

The Sword AND Staff

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

“Perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

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MANY, MANY ISSUES ago we started a series of articles about “going on unto perfection.” This involved three categories of thought, going on unto perfection in our faith, in our love and in our holiness. We developed the category of faith extensively with several articles following one another. We have just now finished two articles on love (perhaps more will be written later), and with this current article start on the theme of holiness.

These three categories of “going on unto perfection” have not been artificially selected. Paul, in writing to the new Christians at Thessalonica in 1 Thessalonians 3, touches upon all three. Carefully read this chapter where faith, love and holiness are emphasized, all moving toward the last one “to the end he may stablish your hearts in holiness unbelameable before God...” All three categories are also highlighted by Paul in 1 Timothy 2:15 where he says that Christian mothers will be saved “if they continue in faith and charity [love] and holiness with sobriety.” Here he adds the ingredient of all of this being done with sobriety (a sense of soberness in realizing the seriousness of what they were doing). All three categories are basic routes we are to take in going on unto maturity in Christ.

To put it another way as parallel thought, God is, God is love, and God is holy. (1) God is. This involves faith (Hebrews 11:6). (2) God is love (1 John 4:8,16). We are to be like Him (1 John 4:7-21). (3) God is Holy. God says, “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). We go “on unto perfection” as we reach out to God in all three of these avenues.—*Editor*

IN THIS ARTICLE we wish to notice (1) Holiness, (2) Perfecting Holiness, and (3) Perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God. As a “jumping off” place into this study, 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 is an excellent place to begin. Read it carefully. This section starts with a positive injunction, “Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” and continues with five questions rhetorically asked to prod our thinking in this direction. Then the writer Paul highlights the reason why we are not to be “unequally yoked.” We are the temple of the living God. Following this, he meshes together thoughts from several Old Testa-

ment sources to get his point across. God will dwell in us, be among us, and “walk in” us—as *He is our God*. But this is all conditional. It is on the basis of the instructions that follow (and had already been given), “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” And finally, chapter 7:1, which should have been part of chapter 6, sums everything up nicely with this extended and crowning admonition, “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, **perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**” As we stated before, that’s what we are talking about in this article.

I. “HOLINESS”

Being Holy and Holiness Defined and Understood in Relation to God

In the light of the Bible, the words “holy” and “holiness” always are to be defined and understood in reference to and in relation to God. God, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, said, “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (Leviticus 20:7; 1 Peter 1:16). He is holy and He is holiness in the absolute, in its perfection and completeness. From our human viewpoint, holiness is realized in our proximity to God, as we have separated ourselves from moral defilement and dedicated ourselves to Him. Trench, in his *Synonyms of the New Testament*, has this to say about the Greek word **hagios** that is translated “holy” in the New Testament. “Its fundamental idea is separation, and, so to speak, consecration and devotion to the service of Deity...and what is set apart from the world and to God, should separate itself from the world’s defilements, and should share in God’s

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—THANK YOU—

Proverbially ***SPEAKING...***

IF THE DEVIL knocks, let Jesus go to the door.

Like the prodigal son, we must come to ourselves (Luke 15:17, 18), before we can come to God.

Because we fear the Lord we can find comfort in him (Acts 9:31).

Someone has said that when the Bible says "therefore," we should look and see what it is there for.

A life that is straight as an arrow will go in the right direction.

A real leader is someone who knows where he is going and is resolved to get there and take others with him.

A liberal person will find that he is treated accordingly.

Blushing is evidence of one of two possible feelings: (1) Virtuous sensitivities that recoil in shame at the thought of evil; (2) Inescapable feelings of guilt and shame that suddenly surface because of evil committed.

A love that's real will do more than feel (I John 3:16-18).

Anticipation and hope bring stability and motivation to our lives.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS



DOES IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE WHAT WE BELIEVE?

BELIEF, whether we are speaking objectively or subjectively, is a cardinal doctrine of Christianity, if not the cardinal doctrine. In fact, Christianity is called "the faith" repeatedly in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 6:7; Romans 1:5; 1 Corinthians 16:13; Colossians 1:23; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 4:7; Jude 3; etc.). This mode of reference can mean a person, Christ, and/or a system of doctrine that surrounds that person. More distinctly, the apostle Paul wrote, "There is...One Lord, one faith, one baptism..." (Ephesians 4:4-6).

With that in mind, we have a question before us. Does it make any difference what a person believes? We live in a multi-cultural society with a multiplicity of religions about us. Now in this melting pot, along with Protestants, Catholics and Jews have been added Moslems and other far eastern religions. The fuzzy, modern, humanistic mentality tends to look upon all religions as being human in origin, with an air of tolerance and acceptance of all, not taking the time to really look into the matter. All of this, consequently, is smoothed over with the attitude, "I'm O.K; you're O.K." (as we subsequently are homogenized into the society in which we live). "It doesn't make any difference what you believe, just so you are sincere." Yes, we believe in treating one another with dignity and respect, but are the afore said words the right way to look at things; especially if we claim to be New Testament Christians?

The New Testament teaches that Jesus was "Emmanuel" (God with us), God incarnate, the Word that became flesh (John 1:1-14). Jesus unabashedly told his disciples, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). In view of his mission, he declared that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Likewise, John 8:24 reads, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." John 3:16 states, "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." In giving the Great Commission, the Lord Jesus implicitly said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). So, from the Christian viewpoint, it sounds like it does make a difference what a person believes, as salvation hinges on it. Peter summed it up well, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 lays out the responsibility in preaching and what is to be believed and observed.

This is to be adhered to, before we can make claim to the promise that follows, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world [age].” The apostle Paul was well aware of this, even reaching beyond the promise of Christ’s presence to the weighty responsibility incurred in faithfully and not faithlessly preaching the gospel. He said to the Ephesian elders, “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). Likewise, Paul instructed 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” (1 Timothy 4:16). He had to live the right kind of life, preach the right message and the people had to believe the right message to be saved. It certainly sounds like it does make a difference what we believe.

The early church confronted false teachers. Among them were the Judaizers, teachers who tried to mix the Law and the Gospel. With this as a backdrop to his thoughts, Paul said to the Galatians, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8). Christians in Asia Minor, facing the incipient and budding doctrine of Gnosticism, were warned by the apostle John, “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11). And the Great Apostasy that culminated in the Dark Ages (with Catholicism and denominationalism) was already beginning in the first century. Having said that the falling away was coming, Paul stated, “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work...” Then he speaks of people not receiving “the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” And he continues, “And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Thessalonians 2:3-12). Yes, the apostle Paul teaches that a person can believe a lie and be damned.

Let us not be deceived by this careless and disrespectful mentality (disrespectful of the truth) that comes at us from every angle in our society today. It does make a difference what we believe. Preacher, everyone, let us seriously take to heart what the apostle Paul writes in 2 Timothy 4:1-8. Let us read this and heed it now. Amen! □

450 SHEEP JUMP TO THEIR DEATHS

[The following news article was recently released by the Associated Press (July 8, 2005). It is especially interesting to the Bible student since the heartland of the Bible, Palestine, was decidedly a pastoral country and the illustrative imagery of shepherd and sheep are constantly used in religious teaching. Different illustrations can be derived from this news article, involving sheep. So, as a matter of interest, with potential applications, we share this news item with you.]

ISTANBUL, Turkey (AP)—First one sheep jumped to its death. Then stunned shepherds, who had left the herd to graze while they had breakfast, watched as nearly 1,500 others followed, each leaping off the same cliff, Turkish media reported.

In the end, 450 dead animals lay on top of one another in a billowy white pile, the Aksam newspaper said. Those who jumped later were saved as the pile got higher and the fall more cushioned, Aksam reported.

“There’s nothing we can do. They’re all wasted,” Nevzat Bayhan, a member of one of the 26 families whose sheep were grazing together in the herd, was quoted as saying by Aksam.

The estimated loss to families in the town of Gevas, located in Van province in eastern Turkey, tops \$100,000, a significant amount of money in a country where average GDP per head is around \$2,700.

“Every family had an average of 20 sheep,” Aksam quoted another villager, Abdullah Hazar as saying. “But now only a few families have sheep left. It’s going to be hard for us.” □

EDITORIAL
Byways

UP WAS UP, AND DOWN WAS DOWN

IT WAS my first trip to Bible lands several years ago (paid for by an anonymous donor). We had flown much of the night over the North Atlantic, changed planes in Amsterdam, to finally arrive at our destination in Tel Aviv, Israel. Here we boarded a tour bus. Excitement was in the air. With little sleep, at least for this writer, our Bible lands tour was now actually becoming a reality. We were in the land where so many Bible things had taken place.

Although excitement was in the air, fatigue finally prevailed. I have little memory of those early hours of that part of our tour, as I was overcome by sleep much of the time. For some reason, perhaps it being the shrugging of the bus going around curves or the sound of the increased pull on the motor of

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the bus as it went up the mountain, I was awakened. We were approaching Nazareth. I could see jagged rocks below a higher elevation. This made a startling impression on me, and doubly so when I learned this was the place where the local citizens were going to cast Jesus “headlong” over the side of the mountain.

What we are referring to is recorded in Luke 4:16-32. Following his baptism, Jesus returned to Nazareth and taught in their synagogue. He read the Scripture from Isaiah, which says, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” Having read this, he sat down and asserted, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” As the people of Nazareth unfavorably reacted to what he said, they mused, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” After Jesus had finished talking, we read, “And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way, And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath days.”

The accuracy of the Bible account in the description of the terrain of the land impressed me. It said they “rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.” There it was, just like the Bible stated. Then it says, “But he passing through the midst of them went his way, and **came down** to Capernaum...” And these words are very exact. Indeed, Capernaum was “down” on the other side of the mountains on the banks of the Sea of Galilee.

The Bible is not a fictitious book, although modern destructive critics have tried to depict it as such. It is not a Book of Mormon with names and sites and lands that cannot be identified. When it names a place, it was a place. When it says up, it means up. And when it says they went down, they went down. Yes, even to the geographic features of the land, it is true.

Stephen in his defense before the Sanhedrin said, “So Jacob **went down** into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers...” (Acts 7:15) This is exactly what took place. Coming out of the highlands of Canaan, Jacob and his company went “down” (and south) in their

trip to Egypt where they were reunited with Joseph and thereafter lived. Likewise, Acts 8:26 reads, “And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the **south** unto the way that **goeth down** from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.” Jerusalem was situated up in the mountains and Gaza was located on the coastal plains. He of necessity would have to go down. In the story of the Good Samaritan Jesus relates how “a certain man **went down** from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead” (Luke 10:30). Indeed, this would be down, descending from the crest of the mountains in Jerusalem to Jericho, located near the Dead Sea (the lowest place on earth). The same is true of what we read in Acts 9:30. When the new convert, Paul, became the target of Jewish hostility, the brethren brought him “**down** [from Jerusalem] to Caesarea [the coastal seaport city of Judea built by the Romans], and sent him forth to Tarsus.” Furthermore, the same verification of the geography of the land can be seen in connection with a later experience in the life of the apostle Paul in Acts 24:5-7.

Also, reference is repeatedly made in the Scriptures of “going up to Jerusalem” (Matthew 20:17, 18; Mark 10:32, 33; Mark 15:41; Luke 2:42; 19:1-28; Acts 11:2; 15:2; 21:4, 12; 25:9; Galatians 1:18; 2:1). Perhaps a twofold meaning is involved in this expression. (1) Literally, it would refer to ascending the mountain range to get to where Jerusalem was located. (2) And the temple was situated here. To the Jews, not only was this a physical summit to ascend, but, since the temple was here, it represented and highlighted a spiritual summit. This place was the apex of their religious life, and going here was associated with religious activities and savored as a mountain top experience. (John 2:13; 5:1; 7:10, 14; 11:55; 12:20; Acts 24:11). So, both thoughts should be kept in mind, a physical and a spiritual summit, when we read of them “going up to Jerusalem.” Sometimes one thought exceeds the other, but, regardless, the verification of the geography of the land is brought out.

Yes, the Bible is faithful and true in its content, even in its reference to the geography and terrain of the lands of the Bible. My personal experience and observation vividly verified this to me. Up was up, and down was down. ▣



***If you are going down the wrong road,
you may get somewhere, but it won't
be the right destination—Are you
on the right road?***

“Perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

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- “Be not conformed to this world...” (Romans 12:2)
- “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord...” (2 Corinthians 6:17)

purity.” Consequently and subsequently, Paul admonished the Corinthians to be “not unequally yoked together with unbelievers,” “to touch not the unclean thing,” and to “come out from among them, and be ye separate.” Holiness is the state attained when we do this.

Places and Things Regarded as Holy

The Old Testament puts a heavy emphasis on places and things being holy, although personal holiness on the part of man is not omitted. Things are holy because of God’s presence and association. The first use of the word “holy” is found when God, who was speaking to Moses from the burning bush, told him to “put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5). The place was holy because of God’s presence. God was there in a very immediate sense. Palestine came to be called the Holy Land; wherein was Jerusalem that was called the holy city, and therein was the holy temple (regarded such because of God’s presence). And the temple proper was partitioned into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. In the Holy of Holies was God’s most personal presence. On the Mercy Seat, situated on the top of the Ark of the Covenant between the cherubim facing one another from the ends, God’s most personal presence dwelt.

A Shift Away from The Material Concept of Holy

The New Testament seems to take a shift away from regarding things as being holy, putting the emphasis on people being holy. However, perhaps looking at it from the Old Testament perspective, earthly Jerusalem is still called the holy city (Matthew 4:5; 27:53; Revelation 11:2), the new

Jerusalem is called the holy city (Revelation 21:2, 10; 22:19), and the mount of transfiguration is called the holy mount (2 Peter 1:18). God’s Word always is regarded as being uniquely holy, being called the Holy Scriptures (Romans 1:2; 2 Timothy 3:15), and His commandments are called holy commandments (Romans 7:12; 2 Peter 2:21). But Stephen, defending himself before the Sanhedrin of the Jews, unquestionably makes it clear that there has been a shift in thinking (especially involving the temple). To the dismay of his hostile audience, he declares that “the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophets, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will you build me? Saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?” (Acts 7:48-50). Paul advances the tenor of what Stephen said, as his voice echoed across Mars’ Hill to resound against the walls of the pagan Grecian temples. “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands...” (Acts 17:24) The time had now come, as Jesus strongly implied to the Samaritan woman, when places and buildings would no longer be important factors in worshipping God (John 4:20-24). “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

The Church is God’s Holy Temple Today

With the advent of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2, the Christian age was ushered in (Mark 9:1). The miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles was followed by the regular indwelling of the Spirit in all believers (Acts 2:38, 39). Slowly, but surely, the church was led away from the building concept of the temple (John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Corinthians 13:9, 10) to realize that God now dwells in a temple not made by hands. Collectively (2 Corinthians 6:16; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:20-22) and in its individual members (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20) the church is the temple of the living God today. With God’s personal indwelling, it is holy and must always be characterized by holiness. A temple is sacred and set apart from the world for sacred purposes. Being a temple, there is nothing secular in the life of a Christian. The body of a Christian is a temple of God twenty-four hours a day and everything that is done is to be entered into and done with this mindset.

A Whole Family of Words

Before we move on in this study, let us point out again that the primary New Testament word for holy is *hagios*. It furnishes the root from which a whole family of words comes. This word and its cognate

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“Perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

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derivatives are represented in our English Bibles with words like “holy,” “saint,” “sanctify,” “sanctification,” “holiness,” and “hallow.” In each word, God is always standing nearby, and each word must always be understood in relation to Him. The thought always involves separation for sacred purposes.

II. “PERFECTING HOLINESS”

Now returning to the key verse in this article, “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *perfecting holiness in the fear of God*” (2 Corinthians 7:1), let us get right into the heart of this study on perfecting holiness.

A. Perfecting Holiness, Sanctification, is Initially Imputed and Progressively Attained

When we talk about perfecting holiness, we are talking about being sanctified—*being made holy and becoming more holy; being separated and set apart unto God*. Basically, sanctification and holiness are the same thing. In being sanctified, we become holy. Sanctification takes place initially in becoming a Christian and it takes place progressively in living the Christian life. Let us elaborate.

Perfection in Holiness Initially Imputed in Forgiveness

Forgiveness of sins and conversion to Christ constitute the initial sanctification (as His perfect holiness is imputed in the taking away of our sins). As Paul has said, “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), and “There is none righteous, no, not one” (3:10). Sin is such a contaminating pollutant that we were anything but a temple set aside to God. One sin made the human race a dying race. Forgiveness, cleansing and imputation of righteousness were necessary before we could be looked upon as holy before God. That is what the story of Christ is all about, “For he [God, the Father] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21). In 1 Corinthians 1:30, Paul had earlier written to the Corinthians about “Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and *sanctification*, and redemption.” Reviewing their former state of pollution in sin, he said, “And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are *sanctified*, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11). Ephesians 5:26 and Acts 2:38 are talking about the same thing. Initial sanctification takes place when we repent and are

immersed into Christ for the remission of our sins. Then the Holy Spirit comes into our lives to live. Our body (our whole person) has become a holy temple set aside for sacred purposes. Likewise, according to the Word of God, we have become a saint.

Perfecting Holiness, An Ongoing Progressive Process

However, now in another very real sense, the new Christian must personally be involved in the practical outworking of his own sanctification. He has been forgiven, but he is a babe in Christ. He is immature and has much growing to do. There are battles to be fought and victories to be won. Consequently, his sanctification now is a progressive, ongoing process. His holiness must be perfected. Righteousness initially imputed in forgiveness must now be converted into practice (Romans 6). How we need to weed out of our lives all things that should not be there (things of the world, lack of spirituality, carnality, bad habits, etc.)! Many weights and sins are to be laid aside (Hebrews 12:1). Read again 2 Corinthians 6:14 through 7:1, which was written to people who had already been initially sanctified (1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11). Now personally, in the face of grave sin problems in the church, they were instructed to be “perfecting [their] holiness [sanctification] in the fear of God.” Paul likewise asserts in 2 Timothy 2:21, “If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, *sanctified*, and meet [suited] for the master’s use...” His prayer for the Thessalonians was that God would “sanctify you wholly,” in view of the second coming of Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:23). This sanctification was after the initial sanctification in conversion. We continually work on this from day to day.



B. Perfecting Holiness Involves the Whole Person Becoming Wholly Holy

Plain and Impressive Verses

Starting with 2 Corinthians 7:1, the following Scriptures are plain in showing that the total person is involved in perfecting holiness. As we aspire to accomplish God’s purpose in our lives, and daily press on, think upon these verses and all that is implied. It is not just an external thing.

- “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from *all filthiness of the flesh and spirit*, perfecting holiness in the fear of the God” (2 Corinthians 7:1).

- “What? Know ye not that your **body** is the temple of the Holy Ghost [Spirit] which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God **in your body, and in your spirit**, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20).
- “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your **bodies a living sacrifice, holy**, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:1,2).
- “And the very God of peace **sanctify you wholly**: and I pray God your **whole spirit and soul and body** be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

Many times in perfecting our holiness, it is not unlike the steps that Jesus took in cleansing the temple. The only difference is that we are talking about spiritual things. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and we are trying to get out all of the unacceptable rubble, pollution and defilement that should never and must never be there. We need to be sanctified wholly in becoming holy.

The Nature and Scope of Sin

We need to understand the nature and scope of sin to appreciate these commands and admonitions to be sanctified and to be wholly holy. Sin is not isolated to one part of our body, or ones life, but it involves the whole person.

Repeatedly in the Bible the different parts of the body are spoken of as being involved in sin, even collectively in one act of sin. Read Proverbs 6:12-18 to illustrate. Here the mouth, the eyes, the feet, the fingers, and the heart are spoken of as taking part in sin. Jesus spoke of the heart, the eye, the hand and the foot being involved in adultery and doing wrong (Matthew 5:28-30; Mark 9:43-47). In the epistle to the Romans in his blistering indictment of mankind, notice how the apostle Paul refers to different parts of the body to get his point across, before he pronounces his conclusion, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (3:23). Notice: “Their **throat** is an open sepulcher; with their **tongues** they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their **lips**: Whose **mouth** is full of cursing and bitterness: Their **feet** are swift to shed blood...There is no fear of God before their **eyes**” (3:13-18). When a person sins, his whole person sins (not just a single part of him). Therefore, perfecting holiness must take into consideration the whole person.

Conversion Involves the Whole Person

All of this being true, conversion of the whole person is necessary in responding to the grace and mercy of the Lord, in receiving the imputed righteousness in forgiveness, and in our being declared justified before God. Philip told the Ethiopian eunuch he could be baptized, “If thou believest with **all thine heart**” (Acts 8:37). Discipleship involves forsaking all to follow Christ (Luke 14:33; 9:23). In repentance, a change of mind, sin is put to death in our bodies. When we are baptized, fittingly the whole body goes under the water (as the whole body and person has been involved in committing sin). We put “off the body of the sins of the flesh” in baptism (Colossians 2:11,12; Acts 22:16). We arise to walk in newness of life. Read the whole 6th chapter of Romans (a great chapter). In Romans 6:19, Paul continues, “As ye have yielded your members [parts of your body] servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.” This inclusive thought is narrowed in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7 when Paul says, “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour...For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.”

**III. “PERFECTING HOLINESS IN THE FEAR OF GOD”
In Perfecting Holiness Fear
Is a Natural and Compelling Motive**

We now come to the last point in this article with the emphasis being placed on the last part of 2 Corinthians 7:1, “**perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**” Someone has said that fear “goes hand in hand with love: love is the positive side, fear the negative; love prompts one to do what pleases God, fear prompts one to refrain from what displeases God. Neither can dispense with the other; neither functions alone.” Perhaps, in the first part of this verse, there is an appeal made to the positive side, as Paul addresses them, “*Having therefore these promises* [6:16-18], dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit...” Then the more somber tone of “fear” enters the picture as he says, “**perfecting holiness in the fear of God.**” The apostle Peter tells us, “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [all your conduct]; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here **in fear**” (1 Peter 1:15-17). We are sinful

(Continued on Next Page)

“Perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

(Continued from Previous Page)

creatures, having sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. A perfect and holy God’s intolerance of sin can’t help but produce a certain amount of apprehension and fear on our part in approaching Him. Only the grace of God modifies this fear (Hebrews 4:15, 16), but it is still there in a sense. In “perfecting holiness,” it must ever be “in the fear of God.”

“For I Am a Sinful Man, O Lord”

When we draw near to God, we are made to realize just how far away from Him we really are. Personal encounters with God in the Bible have always produced fear in His presence. When Adam and Eve sinned, guilt ridden, they “hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.” God called out to the sinful pair, and Adam replied, “I was afraid...and I hid myself” (Genesis 3:8-10). When Jacob awakened from his sleep at Bethel and pondered the vision he had seen, it had an unsettling effect upon him. He had seen angels ascending and descending to heaven from God. He exclaimed, “Surely the LORD is in this place...And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (Genesis 28:10-17). The prophet Isaiah likewise went through such an experience when seeing a vision of God sitting upon a throne in the temple. Angelic beings were crying out, “Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts...” Isaiah tells us of his response. “Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts” (Isaiah 6). We also see the same reaction in Simon Peter. The omniscience of Christ made startlingly apparent in the catching of fish, prompted Peter to fall at his feet and cry out, “Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord” (Luke 5:4-8).

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, we challenge you to go back to 1 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, the section of Scripture where we entered into this study on holiness. Read this again. In the light of the great truths we have looked into, get serious about this matter. Do what is commanded here. Being holy may not be in style today (even in religious circles), and the world may think that we are really strange (1 Peter 4:2-5) (and even fellow Christians may think this), but God still says, “Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (Holiness is separation unto God). The Bible still says, “*Follow* [pursue] peace with all men, and *holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord*” (Hebrews

12:14). The promise of God still stands, “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” And the words of the Lord Jesus are still in the Bible, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). Cushioned by the grace of God (Hebrews 4:14-16), let us grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord, “perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” Amen. □

BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. Luz was the more ancient name of what place in the Bible?
2. The life of Moses can be divided into what three equal periods of time?
3. From where was Moses allowed by God to view the Promised Land before he died, although he didn’t get to enter the land?
4. To whom was the city of Hebron given as an inheritance in the Promised Land, and why?
5. What city in the Bible is called “the city of palm trees”?
6. What Place was the center of worship and the home of the tabernacle during the early history of Israel and the time of the judges?
7. What was the foolish vow of Jephthah, judge of Israel, that he lived to regret?
8. What were the circumstances in which a child was named “Ichabod” in Israel, and what does the name mean?
9. When David and his men were fleeing from king Saul and went into the land of the Philistines, what city was given him by the Philistines in which to live?
10. Who in the Bible said, “Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD”?
11. What were the temptations immediately faced by Jesus after his baptism and fasting forty days and forty nights in the wilderness?
12. What were three occasions when Jesus singled out Peter, James and John from the other disciples to be with him?
13. Where did Jesus tell his disciples he would meet them after his resurrection?
14. What man took the place of Judas, who by transgression fell, to be numbered with the others as an apostle?
15. Who was the first and the last apostle to die (not counting Judas)?
16. Where was Paul when he was stoned and left for dead?
17. What word in the New Testament is opposite in meaning to the New Testament word “mystery”?
18. The letter written by the apostle Paul to the church at Colosse was to be read to what other church also?
19. What book in the New Testament could be called a “Handbook for Preachers”?
20. The epistle of 2 John was written to whom?

(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. □

GEORGIA:

■ *"I sincerely enjoy your writings and commend you for your effort..." (E-mail)*

SOUTH CAROLINA:

■ *"Please send one (1) copy of NOBODY LEFT BEHIND...Thank you for your work. THE SWORD AND STAFF is the 'best' publication."*

■ *"Thank you for THE SWORD AND STAFF that you sent. I would like to receive it often. It is a wonderful and helpful publication. Keep up the good work!"*

■ *"It is about time I stopped being a freeloader. I have enjoyed your publication for a number of years and would like to contribute to its production. I would also like to receive two (2) copies of the book NOBODY LEFT BEHIND as well as one (1) copy of your book POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS..."*

"I will be more diligent about supporting your paper from now on as it is worthy of such. Thank you and God bless you for your efforts."

NORTH CAROLINA:

■ *"Enclosed is a money order for thirty dollars (\$30.00). Please send one copy of NOBODY LEFT BEHIND to... and one copy to me...I loan my copy out so much I want one I can keep for myself."*

VIRGINIA:

■ *"I continue to receive your SWORD AND STAFF. Every issue is rich with truth. Keep on keeping on!..."*

■ *"Enclosed is a check...as a contribution to the work. I enjoy reading your publication and look forward to its arrival."*

■ *"May God bless you! Your love for Christ and your knowledge of the Word has truly made me a stronger Christian..."*

■ *"[I] am sending a little something to help in the publication of THE SWORD AND STAFF. I enjoy reading it very much. It seems that people can't stand hearing the truth, or is it that they just don't believe it?"*

TENNESSEE:

■ *"Keep up your good work as long as you can..."*

■ *"[I] am enclosing a contribution. I look forward to receiving THE SWORD AND STAFF. So many good lessons and source of encouragement."*

■ *"Thanks again for your ministry and I always look forward to the next issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF."*

KENTUCKY:

■ *"I have been receiving your SWORD AND STAFF for many years now. You have been a tremendous help to me."*

WEST VIRGINIA:

■ *"I currently receive your publication and I love it. I don't feel we can ever get too full on good, nourishing spiritual food."*

"I noticed in a 'Readers Response' a remark about distributing to the congregation. Is it OK to make copies and distribute THE SWORD AND STAFF?..."

"Also, I'm not sure when I last made a contribution, so please accept this small amount."

Editor: You are welcome to make "copy machine" copies of material in *THE SWORD AND STAFF*, but not reprinting for commercial reasons. Sharing the truths of God's Word is what the paper is all about.

MASSACHUSETTS:

■ *"I am writing to you, thanking you for your great paper THE SWORD AND STAFF which I have been reading since the 70's. My prayer is that God will give you many more years to keep it going."*

"I have a request of you, and that is you send me four more copies of NOBODY LEFT BEHIND by David Vaughn Elliott...I have shown the book to several members of our congregation...I may use it as a basis for our studies..."

MICHIGAN:

■ *"As I have read the book NOBODY LEFT BEHIND and find the book easy reading and historically accurate. It brought up subjects never discussed before. The book is worth its weight in gold. Please send another one! Thank you very much."*

OHIO:

■ *"Thank you for your wonderful publication! I'm a person with little education and I understand your teaching on the Scriptures—so one doesn't have to be highly educated to understand. Thanks again."*

INDIANA:

■ *"Would you please send me 2 copies of the book POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS? Thank you."*

(Continued on Next Page)

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

■ "Please send me the book *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND: INSIGHT INTO 'END-TIME' PROPHECIES*." Enclosed is my check for the book.

"Also please use the remainder of my check as a contribution for your wonderful paper. I really enjoy it. Keep up the good work."

ILLINOIS:

■ "I would like to receive your publication. It answers so many questions and it's so helpful explaining the Bible. Thank you for your work!" (E-mail)

MINNESOTA:

■ "Please send a one year gift subscription of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* to...

"We appreciate the paper very much. Thank you very much..."

MISSOURI:

■ "Advice I would Give a New Christian"—I will copy and send this advice to several young people who receive encouragement from me by letter about once a month. Well done..."

■ "I have been receiving *THE SWORD AND STAFF* for a number of years and have benefited from it richly.

"I am sending \$...to help with your expenses. I would also like a copy of David Elliott's book *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND*.

"May God continue to bless your work."

OKLAHOMA:

■ "I want to commend you on *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I enjoy reading it very much. Keep up the good work. I want to renew my subscription and order 2 volumes, 1985-86 and 1987-88..."

TEXAS:

■ "We have enjoyed your many good articles. Please send us six copies of *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND*."

■ "Enclosed please find my contribution to your ministry. Would you please send me a copy of the book *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND*? I appreciate your articles and your ministry of the pen. May God continue to bless you."

CALIFORNIA:

■ "We greatly appreciate your well studied presentation of 'A More Excellent Way' and other articles in *THE SWORD AND STAFF*..."

"Please accept the enclosed donation. With much appreciation."

UNITED STATES:

■ "I noted in a recent *SWORD AND STAFF* the 'Peace Prayer' which you attributed to Francis of Assisi. According to several websites, the first appearance of this prayer occurred in France in 1912 in a magazine called 'The Little Bell.' The first translation in English we know of appeared in 1936 in a book by Kirby Page

(a Disciples of Christ minister), 'Living Courageously.' After WW II this prayer began circulating as the prayer of St. Frances, especially due to Cardinal Spellman's book.

"Of course, the thoughts of the prayer are very good, but I do not believe Francis of Assisi had anything to do with it..." (E-mail)

Editor: Thanks for the information. It seems that this is the story of so many 'quotes.' Perhaps we should have said, 'Attributed to Francis of Assisi', leaving it to the possibility of other sources. Yes, the words are good.

■ "I have been a subscriber to your newsletter for several years. I have never written before, so I would like to tell you how much I appreciate the way you present the gospel in its entirety and the positive way you do it.

"I would like to ask a question concerning divorce and remarriage. I taught a college age Sunday School Class a couple of years ago on this subject and I took what I believed at that time to be a very conservative view. Afterwards, I began to feel like the subject wasn't settled in my heart, and began to study again.

"Your last newsletter had an excellent article by Donald G. Hunt about Marriage and Divorce. He used Matthew 19:9 as an exception to the husband and wife being bound together as long as both are alive, the exception being fornication. It seems to me that Jesus is explaining what the Law of Moses allows, by giving a correct interpretation of Deuteronomy 24. If this is true and we are no longer under the Law of Moses, why use Matthew 19:9 since it no longer applies to the Christian age? Now, with the Law taken away doesn't 'let not man put asunder' stand without exception?

"Thanks for answering." (E-mail)

Editor's Comment: An earlier telephone call from Pennsylvania brought up the same question over Matthew 19:9 as addressed in this letter (above). The person on the telephone also brought out the possibility of the word "fornication" only referring to illicit sex between unmarried people, tying it in with Matthew 19:9 (and reference to a Jewish Encyclopedia was made). Our answer to the e-mail letter and the Pennsylvania reader were combined, as they basically dealt with the same subject. The answer and letter follows, as we share this information with you.

LETTER IN REFERENCE TO MATTHEW 19:9 AND "FORNICATION"

I appreciate you calling and being able to talk with you. I am sorry for the delay as we have been involved getting out the English and then the Spanish edition of the paper. I was in the middle of printing when you called, and sometimes I don't hear too well on the telephone, especially in those circumstances. But maybe I got the flow of what you were saying and asking about

the article on marriage and divorce. I will give you a summary of my looking into this subject a little more...

I believe in Matthew 19:3-12 that the teaching of Jesus there has to do with his coming kingdom and how God permanently looks at things [notice, as from "the beginning"]. Like the sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7) and what Jesus told Nicodemus (John 3), much of the preaching and teaching of Jesus was preparatory, looking toward the coming kingdom (Mark 1:1,15). In Matthew 19, Jesus relates what he says to the kingdom in verses 10-12. [He mentions the "kingdom of heaven," which is the church, Matthew 16:18, 19]. It wasn't just for the Pharisees.

Matthew 19:9 was the focus of your calling me, **"And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."** If this was a case of premarital impurity (Matthew 19), and the Law of Moses had been carried out according to the way it was written, there would have been no divorce (putting away). Period (.). According to Deuteronomy 22:13-21, there would have been a stoning to death. Divorce was not an option. Perhaps what you said that was in the modern Jewish Encyclopedia is a more "civil" adaptation to the lenient times in which we live (in the granting of a divorce). Even back then [among the Jews when Christ was here], the putting to death of children who did not honor their parents was not practiced, although commanded (Matthew 15:1-9; Exodus 20:12; Exodus 21:15, 17).

(Christianity is underscored by grace. It would be unthinkable that someone, even a bride, who at some time in her life had committed immorality, but had repented and was forgiven by God...yes, it would be unthinkable and a slap in the face of grace to bring this up as grounds for breaking up the marriage and press this issue upon the person for divorce. This is especially relevant in view of the unstable times in which we live and that many are sexually sullied before marriage. Christianity is about grace and redemption, not condemnation.)

Interestingly, a deeper study of the Greek word for "fornication," *porneia*, (as you referred to it) and its corresponding verb, *porneuo*, as we would say "fornicate," come from the root which means **to sell**. The basic idea is not necessarily sex committed by an unmarried person, but sex from the perspective of the laxness of harlotry. The O. T. repeatedly, looking upon Israel as being married to God, speaks of them going "**whoring** after other gods" (KJV). They repeatedly played the part of a prostitute. I checked a concordance of the Septuagint (Greek O.T. translation used by our Lord and the apostles), and there are many references that make this plain. The book of Hosea is a good place to look. The idea in the word is to act like a "whore," whether you are married or not. In Jeremiah 3:9, fornication

and adultery have reference to the same thing, although each word has its particular emphasis.

Many times today in English we loosely think of sex between unmarried people as being fornication (and perhaps limit the use of the word in this way). But notice what the *American Heritage Dictionary* says about fornication: "Sexual intercourse between a man and a woman *not married to each other*." They could be married, but they are not married to each other.

I appreciate you calling. These are the impressions I got from looking into this subject again and not an elaborate treatment of the subject. Be sure to check out all the Scriptures in this letter. I trust these thoughts will be helpful...—**James E. Gibbons**

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC:

■ *"It's a pleasure to write to you to greet you in the love of Jesus Christ; it's my desire and prayer that God always bless the beautiful ministry that you and your team develop. Brother, I am receiving the paper late with numbers 2003 and 2004. For our convenience, when you send it, I'm going to give you the postal address of our congregation...I would like for you to send me some up to date editions, I read them on the radio program I have Saturday afternoons. Many blessings, thanks ahead of time..." (E-mail, translated)*

Editor: Thanks for your letter. You are receiving the paper late because those who translate it are behind in this work (having a busy schedule otherwise). (They are much appreciated). I think you will find the material timely, and timeless, regardless of the time you receive it. That is the nature of God's Word and truth.

GHANA:

■ *"Thank you so much for your continued sending of THE SWORD AND STAFF... I always make progress, reading the contents of the issues. I want to ask if you can send me a copy of the POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERB. May the Lord strengthen and bless you each day..." (E-mail)*

NEW ZEALAND:

■ *"Please remove our names from your mailing list."*



Why Affliction Comes

AFFLICTION comes to us all not to make us sad, but sober, not to make us worry, but wise; not to make us despondent, but by its darkness to refresh us, as the night refreshes the day; not to impoverish, but to enrich us, as the plough enriches the field; to multiply our joy, as the seed, by planting, is multiplied a thousand-fold.—**Beecher** □



Memory looks to the past; hope looks to the future; faith bridges the past and the future into the present.



Christianity Without Denominations

TO WHAT denomination did Peter, James, John, the 3000 on Pentecost (Acts 2:38-47), Cornelius, the Ethiopian eunuch, Lydia, the Corinthians, and the Philippian jailer belong (as well as everyone else we read about in the book of Acts)? The answer, they belonged to none. They were simply members of the body of Christ, which is the Lord's church (Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18, 24), yet they were not members of any denomination as we know them today (Ephesians 4:4-6). All who were saved became members of this body (Ephesians 5:23), the church, by virtue of the fact that the Lord added them to it (Acts 2:47). Yet they belonged to no denomination. They had been delivered from the "power of darkness," or the world, and were now translated into the "kingdom of God's dear Son," which is the church (Colossians 1:13, 14, 18), but still they were not members of any denominational church. They had been called into one body (Colossians 3:15).

Just so, today, if a sinner believes in Christ, and is baptized, just as the 3000 on Pentecost were, the eunuch, Lydia, Cornelius, the jailer, etc., such would make this person simply a Christian, but nothing more (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:36-41; 8:35-39; 16:14, 15; 16:30, 34; Romans 6:3,4; Galatians 3:26, 27). This would not make him a member of any denomination. And if a great number should do this, would they not have the same status?

Should this number come together on the first day of the week to worship, Acts 20:7, identify themselves simply by the name of Christ as did the apostles and early Christians, accept and teach the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice, have such leaders to serve as the Bible authorizes, and believe and observe the same teachings in the same way as the apostles and early Christians did, and as are set forth in the Bible, would they not simply be the Lord's church without being a denomination?

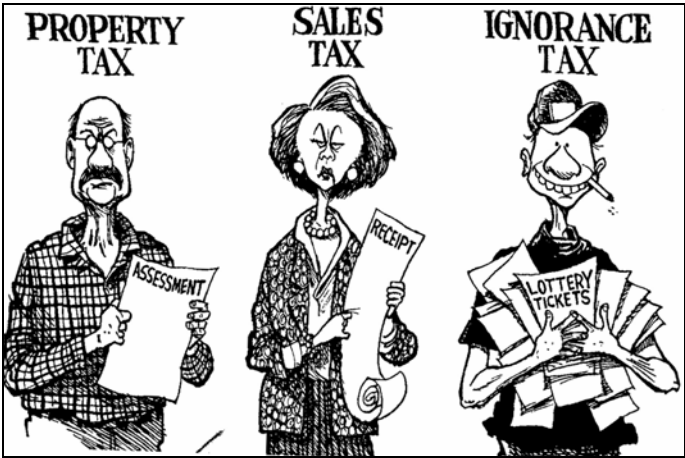
We believe this is the position taught in the Bible and that all of us should take. The Bible only makes only New Testament Christians, no more and no less, and as New Testament Christians we are members of the New Testament church, and that alone. If upon repenting and being baptized the Lord adds us to His church, like in the first century, why be joined to anything else? With the possession of the Word of God in its entirety, why think that we must have man-made creeds and rules of faith? Why call ourselves by denominational names? We believe in Christ. He is our creed, and we do what he says. Consequently the New Testament is our only rule of faith and doctrine (no man-made creeds).

Does this sound good to you? Does it sound too good to be true? Most people will say that they actually believe that this is the way it should be, but getting them to implement it is another thing. Really, it is not a matter of opinion or optional. Christ purchased the church with his own blood (Acts 20:28). The church belongs to him. This is a very serious matter, and it is of the utmost importance that we listen and do what he says (John 12:48). □



The Most, the Greatest...

- The most destructive habit—*worry*
- The greatest joy—*giving*
- The greatest loss—*loss of self-respect*
- The most satisfying work—*helping others*
- The ugliest personality trait—*selfishness*
- The most endangered species—*dedicated leaders*
- The greatest natural resource—*our youth*
- The greatest "shot in the arm"—*encouragement*
- The greatest problem to overcome—*fear*
- The most effective sleeping pill—*peace of mind*
- The most crippling failure disease—*excuses*
- The most powerful force in life—*love*
- The most dangerous pariah—*a gossip*
- The world's most incredible computer—*the brain*
- The worst thing to be without—*hope*
- The deadliest weapon—*the tongue*
- The two most power-filled words—*I can*
- The greatest asset—*faith*
- The most worthless emotion—*self-pity*
- The most beautiful attire—*a smile*
- The most prized possession—*integrity*
- The most powerful channel of communication—*prayer*
- The most contagious spirit—*enthusiasm*—**Selected**



Sometimes a person has to get to the bottom before he will look up.

About Rock 'n' Roll Music

“ROCK ‘N’ ROLL was for and about adolescents...The primary instruments of early rock ‘n’ roll were guitar, bass, piano, drums, and saxophone. All aspects of the music—its heavy beat, loudness, self-absorbed lyrics, and raving delivery—indicated a teenage defiance of adult values and authority.”—*Columbia Encyclopedia* □



BARBS ...with a POINT

IT is never right to do wrong (Romans 3:8).

Beware of a love that is always receiving, but is never giving.

If we are against sin and that which is wrong, we will not be disturbed when it is preached against.

My allegiance is to Christ, not to some religious movement.

It is hard to understand where a person is coming from if you don't know where he has been (so don't be too judgmental).

People who are wound up a little too tight are likely to unravel and come apart.

Some people don't like things nailed down too plainly because they would like to alter their construction later.

Intolerable situations abound where and when anything and everything is tolerated.

Some people appear not to be selfish, as they are generous in sharing with others, but at the same time may be selfish in another way, always wanting to have things their way all of the time.

If you have ever been closer to the Lord than you are right now, you are backslidden.

If you don't respect God's Word, you won't have much respect for the preacher who preaches it.

Once you have gone the route of sin, it makes it easier to go that way again.

When a person leans too far in one direction and then tries to get his balance, he may fall or move too far in the other direction in trying to correct himself (and there is a spiritual lesson in this, too).

Young lady, your ears were made for hearing, not for the hanging and display of gaudy jewelry.

We are living in a mixed up world: The stronger that we believe something (like our religious convictions), the less inviting it is to the fuzzy, modern mentality.

Modern art and modern music are indicative of the disconcerting times in which we live.

Like a train, the church must have doctrine as a track to run on, and it must be the right doctrine.

The only way some people would ever go the extra mile (Matthew 5:41) is to have gotten on the wrong road.

When we extend the corporate life of the church beyond the bounds of the local congregation, having state and national conventions, we have set into motion denominational tracks to run on, which in a matter of time will be followed by more solidified organizations, all establishing the bona fide status of being a denomination.

Church attendance is not determined by how far we live from church, but by how close we live to God.

It is a strange mentality that supposes we can keep the church out of the world by bringing the world into the church.

In the New Testament preachers are called “ambassadors for Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:20), not diplomats.

If Christians are only to marry other Christians, and this is what the Bible teaches (1 Corinthians 9:5; 7:39; 2 Cor. 6:14-18), then it is not right for a Christian to “date” a person who is not a Christian.

Any religion that inspires hatred, and not love, cannot be from above (for God is love).

People don't care about how much you know until they know how much you care; then they are more inclined to listen.

Preacher, it is hard to lead people to where you have not been and will not go.

We are converted to Christ, not to baptism; but baptism is a part of being converted to Christ (Acts 8:35-38; Acts 2:36-41).

There is nothing stingy about Christianity and we shouldn't be stingy in living it.

Loudly rude, overbearing and intrusive; arrogant, defiant and rebellious—that describes much of rock ‘n’ roll “music” and the emotion that it engenders; honestly, how can such be thought of as an acceptable and suitable vehicle to carry the message of the pure and gentle Christ (aside from other questions)?

It is hard for the person who is always wanting to be in the limelight to be a light for Jesus. □



The Real Reason Why?

SOMEONE said, “Do you want to know the real reason that we can't have the Ten Commandments in a Courthouse? You cannot post, “Thou Shalt Not Steal,” “Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery” and “Thou Shall Not Lie” in a building full of lawyers, judges and politicians! It would create a hostile work environment!” [Hmmmm? An interesting possibility]—**Selected** □

Effective Prayer Lives

AS WE attempt to develop effective prayer lives, there are certain things to keep in mind to make our prayer effective.

First, we must pray without calling undue attention to ourselves. One of Jesus’ criticisms of the Pharisees was that “they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men” (Matthew 6:5). Our prayers should never become a matter of display.

Second, we must now allow our prayers to degenerate into mere formality. Jesus warned against using “vain repetitions” in prayers (Matthew 6:7). For example, think of the way we sometimes pray at mealtime or bedtime. If prayer becomes a series of set words and clichés that have no real meaning to the person saying them, then we should re-think what we are saying.

Third, we must pray with the full confidence of faith in God. How do we know that He will answer us according to His wisdom? God is a liberal giver and we must take our request to Him “in faith, nothing doubting” (James 1:5,6).

Fourth, we must always pray according to the will of God. “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him” (1 John 5:14,15).

Fifth, we must be living lives of submission to God in order for our prayers to be effective with Him. “For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil” (1 Peter 3:12).

Sixth, we must be willing to do whatever is necessary on our part to have our prayers answered. For example, it is foolish to pray for health and not take care of oneself; it is foolish to pray for the church and not support her every good work; it is foolish to pray for the lost and not try to reach your friends who are lost.

Let us be encouraged to think on these things. ▣

—Jerry McKey

Value Enhanced

Longfellow could take a worthless sheet of paper, write a poem on it and make it worth \$6,000—that’s *genius*.

Rockefeller could sign his name to a piece of paper and make it worth a million—that is *capital*.

Uncle Sam can take silver, stamp an emblem on it, and make it worth a dollar—that’s *money*.

A mechanic can take metal that is worth only \$5.00 and make it worth \$50.00—that’s *skill*.

An artist can take a 50 cent piece of canvas, paint a picture on it and make it worth \$1,000—that’s *art*.

But God can take a sinful worthless life, wash it in the blood of Christ, put His Spirit in it, and make it a blessing to humanity—that’s *salvation*.

—Selected

THEOPHILUS Loving God, Loving Each Other



“Anyway”

PEOPLE are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered. *Forgive them anyway.*

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motive. *Be kind anyway.*

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and true enemies. *Succeed anyway.*


If you are honest and frank, they may cheat you. *Be forthright anyway.*

What you spend years building, they may destroy overnight. *Build anyway.*

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous and scorn. *Be joyous anyway.*

The good you do today, they often will forget tomorrow. *Do good anyway.*

Give the world the best you have, and it will never be enough. *Give the world the best you have anyway.*

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and GOD. It was never between you and them *anyway*.—**Selected** 



Into the Coffee Pot


*Here is a pointed story, which has been told in rhyme,
About a certain preacher, who lived once upon a time.
At one of his appointments, some members (not a few)
Became sorely troubled, about the word "INTO."
The good book says quite plainly, "They came unto,"
And "went down INTO water" as Bible people do. (Acts 8:35-39)
This "parson" preached a sermon, with zeal and power
and might,
And to his satisfaction, he set the passage right!
"INTO" there doesn't mean INTO, but AT, or NEAR, or
BY.
They went down TO the water, and got a small supply.
Now, near this place of worship, there lived a sister
Brown,
Who, by her splendid cooking, had gotten much renown.
And her delicious coffee, on all the circuit round,
The preacher oft said boldly, "Its like could not be found"
When he would preach a sermon, of extra power and
length,
He liked at her good table, to recuperate his strength.
She was a simple Christian – no better in the land,
And oft reproved the daring, for changing God's com-
mand.
She heard Jones' "INTO" sermon, and thought the mat-
ter o'er
Then asked him home to dinner, as she had done before.
She ground her well-browned coffee, the kettle steaming
hot,
And put it AT, not INTO, the famous coffee pot.
She poured for him a cupful; I think she did not sin,
Why, sister, you've forgotten, to put the coffee in!!
No, No! Dear Sir, that's coffee, I ground a good supply,
And then down by the vessel, I put it AT, NEAR BY.
By logic of your sermon, (I think it very thin),
If AT or NEAR means INTO, I put the coffee IN!
But if you promise now, no more this stuff to teach,
Or dodge God's plain commandment, when you attempt
to preach.*

*I'll go and make some coffee, just to a Bible dot
And I will put the coffee, INTO the coffee pot!!*

—**Author Unknown**



No Tares or Hybrids

THE WORD of God is the seed of the kingdom and does not produce denominational tares and hybrids; consequently, Jesus said, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13). 




Would I Be Called A Christian?

Would I be called a Christian if everybody knew
My secret thoughts and feelings and everything I do?
Would they see the likeness of Christ in me each day?
Oh, would they hear Him speak in every thing I say?
Would I be called a Christian if all could know
That I am found in places Christ would never go?
Oh, could they tell the difference in the songs I sing?
In my eating, drinking, dressing—in everything?
Would I be called a Christian if judged by what I read?
By all my recreation, and every thought and deed?
Would I be counted Christ-like in my work and play,
Unselfish, kind, forgiving others every day?


—**Author Unknown**






"I Knew All of the Time"

DEAF, dumb, and blind, Helen Keller did not learn the story of the love of God in Christ until she was older and taken to Phillips Brooks for religious instruction.
This preacher told her in the simplest possible terms how that God had sent Jesus to teach us His will, show us His love, and make Himself known to humanity.
The face of Miss Keller lighted up as she spelled into the hands of her interpreter, "I knew all of the time there must be One like that, but I didn't know His name."—**Selected** 

Answers to: BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. Genesis 28:19; Joshua 18:13; Judges 1:23; 2. Acts 7:23; Acts 7:30; Acts 7:36 (Read Acts 7:20-36; Deuteronomy 34:7); 3. Deuteronomy 34:1-5; 4. Joshua 14:6-15; 5. Deuteronomy 34:3; Judges 1:16; 6. Joshua 18:1; Judges 18:31; 1 Samuel 1:3,7; Jeremiah 7:12; 7. Judges 11:29-40; 8. 1 Samuel 4:1-22; 9. 1 Samuel 27:1-7; 10. Job 1:20,21; 11. Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; 12. (1) Mark 5:22-24,35-43; (2) Mark 9:2; (3) Mark 14:32-42; 13. Matthew 26:32; Mark 16:7; Matthew 28:16; 14. Acts 1:15-26; 2:14; 15. James (Acts 12:1,2) and John; 16. Acts 14:8-20; 17. Revelation (Romans 16:25,26; Ephesians 3:3-5); 18. Colossians 4:16; 19. 1 Timothy (1 Timothy 3:14,15); 20. 2 John, verse 1. 

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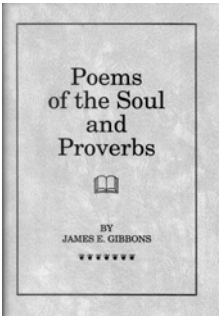
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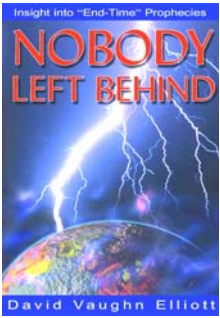
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