that will bring persecution when attained (Matthew 5:10).
  - (3) This righteousness must exceed that of the legal, traditional and pretentious righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:20).
  - (4) It must be the righteousness of God (Matthew 6:33), which is spiritual involving great principles, not just being legal alone, and as the fuller revelation of the New Testament discloses, it must take into consideration the blood of Christ to take away our sins (Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

### C. Thoughts in Conclusion

1. Therefore we conclude that the theme of the Sermon on the Mount is to show the true righteousness that is necessary for those who enter the kingdom of heaven.
2. As a backdrop to the Sermon on the Mount, keep in mind the superficial "righteousness" of the scribes and Pharisees (and what we know about them), that was in the mind of Christ with every word He said here.
3. Christ is laying the foundation in His teaching for His coming kingdom, the church of Christ.
4. No doubt, the Sermon on the Mount was some of the things the Holy Spirit brought to the apostles' remembrance (John 14:26), as well as leading them and guiding them into "all truth" theretofore unrevealed (John 16:13;

1 Corinthians 13:9,10; Ephesians 3:5).

5. No doubt, the Sermon on the Mount was some of the things Christ had in mind in the Great Commission when they were told to teach men to observe all things that He had commanded (Matthew 28:20).
6. Interestingly, the epistle of James is very much like the Sermon on the Mount in style and emphasis.

## II. AN OUTLINE OF THE SERMON OF THE MOUNT

### A. *Introduction: Preliminary Teachings on the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 5:3-19)*

1. The beatitudes—progressively attaining the righteousness of the kingdom; each beatitude seems to lead up to the next beatitude that follows it (Matthew 5:3-12)
2. Our influence upon attaining this righteousness (Matthew 5:13-16)
3. The relationship of the Law to the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:17-19; Galatians 3:23-25)

### B. *The Necessity of Exceeding the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees to Enter and to Be a Part of the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 5:20-6:34)*

1. Their righteousness was mainly legal (external) (Matthew 5:21-48) and traditional (Matthew 15:1-20).
  - (1) In reference to killing (Matthew 5:21-26; 1 John 3:15)
  - (2) In reference to adultery (Matthew 5:27-32)
  - (3) In reference to oaths (Matthew 5:33-37; James 5:12)
  - (4) In reference to revenge (Matthew 5:38-42; Romans 12:19-21)
  - (5) In reference to loving one's enemies (Matthew 5:43-48)
2. Their righteousness was a showy and pretentious righteousness (Matthew 6:1-18)
  - (1) In alms giving (Matthew 6:1-4)
  - (2) In praying (Matthew 6:5-15)
  - (3) In fasting (Matthew 6:16-18)
3. Their righteousness was dominated by materialism (Matthew 6:19-34; 23:14; Mark 7:9-13)

### C. *Conclusion—Varied Concluding Admonitions (Matthew 7:1-27)*

1. Lack of true righteousness, hindrance in truly helping others because of greater guilt (Matthew 7:1-5)
2. Not to give that which is holy to the dogs (Matthew 7:6)
3. About asking, seeking and knocking (Matthew 7:7-11)
4. The golden rule of the Bible (Matthew 7:12;

John 13:34,35)

5. Entering the strait and narrow way (Matthew 7:13,14)
6. Beware of false prophets (Matthew 7:15-20)
7. Necessity of doing the will of the Father to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 7:21-23)
8. Parable of the house on the rock and the house on the sand (Matthew 7:24-27)
9. The astounding reaction to the Lord's teaching (Matthew 7:28,29) (this is anticipated when in Matthew 5:2 it says that he "opened his mouth and taught them, saying" implying what great and marvelous truths would come from his mouth). □

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## "Blessed" and "Blessed," (Two Different Words)

INTERESTINGLY, there are two different words translated "blessed" in the New Testament. They are (1) *makarios* and (2) *eulogetós* (with its similar variants). The first word means to be happy and fortunate; the second involves speaking well of, to praise, eulogize, and when applied to man, invoking a benediction (blessing) upon.

### "Blessed" (Happy, Fortunate)

(1) *Makarios* is well illustrated by the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount. They start with the words, "**Blessed** are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3). In rapid succession the others follow (but not without great depth of meaning, which prompts us to pause and think about them): "**Blessed** are they that mourn... **Blessed** are the meek... **Blessed** are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness... **Blessed** are the merciful... **Blessed** are the pure in heart... **Blessed** are the peacemakers... **Blessed** are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake..." (Matthew 5:4-12). In the midst of these beatitudes one especially stands out, "**Blessed** are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." This beatitude seems to show the over-all jest of all of them considered together, moving toward and attaining the righteousness of God. Blessedness or true happiness does not come by seeking after happiness, but it comes rather by seeking after God—*hungering and thirsting after righteousness*. It is a by-product of being right with God. Each of the beatitudes seems to logically follow those that go before them. Then when finally this righteousness is attained, we will be persecuted for it—"persecuted for righteousness' sake." Happy is the person who embraces and personally experiences

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# ***"Blessed" and "Blessed"***

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the truths of each beatitude, now, even climaxing in persecution, and ultimately in eternity. "Rejoice, and be ye exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven..."

## **"Blessed" (Praise, Eulogize)**

(2) *Eulogetós* (with its similar variants) is represented in Ephesians 1:3. "**Blessed** [*eulogetós*] be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath **blessed** [*eulogéo*] us with all spiritual **blessings** [*eulogía*] in heavenly places in Christ." The Great God of eternity is to be "blessed" (praised and eulogized) because He has "blessed" or invoked great and wonderful things upon us in well-spoken words. This eulogy of God in what He has done for us through Christ begins with this verse 3 and extends through verse 14, all said to be one sentence. Paul keeps tacking one great thought right on to another in the praise of God. God is to be praised, not by saying, "Praise the Lord," but by eulogizing Him; sayings good things about Him. Paul here repeatedly speaks of all of this being "to the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:6,12,14). It is truly marvelous to think about what is said here.

The scope of this eulogy praising God is from everlasting to everlasting with the Lord Jesus Christ and man being in the very center of what is being said. The spiritual blessings that we are now enjoying in Christ are because God has "chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4). And he goes on to say, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (1:5). Included in what is said here is praise for God's grace (1:6), redemption through the blood of Christ (1:7), how that heaven and earth have been brought together in Christ (1:10), the eternal inheritance that awaits us in Christ (1:11), and the assurance that we have of it now with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1:12-14). Marvelous! Amazing!

## **Questions Prompted by "Chosen" and "Predestinated"**

Some questions are prompted by Paul saying that Christians are chosen "in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world." The word "predestined" is also found here (1:5,11). In what sense are we chosen (or "predestinated")? (And he says that it is all "according to the good pleasure of his will," 1:5). God, with total omniscience, knew that man would sin and need a Savior, even before man was created. God's plan called for Christ (1 Peter 1:18-20). And Christians are spoken of as being chosen "in him" (in Christ) from all eternity.

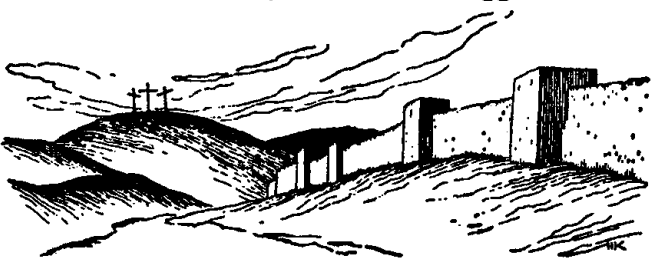
But when Paul speaks of Christians being chosen "in him," is he speaking generally or specifically?

If he is speaking in a general sense, John 3:16 comes to mind. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And the "good pleasure of his will" is that "whosoever will" (Revelation 22:17) may be saved (God leaves it up to us). In 1 Timothy 2:4, it declares that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Then 2 Peter 3:9 asserts that God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (And even after becoming Christians we are admonished to make our "calling and election sure," 2 Peter 1:10). If Paul is speaking generally in Ephesians, it collectively speaks of "whosoever will" being chosen "in him" (with the emphasis being on "in him," in what Christ has done in dying for all).

However, if Paul is speaking specifically when he says that we are chosen or predestinated, that we have individually been picked out from eternity, this adds another dimension to our study. According to Romans 8:29, foreknowledge came before predestination. God foreknew and then He predestinated. The predestination did not come first. What did God foreknow? Being God, and knowing all things from the beginning, He could look down through the ages and see, even individually see, who would have good and honest hearts and of their own free will and volition accept the Savior. These are the "whosoever will" mentioned in the Scriptures. God, in essence says, "It is the good pleasure of my will to choose these people. I choose and predestinate them to be conformed to the image of my Son, holy and without blame in love." So, Biblical predestination is all interwoven with the foreknowledge of God that goes before it. It is not an over-riding of man's free will, but knowing in advance and telling us about it.

How wonderful to know all of this, and with the apostle Paul, praise Him who from all eternity has brought it about. "Blessed" be the God and Father of us all! Amen!—*J.E.G.* □

*"On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross"*



*"I will cling to the old rugged cross,  
and exchange it someday for a crown"*



## Showing Honor and Respect

**A** SCRIPTURE that stirs further interest after being read is found in 1 Timothy 5:17. It reads, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." The word "honour" and then the words "double honour" stand out. "Honour" represents the Greek word *timé*. Interestingly, this word is found in the name Timothy, *Timotheos* (*timé* + *theos* = *honor* + *God*, one who honors God). In 1 Timothy 5:17, Paul is talking about the elders of the church who do a good job being elders. They are to be counted worthy of "double honour." The basic honor comes in respecting them. Paul admonished the Christians at Thessalonica, "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake" (1 Thessalonians 5:12,13). But Paul goes a step further in 1 Timothy 5:18, the verse following the first reference mentioned above, "For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his reward." The "double honour" consisted in them being materially supported in their work, too.

This leads us to more thought about this word "honour." One of the Ten Commandments involved the use of this word. "Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Exodus 20:12). From an article written years ago by this writer, we share the following words with you. We

think they convey our thoughts well without having to express them again.

### "HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER" (EXODUS 20:12)

This great commandment serves as a transition from the first four to the ones that follow. From worshipping the Creator and source of life, parents are to be honored who pass this sacred life on to others, and the image of God in all men is to be mutually respected by all with deference and dignity. Paul summed up the remaining commandments under loving neighbor as self in Romans 13:8-10, then he said, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." This love is *agapé*, the love of esteem and respect.

#### "Double Honour" to Parents

The word "honour" here is from a verb that means, "to be heavy," and hence also "to be rich, to be honored" (it is said). Even as Paul instructed that certain elders in the church were to be counted worthy of "double honour" (1 Timothy 5:17), the Jews realized this significance in reference to parents. (1) Parents were to be honored in the sense of being highly respected, venerated, and even feared (Leviticus 19:3). Mentally, they were to be held in the highest esteem, and by word and deed. (2) This brings us to the second aspect of this honor. Even as they were told in Proverbs 3:9 to "honour the LORD with thy substance," they were likewise to honor their parents in a material sense (especially helping them with their material needs in their old age). But some tried to get around this responsibility later (Matthew 15:4-6; Mark 7:10-13). Such honoring is to be carried out in the context of the church, too (i.e., "Honour widows that are widows indeed," 1 Timothy 5:3; cf. verses 4 and 8). In oriental fashion, we even find children bowing before parents in the Bible (Genesis 48:12; 1 Kings 2:19). Even though parents sometimes were not honorable, they were nonetheless to be respected by their children (Genesis 9:20-27).

#### The Backside of This Commandment

The violation of the negative backside of this commandment was a capital offense. Exodus 21:17 dealt with those who cursed their parents (just the opposite of honoring). "And he that curseth [revileth] his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death." Exodus 21:15 had to do with "smiting" (assaulting) parents (just the opposite of giving them a helping hand), "And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death." Leviticus 20:9 further emphasizes the death sentence in connection with this offense. The Lord Jesus definitely saw this as the negative backside of this com-

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mandment to honor parents (Matthew 15:4). An amplification of this negative problem is seen in Deuteronomy 21:18-21. But it seems that this part of the commandment was never carried out.

## The First Commandment with Promise

Looking back from the New Testament, the apostle Paul, speaks of this commandment to honor father and mother as "the first commandment with promise" (that they would live long upon the earth) (Ephesians 6:1-3). It was the first of the Ten Commandments actually to "spell out" such a promise (or any promise). God attached this promise to the commandment when He initially uttered it (Exodus 20:12). However, years later when Moses rehearsed all of the commandments before Israel, he amplified the promise in connection with this one by saying, "That thy days many be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the lord thy God giveth thee" (Deuteronomy 5:16). Longevity was not the only thing involved. God made the honoring of parents a prerequisite for the people remaining in the Promised Land. As someone has said, "The Holy Land will not tolerate you if you will fail to honor your parents, for in such a case harmonious social life by Biblical standards would be impossible." The family unit built around respect for parents is the very basis for an enduring, stable, and orderly society. Take this away, and they would be in trouble (any people will be in trouble). If they obeyed God, the land would be theirs (Deuteronomy 6:17,18). Otherwise, like the nations before them, the land would "spue" (vomit) them out (Leviticus 18:24-28; 20:22; 26:33; Deuteronomy 4:26,27; 28:62,63).

This article only selectively touches the "hem of the garment" in dealing with this matter of showing honor and respect. Yes, it is highly fitting that honor and respect be shown to the leaders of the church, but only in a Scriptural sense (no titles with "reverend," please). And in this era of the deterioration of the family, and the lack of respect for many things, it should be a matter of high priority to show honor and respect to parents. Many other areas should command our attention involving this subject. Let us not hesitate to explore them and fill the void in that which is lacking.—*J.E.G.* □



## A Good Time to Do It

For the last few months our support has been on the "lean" side in getting out *The Sword and Staff*. If you have been thinking about sending a contribution, now would be a good time to do it.—*Editor* □

# It Takes a Minute

It's the time it takes to smile, or to give a warm "hello,"

It's the time it takes to say, "Well done."

It's the time it takes to sympathize, or avoid calling someone what he "should be called." It's the time it takes to cheer someone or make things better.

How much is a minute worth? It's priceless or worthless—depending on how you use it. □

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

*(Random Questions Over the Bible)*

1. Who in the Bible is called "a mighty hunter before the Lord"?
2. Who in the Bible was married to his half-sister?
3. Beginning with which one of the ten plagues in Egypt were the magicians unable to duplicate Moses and Aaron?
4. Where are the Ten Commandments found in the Bible, fully listed?
5. What two craftsmen endowed with wisdom did God call to lead in the construction of the tabernacle?
6. When or on what occasion in the history of Israel were the people so liberal in giving that they had to be told to stop giving?
7. Why was Moses not allowed to enter the Promised Land?
8. Which judge of Israel made a foolish vow that resulted in the death of his daughter?
9. What king of Israel was a tall man?
10. What "great army" spoken of by the prophet Joel was to confront the Jewish people?
11. What prophet chided the Jews for offering blemished sacrifices to God?
12. Having come back from Egypt, where did Joseph, Mary and the Christ child go to live?
13. In the story about the rich man and Lazarus, how many brothers did the rich man have?
14. What did John say as to why he wrote his gospel account of Christ?
15. Which is the only one of the four gospel writers to call the place where Jesus was crucified "Calvary," with the others calling it "Golgotha" (but both words meaning what)?
16. What was the Aramaic name of Simon Peter?
17. By what other name is the Sea of Galilee known or called in the New Testament?
18. The place where Jesus ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives was about how far from Jerusalem?
19. In the book of Acts, what person did the apostle Peter, and the apostle Paul, raise from the dead?
20. What was the name of Timothy's mother and grandmother?

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

# READERS'

## ...Response

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

### NORTH CAROLINA:

- "Please remove our church from your mailing list..."
- "Thank you for your book [paper]. It could not have come at a better time. The lesson on women preaching was just what I needed, but the trouble is no amount of telling some people or them reading it can get through to them..."

### VIRGINIA:

- "Please send *THE SWORD AND STAFF* to...Thank you for a based on Bible magazine."
- "Great edition of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*, this issue Vol. 42, No. 2. Keep on the 'firing line,' brother."
- "May the Lord bless and keep you and give you good health and supply all your needs physical, mental and spiritual."
- "I have been doing a lot of studying on women in the church. Where are deaconesses coming from and what Scriptures are they using to make it O. K. to serve on church boards, serve communion, and take the lead in the church? I can't find it in the Scriptures."

"Would you please help to make this matter clear."

"Thank you very much for being a true Bible leader."

**Editor's Reply:** This is a good question. Many are not all that concerned about appealing to the Scriptures to authorize a practice. But perhaps some may think they are getting the authority for it from Romans 16:1 where Phoebe is called a "servant" of the church at Cenchrea. The word *diakonos* (deacon) is simply a word that means servant. For the most part, it is used as a non-technical term in the New Testament, not even referring to an "office" in the church. We get the impression that is the way it is used in Romans 16:1 (and evidently the KJV translators thought

this also, simply rendering the word "servant," and not "deacon" here)—and nothing is said elsewhere in the New Testament that would support such a view. On page 11 of this paper (two pages over) there is a chart and study dealing with this word *diakonos* and how it is translated in the New Testament. This should be helpful in understanding its use and in seeing its limited technical application.

### MARYLAND:

- "I am writing to express my sincere appreciation for your faithfulness in mailing *THE SWORD AND STAFF* to my mother and me. It is a true blessing to read. Thank you so much."

### WEST VIRGINIA:

- "Thank you. Keep up the good work and God bless you. Enclosed is...check."

### INDIANA:

- "Please remove us from your mailing list."

### OHIO:

- "I want to thank you for your 'Newsletter.' I ordered back issues and have read this past month from 1987-1996. A lot of good material. Thank you!..."

"Also I would like to order *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS* if you still have them. Please send me 5 copies..." (E-mail)

- "Thank you very much for sending copies of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* to give to some close friends and also the five books of *POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS*..."

"The church I went to this past Sunday had the *CHRISTIAN STANDARD*, so I picked one up to bring home...In the June 27, 2004 edition they have an interview with two men from Willow Creek [former preachers of two mega Christian Churches but now leading 'ministers' with one of the largest mega churches in America, an interdenominational community church]. 1. They call themselves 'teaching pastors.' 2. 'How much better to just focus on Jesus Christ! Wherever I've been in ministry I've tried to look past denominational tags, building relationships across denominational lines. So for me, coming to Willow doesn't seem like a big shift.' 3. I never saw the Restoration Movement as always 'right.' If someone is a true follower of Christ, we're brothers. We can disagree on some things, but let's work together to change the world for Christ.' 4. I have always believed that when a person sincerely comes to trust Jesus Christ as leader, forgiver, and Savior, and repents, the first step of obedience is to be baptized into Christ.' 5. I guess you could say I treasure weekly Communion, but that is not a theological hill I would choose to die on.' 6. I'm deeply convinced that every believer should observe Communion frequently, sincerely, with deep examination of heart and soul. In Acts 2 they apparently observed it daily in their homes."

"...And the editor of the *CHRISTIAN STANDARD* would let something like this be printed in a magazine

(Continued on Next Page)

## READERS'...Response

*(Continued from Previous Page)*

*[that claims to be] dedicated to the teaching of the doctrines of the Restoration movement and according to the New Testament.*

*"...Elders need to stand up in these churches and put a stop to this. This is leading your sheep astray..."*

### MISSISSIPPI:

■ *"Please send a copy of THE SWORD AND STAFF... I have read several copies and enjoy it!" (E-mail)*

### MISSOURI:

■ *"My mother has moved...She has so enjoyed the paper through the years and shares with her family and friends things she has learned or enjoyed...her new address is..."*

### TEXAS:

■ *"Please discontinue!"*

■ *"I enjoy your paper so much. Look forward to every issue. Keep up the good work."*

■ *"Donation enclosed to help in the publishing of THE SWORD AND STAFF. I appreciate receiving it and the truth you proclaim."*

■ *"Thank you for faithfully mailing me, for years, THE SWORD AND STAFF."*

*"The articles are very edifying and sometimes I use them to teach classes."*

*"Your efforts in this endeavor are deeply appreciated."*

*"May the Lord continue to bless you."*

### NEVADA:

■ *"We really appreciate your good work in publishing THE SWORD AND STAFF and trust you will be able to continue it many years."*

### CALIFORNIA:

■ *"Thank you for THE SWORD AND STAFF. Please continue sending it."*

### OREGON:

■ *"Please renew my privilege of receiving THE SWORD AND STAFF for another year. I would also like to receive a copy of the newest bound volumes..."*

■ *"Your SWORD AND STAFF for June, if I may, gives me continued strength and an uplift in Jesus Christ our Lord...Keep up the good work in our Lord."*

■ *"Please send me the bound volumes of THE SWORD AND STAFF from 1987 to 2002. Enclosed find a check...to cover their cost...I want these books for my library. They are very good."*

### WASHINGTON:

■ *"Please remove our address from your newsletter mailings."*

■ *"Please send a complimentary copy of THE SWORD AND STAFF..." (E-mail)*

### UNITED STATES:

■ *"Dear brother Gibbons, I want to thank you for your work in publishing THE SWORD AND STAFF and*

*THE SWORD AND STAFF web site; they are both very informative and useful. I have a question that maybe you can shed some light on... [The question concerned praying and addressing our prayers to Christ instead of to the Heavenly Father—Editor] May God bless you in your work." (E-mail)*

### Praying to the Father

**Editor's Reply:** I think you picked the right Scriptures in dealing with this question (Matthew 6:9-13; John 16:23-28; Colossians 3:17). We don't want to be ritualistic in our prayers, nor unduly critical of a person's sincerity, but at the same time we want to approach our Heavenly Father in the way He has revealed in the Scriptures in keeping with New Testament doctrine. Yes, there is an example of words being addressed directly to Christ in the 7th chapter of Acts when Stephen was being stoned to death. But this was not prayer as practiced daily by Christians. In the vision he saw Christ "standing on the right hand of God" and he was responding to what he saw. Let us look further into the references given above and into some others that have a bearing upon this subject.

Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-4 should be considered together. The Lord in the model prayer explicitly instructs his followers to pray, "**Our Father** which art in heaven..." And the account in Luke has one of the disciples asking Jesus, after seeing his great prayer life, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." "And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, **Our Father** which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

As the time was approaching when Jesus would no longer be with His disciples, and looking to that time, He said to them, "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. [Physically, He would no longer be with them] Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:23,24). John 14:13 states about the same thing. Now prayer is to be made in the name of Christ. Paul in Ephesians 2:18 shows the overall expanded New Testament concept involved in approaching God, whether it be for salvation or whether it be in prayer. This reads, "For through him [Christ] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Yes, Colossians 3:17 likewise reads, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." This fits in with the other thoughts brought out in this paragraph. (Yes, and it is also inappropriate for people to address God and then conclude their prayer by saying, "in Thy Name." Our requests are made in the name of Christ).

*(Continued on Page 12)*

DIÁKONOS (διάκονος) = “Deacon”

<div>“deacon”</div> <div>(Technical Use)</div> <div>—below—</div>	<div>“servant”</div> <div>(Non-Technical Use)</div> <div>—below—</div>	<div>“minister”</div> <div>(Non-Technical Use)</div> <div>—below—</div>
<div>DEACON, an “office” in the church (1 Timothy 3:8,12; Philippians 1:1)</div> <div>↓</div> <div>↓</div> <div>↓</div> <div>↓</div>	<div>King’s SERVANTS (deacons) in parable (Matthew 22:13)</div> <div>Household SERVANTS (deacons) at wedding feast (John 2:5,9)</div> <div>Any man a SERVANT (deacon) of Christ (John 12:26)</div> <div>Greatest to be SERVANT (deacon) of all (Matthew 23:11)</div> <div>Phobe a SERVANT (here used as feminine of deacon) (Romans 16:1)</div> <div>↓</div>	<div>“Great” among disciples to be MINISTER (deacon) (Matthew 20:26)</div> <div>Officials of government called MINISTERS (deacons) (Romans 13:4)</div> <div>Jesus Christ himself called a MINISTER (deacon) (Romans 15:8; Galatians 2:17)</div> <div>Apostle Paul called himself a MINISTER (deacon) (Ephesians 3:7)</div> <div>Preachers called MINISTERS (deacons) (1 Corinthians 3:5; Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; 1 Timothy 4:6)</div> <div>False teachers called Satan’s MINISTERS (deacons) (2 Corinthians 11:15)</div>

THE SCHOLARS of the King James Version of the Bible translated the Greek work *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, that being “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 the preacher is called “THE MINISTER” and has been “ordained” to “THE MINISTRY.”

In the light of what we know about the Bible (notice chart above), 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 (first column above). 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 all 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 denominational MINISTER is somewhat of an EVANGELIST/ELDER/MEMBER hybrid (plus some more). He is a clergyman who has taken over the job, many times, of a defunct eldership and that of an inactive membership (and apparently he and they love to have it so). He is “paid” to do the job God intended others to do. In the meantime, the recognition of and the work of a New Testament evangelist is not being done.

These thoughts may be totally new to some reading this, but think on them. Obviously much rethinking and restoring need to be done (if we are serious about simple, New Testament Christianity). □

# READERS'...Response

*(Continued from Previous Page)*

In addition to this, a study of Paul's reference to prayer and his prayers is helpful in answering the question before us. He writes to the Romans, "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world" (Romans 1:8). In Paul's prayer that is found in Ephesians 3:14-21, he starts out by saying, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Another one of his statement in Colossians 1:3 should make it conclusive in understanding this. "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you." Prayer is addressed to the Heavenly Father. This was the practice in early New Testament times.

## CUBA:

■ *"I greet you in the sweet name of Jesus. I want you to receive my appreciation for sending the publication for some years. I believe that on its pages we can find true teachings. Unfortunately, recently I have not been receiving copies and that is why I am sending my address again and I also want the publication sent to the addresses I am including..."*

*"May God always bless you. I would also like to use this opportunity to tell you that I use the material to share with the brothers that make up the congregation that we have in our home." (E-mail, translated)*

## ARGENTINA:

■ *"I'm writing this to ask if you will please send me the periodical THE SWORD AND STAFF, if you can. I don't know what the process is to get it. I would like to have it to be able to evaluate (and appreciate) your material. If possible, send it to me by normal mail. God bless you." (E-mail, translated)*

## GHANA:

■ *"The very first thing I want to say is to thank you for sending me volume 42 of THE SWORD AND STAFF. I continue to keep you and your family in my prayers. THE SWORD AND STAFF proves that God has not lost control and that we just need to hold on to the truth. May God bless you and your fruitful labour." (E-mail)*

## NIGERIA:

■ *"With a deep sense of commitment and responsibility, I write to commend your outreach which is of high scholarly quality and quite helpful in pointing Christians to the pathway of truth.*

*"I had the opportunity of going through your volume 40 and 41 of 2002 and 2003 dealing with 'The Moving Impetus of Faith and Grounds of Assurance' and 'The Life of Faith' respectively...The various topics covered in the two editions mentioned above were so beautifully crafted such that readers' horizon in matters of faith keeps on being broadened. It is on this premise that I*

*respectively apply to you to please include my name on the list of those who are existing beneficiaries of your analytical publication and other Bible commentaries. I will be most grateful if this application is accorded due attention as my aim is to be thoroughly equipped Scripturally to be able to transfer the same knowledge to others who are desirous of the truth.*

*"May your huge investment for the cause of Christ be rewarded with His crown of righteousness in Jesus Name. Amen."*

## PHILIPPINES:

■ *"Thank you so much for publishing articles both in print and through the Internet. Hope you will continue to do so into the future.*

*"May God bless you always." (E-mail)*

■ *"Your magazine THE SWORD AND STAFF is a big help to us in understanding more clearly certain passages of the Bible. Thank you very much..."*

*"We are a group not much known outside the Philippines but we firmly believe that there are individuals and groups of Christians out there who adhere to the same set of religious beliefs and practices..." (E-mail)*



## Children Learn What They Live

If a child lives with criticism,  
He learns to condemn.  
If a child lives with hostility,  
He learns to fight.  
If a child lives with ridicule,  
He learns to be shy.  
If a child lives with shame,  
He learns to feel guilty.  
If a child lives with tolerance,  
He learns to have patience.  
If a child lives with encouragement,  
He learns confidence.  
If a child lives with praise,  
He learns to appreciate.  
If a child lives with fairness,  
He learns justice.  
If a child lives with security,  
He learns to have faith.  
If a child lives with approval,  
He learns to like himself.  
If a child lives with acceptance and  
friendship,  
He learns to find love in the world.

*—Dorothy Law Nolte*

## Chapters and Verses

**T**HE BIBLE has 66 books, divided into 1,189 chapters consisting of 31,173 verses. The Bible was divided into chapters by Stephen Langton about 1228. The Old Testament was divided into verses by R. Nathan in 1448 and the New Testament by Robert Stephanus in 1551. The first printed Bible divided into verses was an Old Testament Latin edition by Pagninus, printed in 1528. The first complete English version of the Bible divided into verses was the Geneva Bible, printed in 1560. □



**THE STATUS QUO** is usually not the way to go.

*Zeal without knowledge is like driving your car at a terrific speed with your lights off.*

People all wrapped up in this present world will have a hard time disengaging themselves from it when it goes up in flames.

*Although lies don't have a leg to stand on, they have wings and can fly both near and far.*

If you don't love the Lord enough to go to church, you don't love Him enough to go to heaven (nor would you enjoy being there).

*To compromise the truth is to no longer respect it or regard it as absolute.*

If we are "too" tolerant of the wrong about us, it may be because of the wrong within us (that we want to excuse and justify ourselves).

*Christ is not king in your life if you are a slave to nicotine.*

When you are disturbed about those who are disturbed about those who are in the wrong, there is something wrong.

*If all religions are right, error is as good as truth, and there is no God of truth.*

To say that we still have the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit in the church today is to say that we still have men of inspiration who could write Scripture and that the Bible is not a completed and closed book.

*Some people don't like for you to tell it like it is because that is the way they are.*

The modern hired "minister" is so busy doing what each member of the church should be doing that he has little time left to do that which he should be doing as a minister of the gospel of Christ.

*If you don't know where you stand, you might as well sit down.*

It is sad to say, but in many places today the only place a New Testament church can be found is in the pages of the New Testament.

*Some churches have a rock and roll concert every Sunday.*

Mega-churches can be like mega-stores (i.e., Wal Mart, etc.) whereby merchandize is offered at a lower price (they get more customers that way).

*If you don't love the truth, you are more likely to believe a lie (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).*

We are thankful to live in the USA, but patriotism and Christianity are not synonymous, and the sooner Christians realize this, the better off they will be (regardless of what country it is in which they may live)—our primary citizenship and allegiance is to an eternal kingdom not of this world (Philippians 3:20; 1 Peter 2:9; John 18:36; Hebrews 12:28; Ephesians 1:20-22).

*Rhyming words that describe many today: Rude, Crude, Lewd, Nude and, oh yes, Dude!*

In this day and time too many churches in their interchurch "fellowship" constitute a network of compromise wherein a "rising tide lifts all boats," thus impeding faithfulness to the Lord's cause, and in such a context it would be better for local churches to exercise their God-given independence as local autonomous entities and be found faithful to the Lord, in the meantime simply maintaining a relationship of love and concern to the churches at large.

*When you start trimming yourself to please everybody, there soon will not be much of you left.*

One religious body has THE pope over the universal church; other religious bodies have THE minister over the local church.

*We are not trying to be politically correct in what we say, but truthfully correct.*

Before there can be a New Testament church, there must be New Testament Christians.

*You must live right to die right.* □

## True "Christian Unity"

**T**RUE "Christian unity" is produced more by our relation to Christ than by our relation to others. In fact, true oneness is determined by our relationship to Christ. Read Colossians 3:15 (1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27,28), Romans 12:5 and 1 John 1:5-7 (and get the connection). Christians, in a right relation to Christ, are "automatically" put in a right relation to other such Christians. It is a by-product of being right with Christ, following His word and "walking in the light." The closer we get to Christ, the closer we get to one another. If unity is not on this basis, it is not true "Christian unity," but something artificially imposed (a work of the flesh). □

# Psalms 119

**P**SALMS 119 is called the **Alphabetical Psalm**. As the longest psalm and the most perfect of its kind, it uses the Hebrew alphabet of twenty-two letters as a means to recall verses from one's memory. The subject is God's law and sanctification of the soul of man. God's law supports, impacts happiness, peace of mind, and teaches obedience. This psalm sets forth the excellence of the law and the effects upon those who obey it. It uses a variety of expressions to manifest God as abundantly kind, forgiving, merciful, slow to anger, gracious and loving (Exodus 34:6; Psalms 103). With 176 verses the illustrations are markedly clear and free from repetition. There are perhaps no verses exactly like this anywhere else in the Scriptures. The shades and contrasts are designed to make the reader want to reread the law, testimonies and statutes of God. These verses are time-honored descriptions or references to God's law.

The writer David meditated on God's law day and night (Psalms 1). This man of maturity gives the results of his experience, being influenced by God's law under various circumstances, and expresses the effect it had upon others. It was not as commonly used in public worship as the shorter psalms. Yet its storehouse of precious truths was intended for memorization by youths to learn the alphabet and store it as a guide along life's journey. Youth could not have a better treasure than this psalm. To keep a youth from turning away from the religion of his father was premeditated into this psalm. The lessons learned would be applicable to temptation, allurements, enticement, idolatry, sensual inordinate gratifications or feelings of pressure from within or without the Jewish community. This psalm was applicable to the people of God at all times and was to strengthen the mind, heart and soul (Deuteronomy 6:1-5). Youth, trials, duty, meditation, public and private actions are seen in this psalm.

The Psalmist said, "**I am a stranger in the earth**" (verse 19). As a wayfarer, sojourner and pilgrim whose permanent home was not of this world, he set his hope on eternity with God (Hebrews 11:3). He lived among mankind and looked for ways and means to know God's law more perfectly by practice and meditation. His hope was a commitment to a constant fellowship with his God. This psalm removed the feelings of desolation and heartache of a stranger.

The Psalmist said, "...for **I am become like a bottle of smoke**; yet I do not forget thy statutes" (verse 83). This metaphor is of a container (wine-skin or vase) hanging where there was little escape

from defilement. Dark, dingy and corruptive forces bring discomfort, distress and sorrow. In these conditions the "light of God's word" fills a being with hope and confidence in the ultimate victory over self, sin and circumstances beyond one's control. One finds comfort in the hope built into God's word and with an intense longing awaits help in danger. The true believer expresses, "God is greater than all my fears." Patience and strength of faith are preserving elements and an evidence that in nothing affrighted by the adversaries (Philippians 1:28). Patient endurance always prevails.

The Psalmist says, "**I am afflicted** very much, quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word" (verse 17). With God's word as a lamp to one's feet and light to the path one can swear an oath to perform and keep righteousness. There is a commitment that cannot be shaken by afflictions. The frequency of afflictions in this psalm demonstrates that it is an element of life (Psalms 71; 75). The Psalmist accepts such and flees to God, casting his anxieties upon Him because He cares and can do something about making all things work for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:26-30; 1 Peter 5:7). The real life is found in God's saving grace (Ephesians 2:1-10). When one is in Christ, there is vigor to bear up under all of life's many trials (Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 1:3).

The Psalmist says, "**I am afraid** of thy judgment" (verse 120), and "**I am thy servant**; give me understanding..." (verse 125). The flesh trembles at the consciousness of God's presence and the

## *You Tell on Yourself*

You tell on yourself by the friends you seek,  
By the very manner in which you speak,  
By the way you employ your leisure time,  
By the use you make of the dollar and dime.

You tell on yourself by the things you wear,  
By the spirit in which you your burdens bear,  
By the kind of things that make you laugh,  
By the records you play on your phonograph.

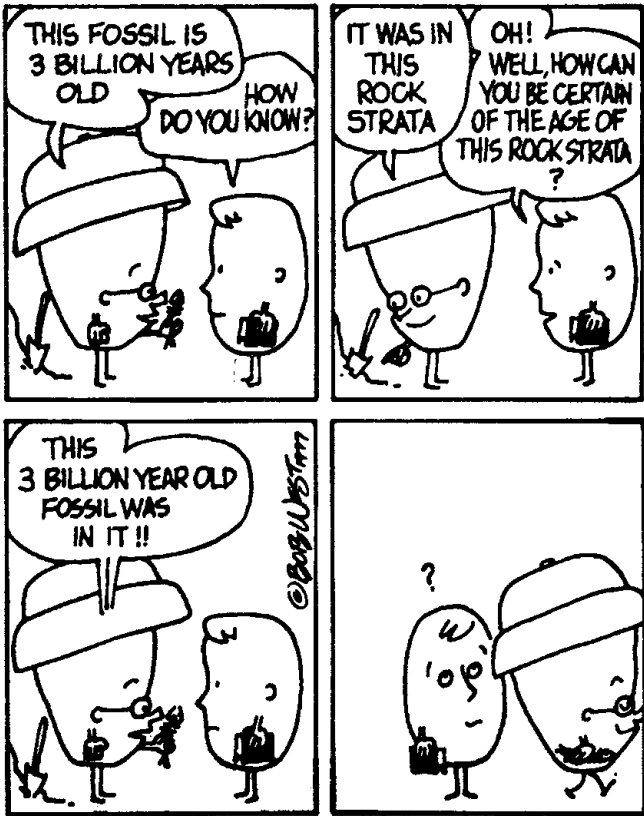
You tell on yourself by the way you walk,  
By the things of which you delight to talk,  
By the manner in which you bear defeat,  
By so simple a thing as how you eat.

By the books you choose from the well filled  
self,  
In these ways and more, you tell on yourself.  
So there is not a particle of sense,  
In an effort to keep up a false pretense.

—Author Unknown

accountability of man. There is a sense of commitment for a full surrender to the merciful and redeeming God who gives peace and cheerful rejoicing in His presence.—*Don Hatch*      □

**"Science Falsely So Called" (1 Timothy 6:20)**



**How Long Were The Days in Genesis?**

**S**INCE A DAY consists of twenty-four hours, then each of the six days of creation was a literal, twenty-four hour period of time. The answer is easily gained from the reading of the text itself. But, those familiar with evolutionary thought know this is quite a contested passage. Even many so called "theists" compromise precious truth by claiming that the days of the creation week were eons of time, instead of six twenty-four hour time periods. The theory of evolution is false doctrine, and any constituent of that theory is equally damnable. To suggest a compromise between Genesis and pseudo-science denies the inspiration and integrity of the Bible and eventually leads the compromisers to a complete denial of God's existence. Though men try, no one can deny the fact that each day of creation was a twenty-four hour time period.

The Holy Spirit, through Moses, consistently employed the Hebrew word for "day" (*yom*) with a

number to indicate literal twenty-four hour days. This fact remains constant throughout the entire Pentateuch. Even the first chapter of Genesis speaks the nature of the days. Plant life was created on day three (Genesis 1:9-13), and the sun on day four (Genesis 1:14-19). Those who would assert that each day of the creation equaled thousands or millions of years must accept the impossible "fact" that plant life thrived for thousands or millions of years with no sunlight! Consider also that Israel's work schedule was patterned in the likeness of the six days of creation (cf. Exodus 20:8-11). Each six-day period was as literal as the other. Thus it is clear, the days of creation were each twenty-four hours long.—*David B. Smith*      □

**Preacher Quits Sports**

Want to know why?

1. Every time I went, they asked me for money.
2. The people with whom I had to sit didn't seem very friendly.
3. The seats were too hard and not comfortable.
4. The coach never came to call on me.
5. The referee made a decision with which I could not agree.
6. Some games went into overtime, and I was late getting home.
7. I was sitting with some hypocrites—they came only to see what others were wearing.
8. The band played some numbers that I had never heard before.
9. The games are scheduled when I want to do other things.
10. My parents took me to too many games when I was growing up.
11. Since I read a book on sports, I feel that I know more than the coaches do anyhow.
12. I don't want to take my children, because I want them to choose for themselves what sport they like best.—*Selected*      □

**Answers to:  
BIBLE QUESTIONS**

1. Genesis 10:8,9; 2. Genesis 20:1-13; 3. Exodus 8:16-19; 4. Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21; 5. Exodus 31:1-11; 35:30-36:4; 6. Exodus 35:4-36:7; 7. Numbers 20:1-12; 8. Judges 11:29-40; 9. 1 Samuel 9:2; 10:23,24; 10. Joel 2:25; 11. Malachi 1:8; 12. Matthew 2:19-23; 13. Luke 16:28 (16:19-31); 14. John 20:30,31; 15. Luke 23:33 (Matthew 27:33; Mark 15:22; John 19:17); 16. John 1:42; 1 Corinthians 9:5; 15:5; 17. John 6:1; 21:1; 18. Acts 1:9-12; 19. Acts 9:36-42; Acts 20:5-12; 20. 2 Timothy 1:5.      □

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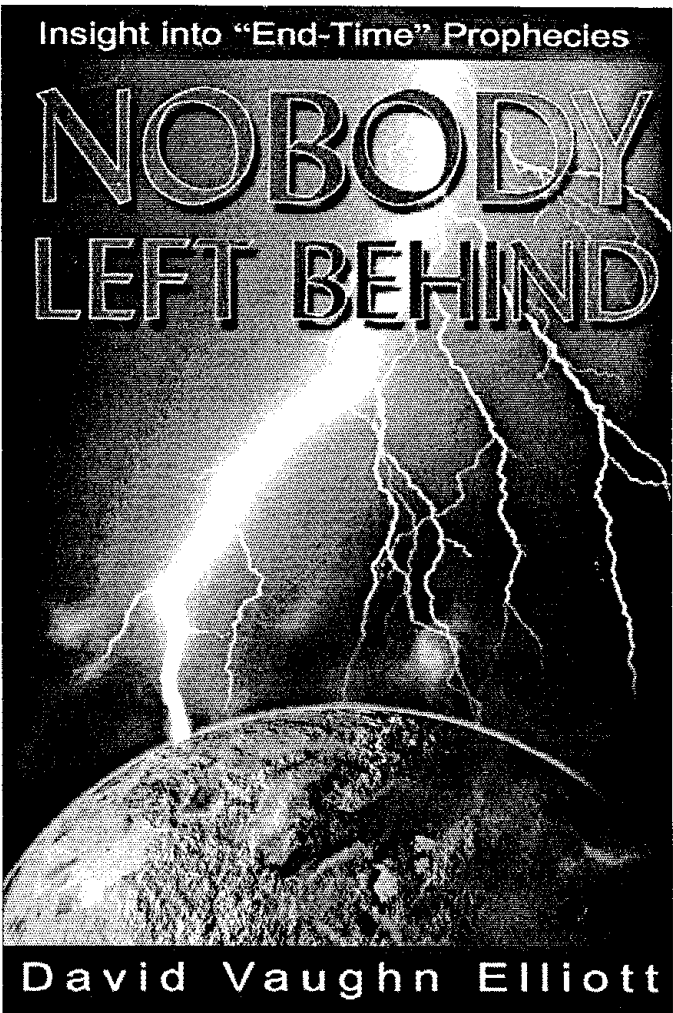
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