

The Sword AND Staff

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

Expressions of



~ LOVE ~

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LOVE. This, above all things, distinguishes Christianity. It constitutes the great divide that sets Christianity apart from the world and the religions of this world. It is not just some warm, wishy-washy, and impulsive fuzzy feeling (amounting specifically to nothing). (This may distinguish human love at times). In its New Testament meaning, it is a profound word that has definite body (with legs to walk upon) and purpose. Hence, in its execution and fulfillment, it is ex-

Can Love Be Commanded?

WE HEAR people say that love can't be commanded. Is this true? Can love be commanded? The answer is **yes**. The answer is **no**. It is just according to what kind of love you are talking about.

In the New Testament we find two words for love, **agapao** and **phileo** (both verbs). **Agapao** becomes a noun in the well-known word, **AGAPÉ**. On the other hand, we find no noun for **phileo** love (interestingly, noun spin offs are seen in words translated “friend” and “kiss”). **Agapao** (**AGAPÉ**) love involves the intellect and the will; it involves purpose, esteem and respect; it involves choice. However, **phileo** love is the love of natural inclination; it is instinctive; it is the love of emotion. It is spontaneous, involuntary; it just happens. We might say that one puts the emphasis on devotion, whereas in the other, emotion prevails.

Therefore, **agapao** love (involving the intellect and the will) can be commanded, and it is commanded (as in the great commandment, loving our enemies, and elsewhere throughout the New Testament). But **phileo** love, in its basic inherent meaning, is not commanded (except indirectly). It is more of a natural and spontaneous response; it just happens. We are to love (**agapao**) our enemies, but it is hard to be emotional about it (**phileo**). We can have high esteem (**agapao**) for them (in the sense of respecting God's image in them and wishing them well) and not even like (**phileo**) them (it would be hard to be emotional about it).

Can love be commanded? **Yes** and **no**. These are our conclusions from a word study.—**J.E.G.**

pressed in the most meaningful of ways. And the word we are talking about is **agapé**.

“The Greek word **agapé** (love) seems to have been virtually a Christian invention—a new word for a new thing (apart from about twenty occur-

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—THANK YOU—

Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

THE WAY to heaven: *Turn right, go straight, and then up.*

We must come to ourselves (Luke 15:17) before we can come to God (Luke 15:18).

It is good to be "set in your ways" if your ways are the ways of Christ.

As Christians we pass through this life as "strangers and pilgrims" whereas a sinner passes through as a "fugitive and a vagabond."

It is good to be clothed with Christ when life gets threadbare.

Knowledge is proud that he knows so much; wisdom is humble because he knows so little.

We can give without loving, but we can't love without giving.

If you have counted sheep and still have trouble sleeping, try talking to the Shepherd.

The person who tells us all that he thinks is not thinking.

The LORD made us with two ears and one mouth; that should tell us something.

Looking back is a sure way to fall behind or trip and fall.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS



THE JUDAIZING PROBLEM, AND OTHERS

THE 15th chapter of Acts is a highly interesting chapter to study. With the termination of the Old Testament Law on the cross (Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 9:15-17), the Holy Spirit, step by step, was guiding the apostles and early church into "all truth" (John 16:13; 1 Corinthians 13:9-10). Breaking with the Law was not easy for them and it took time for them to come into the fullness of the New Testament revelation. After God showed that Gentiles should be accepted into the church with the household of Cornelius (Acts 10 and 11), Paul and Barnabas later broke new ground as they were sent out into the Gentile world with the gospel (Acts 13, etc.). Being sent out from the church at Antioch, they successfully preached in southern Asia Minor and returned to report their labors (Acts 14:26-28). It was from here, Antioch, after their preaching tour that the scenario of the 15th chapter of Acts begins to unfold. Certain die-hard Jews who believed in Christ came to Antioch from Jerusalem and taught the brethren, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1). This caused much confusion and concern among the Gentile believers, and, consequently, they sent Paul and Barnabas with some others up to Jerusalem to "see what was going on." These Jewish teachers, whom we call Judaizers, had gone out from the church in Jerusalem and seemed to be claiming to represent the church in what they were saying. We gather this from the letter the Jerusalem church sent out to the Gentile churches, disavowing what they were teaching. The letter said, "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which **went out from us** have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: **to whom we gave no such commandment**" (Acts 15:24). This letter was received with joy by the Gentile believers who were unquestionably verified to be bona fide brothers in Christ (and, significantly, the word "brethren" is found more times in this chapter than any other chapter in the New Testament, eleven times). However, these Judaizers continued to be a thorn in the side of the early church, as they went on into Galatia and others places, hounding the Gentile believers. (Notice the book of Galatians and other related references).

With this interesting Scripture noticed and highlighted, we now move on to some other thoughts arising in connection with this chapter. In response to our emphasis on wanting to have Scriptural precedent or principle behind all that we practice in the church, a person once said to this writer that the 15th chapter

of Acts furnishes us a Scriptural example of a church convention, like that of a world, national or state convention (organizationally set up and drawn from many local churches). Thus, a national or other such regional name could be appropriately applied to the gathering. But does Acts 15 furnish such an example or precedent?

Review the first section of this article. The church at Antioch was confronted by the Judaizers. The Judaizers taught, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." They seemed to be claiming to represent the church at Jerusalem in what they were teaching. Paul and Barnabas were sent to get to the heart of the matter. The brethren at Jerusalem sent a letter, saying, among other things, "Forasmuch as we have heard, that *certain which went out from us* have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: *to whom we gave no such commandment.*" Now, really, does this sound like a church convention? They are handling a church problem.

We remind you that the church in the New Testament was made up of local, independent and autonomous entities. To apply world, national or regional names beyond the local church is to leap frog the simple New Testament concept and have a ready-made setup for a denominational identity (and apostasy in that direction). Who gave anyone the authority to thus name such gatherings, and thus imply that they are collectively representing a vast number of churches? In the New Testament, the stratum of the organization of the church does not go beyond the local church. □



LOCAL, AUTONOMOUS CHURCHES

CORPORATELY speaking, the church has its being locally. When the New Testament makes reference to Christ's followers in an organized sense in the world, or in any given region, it is never THE CHURCH, but CHURCHES. There is no such thing as a universal church or a national church. There is no such thing as a church organization in any sense of the word on a state, regional, or district basis (just the local, independent and autonomous church is all that we find in the inspired Scriptures). Yes, Christ said, "I will build my church," but he is speaking of the whole church in a general sense and did not have reference to a collective unit or organization. When we read the New Testament Scriptures about Christ's followers in an area, it was never THE CHURCH

OF CHRIST, but CHURCHES OF CHRIST (Romans 16:16). It was never THE CHURCH OF MACEDONIA, but THE CHURCHES OF MACEDONIA (2 Corinthians 8:1). It was never THE CHURCH OF ASIA, but THE CHURCHES OF ASIA (THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA) (1 Corinthians 16:19; Revelation 1:4). It was never THE CHURCH OF GALATIA, but THE CHURCHES OF GALATIA (Galatians 1:2). It was never THE CHURCH OF JUDAEA, but THE CHURCHES OF JUDAEA (Galatians 1:22). And so we could go on!

Beloved, this is not without significance—in fact, it is very significant! This means the followers of Christ in the world or in any given area were not welded together by an ecclesiastical organization on a universal scale, nor on the basis of some political region—but that each church was locally based, independent and autonomous in its church life and government. Each was a complete entity within itself—the only entity. Therefore, we read the following: "The church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Corinthians 1:2); "The church of the Thessalonians" (1 Thessalonians 1:1); etc.

Colossians 4:16 and Philippians 4:15 are also significant references. Philippians 4:15 is especially significant. The latter part of this latter reference reads: "NO CHURCH communicated with me concerning giving and receiving, but ye only." By CHURCH he means the local church, for he is saying this in contrast with the local Philippian church, and this implies that Paul was not expecting CHURCHES (as a group) to communicate as an organized singular unit to support him—for the extent of the government and organization of the church was only local. (Yes, this implies that he was not expecting help from an organized unit such as a district or national church, nor from local churches working through a crystallized district or other organization beyond their local boundaries: NO CHURCH communicated).

Thus, the only way we can speak of Christ's followers in the world in an organizational sense (when speaking of more than one congregation) is to speak of them as "CHURCHES OF CHRIST." To think in terms of "THE CHURCH OF CHRIST" is to move in the direction of denominationalism.

—from a booklet by the Editor



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rences in the Greek version of the Old Testament, it is almost non-existent before the New Testament). *Agapé* draws its meaning directly from the revelation of God in Christ. It is not a form of natural affection, however, intense, but a supernatural fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). It is a matter of will rather than feeling (for Christians must love even those they dislike—Matthew 5:44-48). It is the basic element in Christ-likeness.

“Read 1 Corinthians 13 and note what these verses have to say about the primacy (vv. 1-3) and permanence (vv. 8-13) of love; note too the profile of love (vv. 4-7) which they give.” (a well-worded quotation from one James Packer)

In 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, we find how this love should find expression through us, both passively and actively: “Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.” (NKJV)

In this article, for our lesson, we would like to selectively pick out some Scriptures and look into a few of the many ways that love can find expression through us. We can examine this from the viewpoint of how God expresses His love toward us. Then we can highlight it from our personal perspective. Keep 1 Corinthians 13 in mind as we notice various Scriptures.

I. “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” (John 3:16).

“For God So Loved the World That He Gave”

“For God so loved the world, *that He gave...*” Yes, He gave. Highlight these all-important words. They represent the great characterizing expression of love, emanating from God Himself. Romans 5:8 reads, “But God commendeth [demonstrated] His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” This same thought is emphasized in 1 John 4:9-11, with the admonition, “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another.” In what God has done we have the ultimate example of giving and the ultimate expression of love which we are to emulate.



“Christ Also Hath Loved Us, and Hath Given Himself for Us”

God gave “His only begotten Son” (John 3:16). While God the Father was giving, the Son was giving. The apostle Paul spoke of “the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). Toward the end of his ministry, Jesus instructed his disciples, “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:12-13). And from this statement of love later comes Paul’s admonition in Ephesians 5:1 and 2, “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children: And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us...” (These Ephesian verses sort of sum it up, including God the Father and the Son, Christ, in this exhortation on love).

Our “Work and Labour of Love”

Love is the embodiment of genuine care and concern that is unselfishly expressed in giving and in other selfless kindred acts. It is active. Paul, indirectly illustrates this giving love, when he wrote, dealing with the problems in the church at Corinth, “And I will very gladly *spend and be spent* for you: though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved” (2 Corinthians 12:15). However, in connection with their benevolent giving he sees evidence of love, which he calls “proof of your [their] love” (2 Corinthians 8:24). Then, more generically, when writing earlier to the new Christians at

Thessalonica, he thanked God for them, and said that he was always “remembering without ceasing your [their] work of faith, and **labour of love**...” (1 Thessalonians 1:3). Likewise, the writer of the Hebrews epistle speaks along this same line when he tries to encourage his readers by saying, “For God is not unrighteous to forget your **work and labour of love**, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (Hebrews 6:10).

Love “in Deed and in Truth”

A very expressive and impressive section of Scripture is found in 1 John 3:16-18. It reads, “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world’s goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him [has no pity], how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” Here is echoed the words of Jesus as we noticed in John 15:12-13. Here we see, even as James said that faith without works is dead (James 2:15-18), love without works is likewise dead. Love is not just something we talk about; it is not just something we “feel,” it is something that we do out of unselfish concern.

“No Murderer,” “Lay Down Our Lives,” Sustain Life

And this Scripture in 1 John 3:16-18 is further accented when we read the verses right before it (verses 14 and 15). “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” John goes on to say, as we noticed, “we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (not hate them and in our hearts be guilty of murder). One way of doing this, just the opposite of murder, is in helping them sustain their lives. We see their need and give unto them of “this world’s goods.” To the one who is not properly clothed and “destitute of daily food,” we do more than say, “Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled,” not giving them that which is “needful to the body” (James 2:15-16). We do more than say, “I am sorry for you.” We help. We give of our means and of ourselves.

We Can Give Without Loving, But We Cannot Love Without Giving

But we always need to remember 1 Corinthians 13:3, “And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity [love], it profiteth me nothing.”

“For the gift without the giver is bare” (Lowell) and is meaningless religiously. What we do must be a genuine extension of what’s in the heart. We can give without loving, but we cannot love without giving. When genuine love is in the heart, giving is the extended expression of it being real.

II. “If you love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous (burdensome)” (1 John 5:3).

“If You Love Me...”

The Lord said to His disciples, “*If you love me, keep my commandments*” (John 14:15). Many, many years later the apostle John would write in his Second Epistle to the “elect lady” that he was not writing a new commandment to her, “but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another: And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it” (2 John, verses 5 and 6).

Love Prompts Obedience

Genuine love prompts obedience. There are different legitimate motives that move us to obedience, but love is the most basic and compelling. In our initial relationship to God, the “goodness of God” leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4). Then, as John said, “We love him, because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). And this love is continually made evident by our responding in obedience. “Lord, what will you have me do?” According to Christ, our love finds fulfillment and expression in keeping His commandments. This does not detract from our personal relationship to Him, but strikingly makes it obvious.

The Old Testament and the New Testament

This unambiguous truth is nothing new in the Bible. Many times we leave out the concept of love when we talk about the Old Testament, but love definitely is there (although encased in a legal context). In listing the Ten Commandments, God said that He was showing “mercy unto thousands of them that **love me and keep my commandments**” (Deuteronomy 5:10). This matter of loving Him and keeping His commandments is stated time and time again (Deuteronomy 7:9; 11:1; 30:16, 20; etc.). Then in His two-pronged answer to the question about the great commandment in the Law, the Lord Jesus summed it up by relating it to love (Matthew 22:36-40). (And, we might add for

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purposes of clarity, in comparison with the Old Testament Law, the New Testament is not a legal system *per se*; it is “the faith.” Commands are more informally stated, as we think in terms of the “obedience to the faith,” Romans 1:5, not in terms of a set of rules—but commands are commands, and are not any less important, and in the keeping of these commandments love prevails as a definite expression of love).



What Are the Commandments?

Yes, the Lord Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments.” Many of His commandments were spoken during His ministry. After His resurrection, He gave the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). It ended by saying, “Teaching them to **observe all things whatsoever I have commanded** you...” The Lord had said that when the Holy Spirit came, whom he would send, He would guide the apostles into all truth involving the New Testament (John 14:26). Consequently, the apostle Paul would say later that the things he was writing were “the commandments of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 14:37). They were as if the Lord was speaking directly. The commandments of the Lord involve the whole spectrum of the New Testament. Our love for the Lord, if it is real, will move us to search out what the Lord has said and put it into practice.

Love Begins and Ends in Keeping the Lord’s Commandments

Keeping the commandments of the Lord begins in love and ends in love (the command to love, itself, being the most prominent commandment that prompts us to obey all other commandments). Love gets us on the way to obeying the Lord’s commands, as we walk in love (Ephesians 5:1-2; 2 John, verses 5 and 6). Then in obedience to the commands we perfect this love. John said that “whoso keepeth his Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him” (1 John 2:5). Interestingly, that which got us started in obeying the Lord’s commands is the goal we are reaching for in obeying His commands. Paul asserted, “Now **the end [goal] of the com-**

mandment is charity [love] out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned” (1 Timothy 1:5). How amazing! Truly, keeping the Lord’s commandments is a genuine expression of love for Him. We want to please Him.

III. Love “rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth” (1 Corinthians 13:6).

Truth Received, Rejoiced In and Appreciated

Under this point, the consideration of an expression of love that we are now looking at involves truth. We see evidence and expression of this love by **rejoicing** in the truth, with a negative backside (which we will also notice shortly). We are to “**receive**” the love of the truth that we might be saved (2 Thessalonians 2:10), and having received it, we are to rejoice in it with **appreciation** and **thanksgiving** (Romans 1:18-22), or we will lose it. When men do not love the truth, and accordingly do not manifest meaningful expressions of it, Paul says, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (2 Timothy 4:3-4). (Lust is the illicit parallel and opposite of love).

“What Is Truth?”

In responding to Jesus, Pilate asked, “What is truth?” (John 18:38). And we ask, from the New Testament perspective, “What is truth?” For one thing, when we talk about loving the truth, we are talking about God who cannot lie (Titus 1:2). We are talking about Christ, who said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). We are talking about the Holy Spirit, who is called “the Spirit of truth” (John 16:13; 1 John 5:6), and His revelation to us. In other words, we are talking about the Word of God, of which Jesus prayed to the Father, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth” (John 17:17). All of these great truths, including salvation and the way that we are to live, are embodied in the Scriptures (and from our Christian perspective, in the New Testament, 2 Peter 1:12). In these great truths we rejoice.

The Positive and Negative Backside

As we implied, there is a negative and a positive side in the expression of love for the truth. Love “rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.” Taking it a step further, in talking about Christ, Hebrews 1:9 says, “Thou hast **loved righteousness**, and **hated iniquity**; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the **oil of**

gladness above thy fellows.” Really, the Bible teaches that if we have an intense love for what is right, we will hate the wrong. The flip side of the coin of love is hate (in a wholesome sense). The Psalmist wrote, “***I love thy commandments*** above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore ***I esteem*** all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and ***I hate every false way***” (Psalms 119:127-128). In the New Testament, John that great apostle of love hated the “deeds” and “doctrine of the Nicolaitanes” (Revelation 2:6, 15). Yes, the apostle Paul instructs us in Romans 12:9, “Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.” It is that simple. This is how our love for truth is expressed.

A Word of Warning

Perhaps a word of warning is in order, as we give a little more attention to a Scripture that we have already mentioned. There is not much respect or love for truth in the realm of religion today. “Believe whatever you like; it doesn’t matter.” The Scripture we are talking about is found in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2. It is very sobering. Here a falling away from the true church is prophesied with the eventual coming of the man of sin. With the coming of this apostasy, Paul asserts, “Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 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 2:10b-12). Note. If we do not love the truth, we set ourselves up for the devil (who is the father of the lie—John 8:44), apostasy and delusion. May our love for the truth never wane! Let us unwaveringly hold to it—*love, value and appreciate it!*

IV. “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Revelation 3:19).

An Expression of Love

Some would hesitate to think of rebuke as an expression of love. But that is what our Lord said, “***As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.***” Hebrews 12:5-6, which is a quotation from Proverbs 3:11-12, reads, “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when ***thou art rebuked*** of him: For ***whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth***, and ***scourgeth*** every son whom he receiveth.” This is an extended concept of a father correcting his children. Proverbs 13:24 further reads, “He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but ***he that loveth him chasteneth him*** betimes [promptly].” Love does not want an errant person or child to continue in a way that is not for their

well-being (a way that may even mean their destruction or eternal damnation). To not take action, as Proverbs said, is equivalent to hating them. Sometimes rebuke is just what is needed to get a person’s attention, to shake them up a little, and to turn them around. Love will not stand idly by.

Expressed in Love

Rebuke, in more places than one, is enjoined in the New Testament (Luke 17:3; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13; 2:15; etc.). But for rebuke to be an expression of love, it must be an expression of love, i.e., expressed in love. Along with love, other important ingredients are humility and meekness. Galatians 6:1 admonishes us, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one ***in the spirit of meekness***: considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” (There is no room for self-righteousness. But different kinds of rebuke are appropriate under different kinds of circumstances involving different kinds of people). Consider Matthew 7:1-5. Add longsuffering, as we exercise humility and meekness (2 Timothy 4:2). With this combination, people will be more disposed to receive what we have to say as being an expression of love.

“Provoke Not Your Children”

To these thoughts, which included reference to human fathers, and, to their rebuke and love, we add the following. Here, too, for the rebuke to be an expression of love it should be expressed in love. The apostle Paul instructs, “And, ye fathers, ***provoke not your children to wrath***: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).

“Rebuke and Chasten”

Paul did not hesitate to rebuke and take corrective measures when this was needed in the churches (Read 1 and 2 Corinthians). Fathers and families should not hesitate to do this (Eli didn’t do this in the Old Testament—1 Samuel 3:11-14). Remember, the Lord said, “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Revelation 3:19).

Concluding Statement

This concludes our article on “Expressions of Love.” There is so much that could be and should be said, but we have been somewhat selective in highlighting the truths we have tried to bring out. Christianity is the ultimate expression of love. Consequently, every facet of a Christian’s life should be permeated with love. Let us live accordingly, ever keeping these wonderful truths before us, as we spread the gospel of Christ. Amen. □

Sixteen Cities Named “Antioch” (Two in the New Testament)

THERE ARE two cities named “Antioch” mentioned in the New Testament Scriptures. One was Antioch in Syria (Acts 13:1; 14:26), and the other one was Antioch “in Pisidia” (Acts 13:14). This is very interesting, and especially since we are told there were sixteen cities altogether bearing this name.

How did this come about? With the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C., the vast territory he had conquered (going all the way to India) fell into the hands of his generals. One of these generals, Seleucus 1 Nicator, in time prevailed and controlled the largest portion of this land. He had a passion for building cities and named the cities after himself and his immediate family. He is said to have built nine *Seleucias* (named after himself, and one of these cities is mentioned in the New Testament, Acts 13:4, being the seaport of Antioch in Syria), sixteen named *Antioch* (after Antiochus his father, who had been a general in the army of king Philip of Macedonia, the one who united all of Greece and was the father of Alexander the Great), and six *Laodiceas* (named after his mother, one such city being mentioned in the New Testament in connection with the seven churches in Asia, Revelation 1:11; 3:14-22; Colossians 4:15-16).

It is rather interesting how he went about determining where to build these cities. Seleucus was a worshipper of the mythological Greek god Zeus. The site where many of these cities were built was decided by ritual and sacrifice to Zeus. An eagle, the bird associated with Zeus, was given a piece of the sacrificial meat. Where the eagle would fly with the meat, and land, would be where the city would be built. This was supposed to have been the way they determined where to build Antioch in Syria. This Antioch was sixteen miles inland from the sea, with Seleucia being its seaport. It was located on the eastern banks of the Orontes River.

In New Testament times, Antioch in Syria was the third largest city in the Roman Empire, and it is said to have had a peak population of over 500,000 at its highest. The size of the city was exceeded only by Rome, first, and then Alexandria in Egypt. It had a large Jewish population. Its significance has faded today, as well as its population, and it bears another name, being part of modern Turkey (bordering modern Syria).

Antioch in Syria was to the church in the Gentile world what Jerusalem was to the Jewish believers in the beginning. It was from here that the

gospel in a more concentrated and concerted effort was carried throughout the Mediterranean world. In this evangelistic effort, spearheaded by the apostle Paul and others, we are brought in contact with the second Antioch that is mentioned in the New Testament, Antioch of Pisidia. This Antioch was the capital of southern Galatia. □



BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. How many people were saved in Noah's ark when the flood came, and who were they?
2. What man, whose mother experienced great difficulty in giving him birth and while dying named him “Benoni” (“son of my sorrow”), was renamed by his father with a name that meant “son of my right hand”?
3. In what part of the land of Egypt did the children of Israel live during their stay there?
4. What people launched an attack on the Israelites after they made their exodus from Egypt?
5. How many nations of people did the Israelites destroy and displace in their conquest of Canaan?
6. Of what two men in the Bible does it say that they “cursed” the day wherein they were born?
7. Throughout the book of Ezekiel it is repeatedly stated, “And ye shall know that I am the LORD”—*How would this be brought about that they would know this?*
8. What was the signal for the people to fall down and worship the sixty cubit high golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had made, and those who didn't would be cast into the fiery furnace?
9. What is the Old Testament word for “Christ,” and what does the word literally mean?
10. What were the first recorded words of Jesus in the New Testament Scriptures?
11. What were the last words spoken by Jesus before he died?
12. What were the last recorded words spoken by Christ before he ascended back to heaven?
13. What were the last recorded words spoken by Christ from heaven in the book of Revelation?
14. Of the accounts of the temptation of Jesus, which writer is the only one that tells us that Jesus was with the wild beasts in the wilderness?
15. Who was the first disciple of John the Baptist named that became a disciple of Christ?
16. Out of what woman did Christ cast seven “devils” (demons)?
17. Which disciples did Jesus tell to go and prepare the last Passover that he would eat with them, and by what unusual way were they to know where to go?
18. What was the only miracle wrought by an apostle that brought injury to one's person?
19. Who had a relationship with the apostle Peter that was similar to that of Timothy to the apostle Paul?
20. Which one of the general New Testament epistles deals with the theme of suffering (and especially in connection with persecution)?

(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:

■ *"Thank you for [making available] the sample copy of your magazine. I just ran across your website. Very good." (E-mail)*

NORTH CAROLINA:

■ *"The recent SWORD AND STAFF is an excellent work: Volume 45, Number 2..." (E-mail)*

VIRGINIA:

■ *"Please remove this name from your mailing list, and do not send any more material..."*

■ *"Many years ago my mother received THE SWORD AND STAFF paper and I truly loved it. She would always give it to me when she was through..."*

"Do you all still put out THE SWORD AND STAFF and how much is it?..."

PENNSYLVANIA:

■ *"Greetings in the name of Jesus our Lord and Savior. Daily I do pray for you and your needs spiritually, mentally and physically. Also for your ministry for Jesus to the lost and church family. Please do continue your conservative SWORD AND STAFF periodical, with God's help and guidance..."*

MASSACHUSETTS:

■ *"Thank you for the insight and inspiration. I truly enjoy the Word and Teaching. Please keep us in your prayers. In this area of the country true Christians need your support."*

MICHIGAN:

■ *"Please send one copy of your book NOBODY LEFT BEHIND. Thank you for comforting articles in your paper."*

■ *"We enjoy your publication—its truths and challenging content. God bless the work that you do and may it be multiplied for God's kingdom!"*

■ *"...Thank you for your continued work on our behalf through the publication of THE SWORD AND STAFF. It is a marvelous source of information, education and Biblical insight." (E-mail)*

■ *"Having been given a copy of THE SWORD AND STAFF that was delivered to our church, I am very impressed with the simple way you address your topics. I even visited your web page and have spent some time reading. I would like to receive the next issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF if you can get me on your list...I look forward to studying with some of your material. I will definitely be back to your web page. Thanks for some great material..." (E-mail)*

OHIO:

■ *"I want to thank...[you]...for sending me THE SWORD AND STAFF and keeping me on the mailing list. I find it very encouraging and comforting to have such a wonderful publication as yours in my home..."*

ILLINOIS:

■ *"I enjoy reading and rereading THE SWORD AND STAFF..."*

■ *"I have been enjoying THE SWORD AND STAFF for many years. You are to be commended for your hard work put into sending this publication to so many people all over the world."*

"In our congregation we have several men who deliver sermons from God's Holy Scripture. Your publication has been helpful to me many times for sermon topics and the Scriptures to back them up. I know others who have done likewise. Keep up the good work!"

"I am sending you money for the book NOBODY LEFT BEHIND by David Vaughn Elliott and the booklet, called, 'The More Excellent Way.' And also financial support to keep THE SWORD AND STAFF coming."

MINNESOTA:

■ *"I love your paper. I'm getting these tracts for the church. Thanks again."*

NEBRASKA:

■ *"Thank you for your ministry! I hope it continues until Jesus comes!"*

■ *"Please send us the 10 bound volumes of THE SWORD AND STAFF. We have enjoyed your publication for many years. Thank you so much for telling the whole truth of the Bible."*

KANSAS:

■ *"Thank you for all you do for our Lord. Please send 50 copies of 'What Must I Do to Be Saved?', 10 copies of 'After Baptism, What?' Then, 10 copies of 'Advice I Would Give a New Christian'. Thanks."*

(Continued on Next Page)

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

COLORADO:

■ "Enclosed is a check for 10 copies of *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND* by David Vaughn Elliott. I began preaching...60 years ago this month and this is the best work on the Scriptural coming of Christ in my memory..."

TEXAS:

■ "Please find enclosed check for 10 more copies of *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND*. Brother Elliott 'hit a home run' for truth with this book. I am not sure, but I believe that this order will bring the number that my wife and I have ordered to 50.

"We continue to give the book to people that: # 1, will read it; # 2, will bring glory to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

"We already 'have a home' for 2 of this present order..."

■ "I am writing to you because I have just finished reading a copy of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* publication for the first time. I so enjoyed it that I would like to ask if you could please put my name on your mailing list to receive it.

"I realize that I am asking quit a bit. You see, I am incarcerated here in the Texas prison system. I am also incarcerated here without any funds or any means to obtain any funds. So I am unable to donate any money toward helping in the costs of publishing and distributing *THE SWORD AND STAFF*..."

"I shall keep my hopes high that you will be able to put my name on your mailing list to receive *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I shall be eagerly awaiting your reply..."

CALIFORNIA:

■ "Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. His name is Wonderful and His name is above every name.

"We Christians here in Northern California who meet simply and only in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ are very thankful to receive your publication. It has been a joy and a blessing to us to see Bible truths rarely seen in denominational literature. Please accept our offering for more issues as indicated.

"May you, as we, continue to rejoice in the blessings that God has provided for us through His precious Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ Lord of all.

"Much Christian love to you and your staff."

UNITED STATES:

■ "...I really do appreciate the magazine *THE SWORD AND STAFF* that you publish. It's encouraging to see that you take a strong Biblical stance in today's day and age!" (E-mail)

■ A question has been received in reference to the use of the terms "Holy Ghost" and "Spirit" in the Scrip-

tures. Are these terms referring to two different entities? Why do the newer translations not use the expression "Holy Ghost"?

"Holy Ghost" and "Holy Spirit"

As we know, the New Testament was originally written in the Greek language and is translated into English. In reference to the words "Ghost" and "Spirit," they are translations of the same Greek word, *pneuma*. Why the translators in the King James Version used two different words to represent one Greek word, I do not know.

As to why the newer translations do not use the term "ghost," this term obviously has changed its meaning since the King James Version was made in 1611. To our thinking today, the word "ghost" means the disembodied spirit of a dead person, an apparition. This is not exactly right in talking about Deity. God is pure spirit, not a "ghost" that has come out of a dead body. This is the main reason in getting away from saying "Holy Ghost," and more exactly saying "Holy Spirit."

WASHINGTON:

■ "Please remove the following address from your mailing list..."

MAURITIUS (Indian Ocean):

■ "Blessings to you from Mauritius. I am pleased to send you this short mail to say 'hello' and to thank you very much for sending me your magazine, *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. Each issue brings lots of blessings to me..." (E-mail)

GHANA (Africa):

■ "I am a subscriber to your Christian magazine *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I would be very grateful if you could send me all the bound volumes...I also would like to have a copy of *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND*..."

"These books could be used in my life and ministry. I would be very happy to receive these books..."

Editor's Note: We have filled this request, but we should have been a little more explicit about such orders (and especially this large size, ten books). In the original statement about the bound volumes offer, we made available all of these books without charge, but requested that those ordering them would help with the mailing cost. We should have said this offer was for within the USA. In some foreign countries, people (because of the economy) may be unable to pay for the shipping cost (as in the case above, although no charge was placed on the bound volumes). The high cost of mailing this one order outside of the country was \$43.55. That price is considerable. In the future, because of our limited resources, we may be unable to do this. However, if some would be disposed to help us, we would be in a better position to do this.



They Opposed Themselves

THE APOSTLE Paul said that “no man ever yet hated his own” body (Ephesians 5:28-29). Normally speaking, this is true. But there have been and are situations where it would seem that some people actually opposed themselves, and even hated themselves, if we took them for what they said and the way they acted to mean anything. Let us notice some interesting illustrations along this line from the Scriptures.

Starting with the book of Proverbs, we read, “He that refuseth instruction **despiset** *his own soul*: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding” (Proverbs 15:32). Then as wisdom speaks out in Proverbs 8:35 and 36, she says, “For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. But he that sinneth against me **wrongeth his own soul**: all they that hate me love death.” Proverbs 29:24 states, “Whoso is partner with a thief **hateth his own soul...**” The end results of being unwise, and disregarding wisdom, is the same as if we actually hated ourselves. We can be “pretty” dumb sometimes.

Some interesting Scriptures appear in the New Testament on this subject. In the book of Acts we have a record of the speech that Paul delivered in the Jewish synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia on his first preaching tour with Barnabas. It was the message of forgiveness of sin and salvation through Christ (and the eternal results, everlasting life). But it was categorically turned down by his Jewish audience in an atmosphere of hostility. Paul and Barnabas, without hesitation, plainly and clearly responded with these sobering words, “It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and **judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life**, lo, we turn to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:46). In essence, and in fact, this was what they were doing, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life. And this was followed by persecution against Paul and Barnabas. Really, nothing could be any more for our benefit and in our favor than this message of love, hope and salvation. To oppose it actually is to oppose ourselves and all of the consequent eternal good that would come in our behalf. And to think that persecution would come as a result of telling people such good news! What a contradiction and a mixed up situation!

Later in dealing with false teachers, Paul admonishes his fellow-worker, Titus, “A man that is a heretick [a divisive, factious person] after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he

that is subverted [perverted], and sinneth, **being condemned of himself** “(Titus 3:10,11). Yes, by his actions he actually condemns himself.

Normally, people do not hate themselves and then intentionally respond and make decisions that are destructive to their own personal well-being, but from these Scriptures (and our own observations and experiences) we have seen this taking place. What they do is not thought of in these terms, but the end result is nonetheless the same. The Scriptures simply tell it like it is. Sometimes we are our own worst enemy. □



“The World’s Best Pitcher”

DID you hear about the little boy who went out to his backyard to play some baseball? He thought to himself—“I am the best hitter in the world.” He threw the ball up and took a swing, but missed. Without hesitation he picked the ball up and tossed it in the air, swinging again and missing again. “Strike two,” he thought, “but I am still the best hitter.” Then for the third time he tossed the ball up and with intense determination he swung with all his might, but missed the 3rd time. “Strike three,” he said and laid his bat down, with a great big smile. “What do you know” he said, “I struck out, so I must be the world’s best pitcher.” Now that is the world’s best attitude.

Your mind is the most wonderful computer in the world. Why not fill it with the most wonderful stuff in the world (Philippians 4:7-8) and come up with the most wonderful attitude in the world?

A good attitude is the biggest factor in living a winning life as we represent heaven. Our challenge today is to think on the wholesome while living in such a negative world. Negative thinking does many detrimental things:

1. It clouds our choices at critical decision time.
2. It is like a contagious disease.
3. It makes the difficult look even worse.
4. It limits God and faith in our life.
5. It keeps us from enjoying life.
6. It hinders our influence among those we love.

Be a Joshua and a Caleb with a positive report because their kind of attitude is where the “Milk and Honey flows.” (Numbers 13 & 14)

Keep the SON shining in your life. □

—Dick Ellis

It is better to spread the message of acclaim than the message of blame.

“Mother, May I Wallow”

ONE DAY a little lamb was taking a walk with his mother, and as they walked they passed a pigpen. A pig was stretched out, grunting contentedly as he wallowed in the mud and muck and mire of the pen. He looked so perfectly contented and comfortable that the little lamb was greatly impressed. Indeed, the lamb was led to believe that he had been missing something. He turned to his mother a little breathlessly because of the wonderful idea that had just come to him.

“Mother,” he said, “may I wallow?”

The question rocked Mother Sheep back on her heels. She was both shocked and surprised to think that a son of hers would ask such a question. When she had regained her composure, she answered quite firmly, “Of course not! Sheep don’t wallow.”

But Little Lamb was not convinced, and the minute his mother’s back was turned, he darted over to the pigpen, slipped between the bars and felt his feet sink into the cool mud. It was deeper than he had thought, and it smelled terrible. He tried to back out but found the mud clinging to his feet. He began to be frightened, and as he jerked frantically he only got in deeper. By now he was terrified. He wished fervently he hadn’t come, that he had obeyed his mother. He thrashed about in desperation, lost his balance, and sprawled on his side in the evil smelling muck.

The pig looked over his way and grunted amenably, but Little Lamb was frantic. He couldn’t move. He could only roll his eyes, and he thought every breath would be his last. Finally, just as he had bleated weakly for the last time and given up, the farmer came along and tenderly lifted the little lamb from his death trap, thoroughly cleaned him, and restored him to his mother.

His mother was terribly hurt because he had disobeyed her; yet even more concerned because her own son, a tiny white sheep, had tried to wallow.

“I feel that you learned your lesson,” she said. “Only pigs wallow. Hogs are born to wallow, but sheep are different creatures, and sheep don’t wallow.”—**C. E. Henry**

* * * * *

This simple little story should vividly get a point across. The world, as such, is a pigpen of the muck and mire of sin, fit for pigs. People at large may feel very much at home in such an environment and enjoy such a lifestyle. Real Christians, however, are a different species from the world,

having been “born again” and washed in the blood of Christ. Especially, the young, naïve, and inexperienced children of Christian families need to realize this and be wary of the world. The world may seem alluring with so many involved in doing wrong, and seeming to enjoy it. Drugs, illicit sex, and all kinds of unrestrained carnal behavior may seem to be exciting. Hollywood, the entertainment world, and “rock” stars zero in on young people, brainwashing, pushing their ungodly and hedonistic agenda. However, let it be known, the pleasures of sin are but for a season (Hebrews 11:25); then it will be found that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). We live in a world of sin and death, and like Little Lamb trapped in the muck and mire of sin, many have fallen in delusion and face the same fate (unless rescued). But sheep were not made for the pigpen. A life of purity, accompanied by dignity and respect, this is the good life to be lived. Young person, always remember, “Sheep don’t wallow.” Keep yourself unspotted from the world. □



Drug Pushers And Sexual Predators

MANY PARENTS, who thought that some shadowy character, lurking on the sidelines, was supplying and selling drugs to their children, have been shockingly surprised to find that it was their children who were selling and distributing drugs among themselves.

And many parents, who are worried that some sexual predator is waiting on the sidelines, intruding on the “MySpace” of their children on the internet to sexually ensnare them, need to wake up to the reality of the sexual garbage that many of these young people are feeding one another on their website. (They were primed for this way of thinking as they were initially instructed to “pimp” their “MySpace” webpage). □



Irish Blessing

May the road rise to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sunshine warm your face, the rain fall soft upon your fields.

And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.



Jesus died on the cross because of the difference between right and wrong.



Is It All One Big Blurry Blob?

IF WE don't see things as black and white, perhaps we are not in the light. Light by its very existence produces shadows, tones, and half-tones when it shines. Where there is no light, or very little light, nothing is distinct. And, morally speaking, the difference between right and wrong is blurred. It is all one big blurry blob. □



BARBS ...with a POINT

YOU are not a Christian unless you are a Christian.

What really matters is what matters (get your priorities straight).

Christianity has not been tried and found wanting, but, to a great extent, it is still wanting to be tried.

We are in a position to find ourselves when we realize that we are lost.

A major problem in some people accepting the truth, and that alone, is that they don't want to say that anyone is wrong (including themselves).

Preachers should preach, not only to be understood, but to not be misunderstood.

The church is not a forum wherein the various opinions of men are to be given audience; it is the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15).

Worship is not just making noise, but it is intelligently and respectfully praising God.

When you are in church and you feel like applauding instead of saying "amen," perhaps the atmosphere is one of entertainment instead of worship.

The early church fasted and prayed while today's church seems to be feasting and playing.

Much of modern religion and its proponents are more preoccupied with making people "feel good," than "be good."

Riding your "high horse" will get you no where with the Lord.

The trouble with reactionaries is that they overstate their case, although legitimate, and thereby set the stage for more reaction.

If it is easy to "get your goat," is that the way one of the Lord's sheep should act?

If love and grace do not prompt us to want to carefully follow the Word of God, there is something wrong with our concept of love and grace.

A man is known by the company he doesn't keep as well as the company that he keeps.

The early church was accused of turning "the world upside down" (Acts 17:6), but the modern church seems to have turned itself "upside down" to accommodate the world.

Getting even is the devil's twisted version of the "Golden Rule" (Romans 12:21; Matthew 7:12).

When your children do wrong, and you choose to look the other way, they may not be there when you look back again.

Most people like good, strong gospel preaching until they are on the receiving end of it.

Love respects the consciences and tender sensitivities of fellow Christians (1 Corinthians 8:12,13; Romans 15:2).

To sin against the light is to bring upon oneself the darkest night.

If a person doesn't show honor and respect to their mother and father who passed life on down to them from God, they are going to have a hard time worshipping God, the source of all life, regardless how religious they may profess to be.

The carnal man takes to the carnal like a duck takes to water.

When our young people go from our public schools on to college, it is like jumping out of the frying pan into the fire (as far as the impact of ungodliness upon them is concerned).

When we have experienced the depths of sin, it is easier to slip right back in again.

People who are set on doing their own thing, come hell or high waters, may some day wish they had some of that water.

We may have hate in our hearts for no man, but the question is, do we actively love our fellowman? □



Self-Consciousness and Self-Pity, Inverted Forms of Egotism

THIS MAY sound strange, but we assert that self-consciousness and self-pity are inverted forms of pride and egotism. In both cases, there is an exaggerated sense of self. The self-conscious person is unduly preoccupied with what others may think about him. He may be uncomfortably conscious of himself in relation to others. And the person all "wrapped up" in self-pity is all "wrapped up" in himself. Such a person is absorbed too much with thoughts about himself. Again in both cases, they need to get their eyes off of themselves with their paranoid obsessions, and with a wholesome attitude, while respecting and being unselfishly aware of others, normally take their place in a world of interrelated fellow human beings. □

On His Blindness

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one Talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,
“Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?”
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, “God doth not need
Either man’s work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o’er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.”

—John Milton (1608-1674)

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 not 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 opened 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

Apology and Correction

We would like to apologize for the omission of an entire line in the last issue of The Sword and Staff in the little article “Higher Criticism and a Parody (Higher Criticism Method of Bible Study Applied to ‘Old Mother Hubbard’), starting on page 12 and continued on page 14. (Even the “Continued on Page 14” words were missing). Following is the paragraph corrected and the missing line supplied in bold italics.

“In the uncritical ages of the past, this poem was believed to be the composition of a single person—a very ancient English woman by the name of Goose. Whether we should style her Mrs. Goose, or Miss Goose, we have no means of deciding with certainty, for the stories which have come down to historical times concerning her are mostly legendary. It might be supposed that the title ‘mother’ would settle the difficult question; but, as in certain convents of our day, venerable spinsters are styled *Mother*, so may it have been in the days of Goose.”

No Obstacle Too Great

WILLIAM MCPHERSON had a charge of dynamite go off in his face. He lost his eyes, hands, and the feeling in parts of his face. He realized how much the Bible meant to him, and how he needed its strength daily. He could not read the Braille Bible because of his artificial hands. He tried to place his lips on the dots, but they were numb.

He finally found he could use his tongue to decipher the “Moon Type” system of dashes. The metal left his lips and tongue bleeding and sore, but he prayed to God to help him learn just one letter of the alphabet. In the 65 years that followed, he read the Bible through four times with his tongue! Now, what was my excuse for not being a daily Bible reader? (Matthew 6:33; Psalm 1:1-3) —**Selected** □

“Pick Up the Broken Pieces”

IT IS good to be crushed and broken about our wrongs, but it is not good to just wallow in the broken pieces; let God put them back together again the way they should be and go on from there. □

Confused About... Which Way to Go?



Go back to the Bible and the local, autonomous, independent, and undenominational church of the New Testament and you will be right on tract.

“Where’s My Rolex?”

HAVE you heard this story (and it is fictitious)? An up-and-coming, young entrepreneur was opening the door of his sleek new Jaguar when a truck roared by, hit it, and ripped it off its hinges. The police arrived at the scene quickly and found the man jumping up and down in the street. He was shrieking to anyone who would listen to him about the horrible damage done to his precious car. “You wheeler-dealers are all so materialistic!” began the investigating officer, shaking his head in bewilderment. “You make me sick.” “What’s your problem?” the driver snapped back. “You’re so worried about your precious Jag,” said the cop, “that you appear not to have noticed that your left arm was ripped off!” “Oh, no!” belatedly the guy as he looked down at the grisly stump where his arm had been a few minutes before. “Where’s my Rolex?”—*Selected* □

It Made the Difference

MARIA Fedorovna, the empress of Russia and wife of Czar Alexander III, was known for her philanthropy. She once saved a prisoner from exile in Siberia by transposing a single comma in a warrant signed by Alexander. The czar had written: “Pardon impossible, to be sent to Siberia.” After Maria’s intervention, the note read: “Pardon, impossible to be sent to Siberia.” The prisoner was eventually released. □

Breaking Point

WHEN you think you have reached a breaking point in your life, don’t despair. This may be the biggest break you will ever have (in a good way). □

Bound Volumes for The Last Two Years Ready!

THE LAST TWO years of *The Sword and Staff* (2005-06) have been put into bound volume form and are now ready to be ordered. Here you have this timely and timeless Scriptural and spiritual material in more of a permanent form, with an index in the back of the book. This is a treasure trove of truth, information and inspiration. Notice what we wrote on the back of this issue about getting all of the bound volumes available, or the ones you don’t have. Send a contribution and we will get your order in the mail right away. Our mailing address is on the back. □

All the Bound Volumes (One Volume Less Now)

THE LAST page tells about the special opportunity to get all of the available bound volumes of back issues of *The Sword and Staff*. One less volume is available now, going back through 1989 (18 years and 9 books available now). We invite you to take advantage of this opportunity. This is a good source of sermon material, study material, Bible questions, short articles, material for church bulletins (and we could go on). Here you have *The Sword and Staff* in more of a permanent form. The material is indexed. □

THE SWORD AND STAFF paper is mailed to thousands of people each time. Help us get this Scriptural material into the hands of as many people as possible. Your support is very much appreciated, especially with the increase of printing and mailing costs. Subscribe for others. □

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Answers to: BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5; Genesis 7:7 (9:18,19); 2. Genesis 35:16-20; 3. Genesis 45:10; 47:4-6,27; 4. Exodus 17:8-16; 5. Acts 13:19; Deuteronomy 7:1,2; 6. Job 3:1-3; Jeremiah 20:14-18; 7. Ezekiel 5:13; 6:10,13,14; 7:4,9,27; 11:10,11; 12:15,16,20; 13:9,14,21,23; 15:7; 17:21,24; etc. (by God’s judgment coming upon them); 8. Daniel 3:1-7; 9. John 1:41 (the anointed one); 10. Luke 2:49; 11. Luke 23:46; 12. Acts 1:8; 13. Revelation 22:20; 14. Mark 1:12,13; 15. John 1:35-40; 16. Luke 8:2; Mark 16:9; 17. Luke 22:7-13; 18. Acts 13:4-12; 19. 1 Peter 5:13; 1 Timothy 1:1,2; 20. 1 Peter. □

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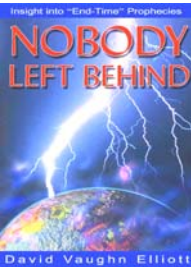
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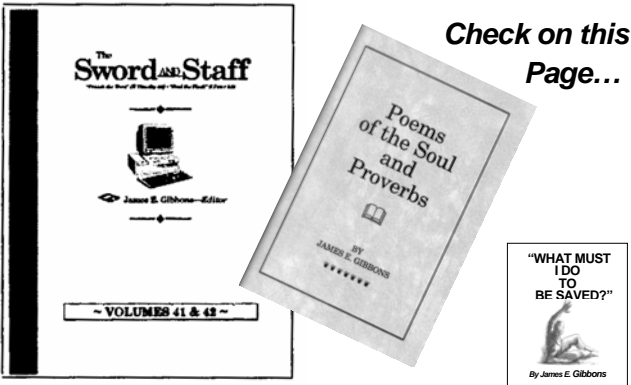
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