



1985

PREACHER'S
STUDY
NOTES

FORWARD

Once again THE WATCHMAN is pleased to publish the annual Study Notes. Our aim each year is to print these notes so that they might be used by the reader to further their private study and to assist them in their understanding the scriptures. We regret that we were unable to have 100% participation from the participants in this year's study, however we are most thankful to those who did submit their material for publication. Without their support, this publication would not be possible. We are also thankful to the Garden's Edge congregation for hosting this year's study.

A special thanks is due to Charles and Barbara Everett, who have sacrificed much to insure that this year's published notes were ready for distribution during the 1985 Study. Without their dedication to this project, we would be much poorer in the printed word. May God grant them those blessings which will permit them to continue their efforts for the truth, and the benefit of others.

Finally, our prayer is that you the reader will benefit from this labor of love, and that God might receive the glory for the good done thereby.

Lonnie Kent York: Editor - THE WATCHMAN

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1985 ANNUAL PREACHERS STUDY

The annual study for preachers in 1985 was hosted by the Garden's Edge church in Wichita Falls, Texas. The elders of the congregation asked Ronny Wade and Ronald Courter to arrange for topics and speakers and act as moderators for each session.

A large crowd from through-out the United States and several foreign countries gathered daily from December 23-26 to investigate various topics from the word of God.

A number of outstanding speakers, who had prepared their subjects well, participated in the daily sessions. Subject material was varied and addressed a number of pertinent issues. At the conclusion of each discussion period the floor entertained questions from the audience.

This volume contains outlines/or complete manuscripts of the presentations made at this gathering. Brother Lonnie York is to be commended for his zeal and foresight in making these notes available to the general public for reading and study. It is our prayer that the truth's herein presented will challenge the minds and spiritual acumen of all those who read them.

Ronny F. Wade

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A LIE CAN BE TOLD, LIVED, OR PRACTICED

by Alton B. Bailey

I have for a long time been concerned about the term lie.

1. What it means to lie To misrepresent the truth or deceive.
2. What constitutes a lie Can be told, lived, or practiced.
3. The different ways in which a lie can be termed By definition.
4. How it effects the individual It brought death to Adam's race.
5. How it effects others Brings hurt, heartache, loss of love and influence.
6. How it effects God Repented him that he made man. (One of the original ten commandments) Matt. 19:18.
7. The end of a lie Rev. 21:8 "All liars shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone."

ONE CLASSIFIES HIMSELF BY LYING

John 8:44 - "ye are of your father the Devil, and the lust of your father ye will do: He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

The word "father" in John 8:44 literally means "nourisher, protector, upholder: ... The nearest ancestor. The originator and transmitter of anything: The author of a family or society of persons animated by the same spirit as himself: One who has infused his own spirit into others, who activates and governs their minds." The phrase is used of one who shows himself, as like another in spirit and purpose as though he had inherited his nature from him.

COMMENTS ABOUT LYING

1. A report on TV lately said the average American lies about 50 times each day.
2. A lie believed has the same effect on the individual as the truth when believed.
3. Many say they never lie, they are like the Philadelphia lawyer, they never lie they just rearrange the facts.
4. A man's word is his bond - No man is any better than his word.
5. There was a time it was one of the greatest insults that could be passed or said to anyone, "He is a liar."

EXAMPLES OF LYING IN THE BIBLE

1. The Devil in the Garden of Eden, lying to Eve about the tree of knowledge - "Ye shall not surely die."
2. Cain - "I know not ... Am I my brother's keeper." (Lying to God)
3. Ananias and his wife - (About the money they received for the land they sold.)
4. The old prophet in I Kings 12:18 - "I also am a prophet ..."
5. Peter at the trial of Jesus - "I know not the man."

THE MEANING OF A LIE

Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary, page 1044: "(1) To utter falsehood with an intention to deceive; (2) To cause an incorrect impression; (3) To present a misleading appearance; (4) To deceive one; (5) A false statement or action, especially one made with intent to deceive; (6) Anything that gives or is meant to give a false impression."

Britannica (World Language), Funk & Wagnalls Standard, page 736: "(1) An untruth, falsehood; (2) Anything that deceived or creates a false impression; (3) An accusation of lying; to give him the lie. White lie an untruth uttered or implied in deference to conventionality, expediency, or courtesy; A fib; (4) To make untrue statements knowingly, especially with intent to deceive. To give an erroneous or misleading impression: Synonyms (noun): deceit, deception, fabrication, falsehood, untruth; (5) A lie is the uttering of what one knows to be false with intent to deceive."

SOMETHING THAT IS NOT A LIE THOUGH NOT TRUE

1. The novel or drama is not a lie, because it is not meant to deceive.
2. The word "Hyperbole" defined by Webster's Dictionary, "Exaggeration for effect, not meant to be taken literally. Example: This story is as old as time."

UNTRUTH

Untruth is more than lack of accuracy, implying always lack of veracity; but it is a somewhat milder and more dignified word than "lie." Thayer -- "Conscious and intentional falsehood."

- (1) In a broad sense, **whatever is not what it professes to be.**
- (2) "Liar" One who breaks faith, a false or faithless man.

FIB

A petty falsehood -- To tell a fib.

HOW DOES GOD FEEL ABOUT LYING?

Num. 23:19 "God is not a man that he should lie."

Heb. 3:11 "I swear in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest."

Psalms 101:7 "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house. He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight."

Prov. 6:16-19 "These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto him

Prov. 12:22 "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord."

WHAT DOES A TRUE CHRISTIAN FEEL ABOUT LYING

Prov. 13:5 "A righteous man hateth lying."

WHAT DOES A LIAR FEEL ABOUT LYING

Prov. 26:28 "A lying tongue hateth those that are affected by it."

THE END OF A LIE OR LYING

Speaking of Heaven

Rev. 21:27 "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie but they which are written in the book of life."

Speaking of Hell

Rev. 21:8 "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and **all liars** shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Permanent separation from God)

Prov. 19:5 "A false witness shall not be unpunished and he that speaketh lies shall not escape." (v. 9 - "shall perish.")

TO TELL A LIE

Jer. 23:25 "I have heard what the prophets say, that prophesy lies in my name..." v. 17 "They say unto everyone that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, no evil shall come upon you."

I Kings 13:18 (the story of the young prophet and the old prophet) "He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; And an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord saying, Bring

him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water, **but he lied unto him.**"

Our motto should be like Paul said in Rom. 9:1 and I Tim. 2:7: "I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not."

WHITE LIES

A lie which is **half the truth** is ever the greatest of lies and harder to refute or deal with. A lie that is **all lie** can be met and defeated. One common form of lying is to make a true statement, yet told in such a way that leads those who hear to believe a falsehood; suppressing a part of the truth.

A lie does not have to be told with **words** but also with actions. This is done when one deceives another.

To suppress a part of the truth as Jacob's sons did in Gen. 37:31-35 (after Joseph had been sold into the hands of the Ishmaelites). "They took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; and they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it thy son's coat or no. And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him."

Abraham and Sarai lied in Gen. 12:10-20: "She is my sister ..." Abraham did not wish his wife to tell a lie or falsehood. However he did want her to suppress (or keep back) a part of the truth. Note: from Gen. 20:12, "It is evident she was his **step sister**. That is his sister by his father by a different mother. When one tells the **truth only** they never have to worry about what they said the last time, when they tell the same story again." One man said out of gesture, "I would rather tell a lie anytime than the truth because you can always add to it. But with the truth there is nothing else you can do with it."

The account of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-11. "Kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land. Thou hast not lied unto man, but unto God ... His wife, not knowing what was done, came in and Peter answered unto her, tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? and she said, yea, for so much."

LYING WITH WORDS

An example of this is found in Gen. 3:1-4: "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made, and he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die."

LYING WITH ACTIONS

Lying Wonders: II Thess. 2:9, "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders."

Rev. 13:13-15, "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

The term **Lying Wonders** are calculated to deceive. The purpose being to deceive people into the acknowledgement of the claim to deity on the part of the man of sin. This is about the same as in our modern miracle workers (Matt. 7:21-23).

LIVE A LIE

By not living truthful.

Not faithful to one's mate after marriage is to live a lie. Remember the oath before God and man - "Till death do us part."

The word "liar" also means "one who breaks faith, a false or faithless man" (Thayer).

Unfaithful to God after obeying the gospel then turn to sin again is to live a lie.

Isa. 28:15 - "We have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves."

Matt. 23 (Jesus said of the Pharisees) "They say and do not." Therefore they live a lie.

Vine (Vol. II, p. 335 under the word "Pseusma") "a falsehood, or acted lie, ... Rom. 3:7, where 'my lie' is not idolatry, but either the universal false attitude of man toward God or that which his detractors charged the Apostles."

I John 5:10 - "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

Rom. 3:4 - "Let God be true and every man a liar."

Lie is often associated with idolatry (false worship, God etc.).

Hypocrites! Mr. Vine says is "Play acting" - Hence pretense, thus living a lie.

Claiming self righteousness when one is not. Rev. 3:9, "I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews (God's people or Christians) and are not, but do lie."

I John 1:8 - "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

PRACTICE A LIE

Vine's describes a "lie" as a falsehood on pages 334 and 335. An example is Rom. 1:25, "Who change the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the creator. Who is blessed for ever." This is especially true where it stands by metonymy for an idol or false worship. Vine gives an example in Jer. 13:25, "Thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood."

Amos 2:4 "Thus saith the Lord; for three transgressions of Judah, and four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked." (cf. Isa. 30:9,10)

THE PRACTICE OF A LIE - FALSEHOOD

II Thess. 2:3,4,11: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God shewing himself that he is God." "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." With this in mind they practice a lie in the fullest sense of the word.

Vine's also suggest that in Rom 1:25, the lie or idol is the outcome of pagan religion; I John 2:21,22 the lie is the denial that Jesus is the Christ; II Thess. 2:11 the lie is the claim of the man of sin; Job 13:4, "Ye are forgers of lies." The word "forgers" means "fabricator or counterfeit."

Jer. 10:14: "Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten is falsehood, and there is no breath in them."

Jer. 13:25: "This is the lot, the portion of thy measure from me, saith the Lord; because thou has forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood."

I John 1:6: "If we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth."

Rom 1:25: "Who change the truth of God into a lie, and worship and serve the creature more than the creator."

II Thess. 2:10,11: "With all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive 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."

Rev. 22:15: "Without are dogs and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

Rom. 3:4: "Let God be true and every man a liar."

Jer. 23:21,25: "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." "I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name,

saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed." What did they dream? Verse 17, "They say still unto them ... every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you."

OVER THE MAN

by Bob Loudermilk

Introduction

As we come to a study of I Timothy 2:11-15, we are aware of the controversy that has clouded the issues discussed in this particular passage. It is a passage of scripture that has been overlooked, disregarded, ignored, misinterpreted, and misused in an effort to justify women publicly teaching and preaching.

Some would rather pretend that this passage, along with I Corinthians 14:34,35 either did not exist or did not apply. It reminds us of the woman preacher who was holding a "revival meeting" down in Texas. Someone asked her to explain I Corinthians 14:34, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak..." She thought about it for a minute, then finally replied, "Well, that means for them to keep silent about that passage!" Many people are that way when it comes to the verses that we are considering. They would prefer to just keep silent about what is taught in order to continue the practice of using women preachers in their pulpits.

A LOOK AT THE CONTEXT:

"Some scholars deny that this chapter (I Timothy 2) records regulations with regard to the public services of the churches, but the vast majority agree that Paul's purpose is clearly that of laying down instructions for conducting the public services of the congregations. As David Lipscomb stated it, 'He laid down rules for the men in the public worship, and then he gave rules for the women.' Wallis referred the chapter to the 'the public worship;' Nute said it stressed 'the importance of public prayer' ... However, more is covered in this chapter than prayer regulations, for the entire aspect of Christian assemblies is the subject of Paul's instruction, even including guidelines for the proper dress and adornment of the worshippers." (Commentary by James Burton Coffman)

UNDERSTANDING I TIMOTHY 2:8-15

The inspired apostle penned these words in I Timothy 2:8-15: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety." We will be paying particular attention to verses 11 & 12, because this

article involves an exegesis of these two verses, with emphasis on the phrase "over the man."

Let us begin with verse eight. "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." Since the apostle appears to be speaking of public prayer, he has restricted the offering of prayers in the public assembly of the church to men, as distinguished from women. This is fully in keeping with the teachings of the New Testament elsewhere, and with the general practice of the church throughout many centuries. A.I. Robertson, in his "Word Pictures in the New Testament," comments as follows: "The men in contrast to 'women' in verse 9. In the public worship, of course, and 'in every place' for public worship (Vol. IV, p. 569).

MacKnight paraphrases verses 9-10 in the following language. "In like manner also I command, that the women, before appearing in the assemblies for worship, adorn themselves in decent apparel, with modesty and sobriety, which are their chief ornaments, not with plaited hair only, or gold, or jewels, or embroidered raiment; in order to create evil desires in the men, or a vain admiration of their beauty; but instead of these vain ornaments, let them (as becometh women professing the Christian religion) adorn themselves with the works of charity which are the greatest ornaments of the female character, and to which the tender heartedness of the sex strongly disposeth them." This reminds us of what Peter recorded in I Peter 3:3-4, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Peter makes it plain that the woman is not to depend upon the outward adorning to make her beautiful. Rather, her beauty is to come from within, from incorruptible apparel. This "meek and quiet spirit" is called an incorruptible ornament, because it does not, like ornaments of gold and silver, grow out of fashion by age, nor ugly by wearing, but preserves its beauty always. God looks upon the heart. No wonder the wise man exclaimed in Proverbs 31:30, "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

In verses 11-12, we find that the woman was to learn in silence. Learning in silence with all subjection, was her God-given place. This place she was to take with a glad and willing obedience to the command of the Lord. MacKnight, in his expanded translation, gives this rendition of verse 12, "for I do not allow a woman to teach in the public assemblies, nor in any manner to usurp authority over a man; but I enjoin them, in all public meetings, to be silent." Notice how that Paul passes from what the general disposition of a Christian woman should be (verses 9-10), into the prohibition of public teaching (verses 11-12). She should be modest in dress, not gaudy in grooming, sober in attitude, and silent in the public assemblies. Unless modesty and sobriety are no longer applicable it is difficult to see when the ban on teaching was lifted.

When a woman goes into an assembly her role is not that of a teacher, but that of a learner: "Let the woman learn in silence." Paul prohibits two things in verse 12: (1) "I suffer not a woman to teach," and (2) "I suffer not a woman to usurp authority over a man." But the question comes up, "WHY?" Why did God order a woman not to teach and not to usurp authority over the man? We find the divine purpose for these instructions in the next two verses.

In verses 13-14, two reasons are given. Number one, the man was made first, and then the woman. Verse 13 says, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve." As the original human being, the man was granted the position of leadership. The second reason is stated in verse 14, "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." It was Eve who

listened to Satan's tempting words, was deceived, and was brought into sin. Adam, however, even though he disobeyed God -- does not appear to have been led away by deception. Hence Eve, in extenuation of her fault, pleaded, "The serpent beguiled me and I did eat." Whereas Adam, you will recall, simply said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat," which seems to be insinuating that as the woman had been given him for a companion and help, he had eaten of the tree from affection to her.

Paul used these two arguments to support the point he had made. The woman should not "teach" or "usurp authority over the man but be in silence." Man's role in the church is to instruct. After all, Paul reminds us, he was created first. Besides, it was the woman who was deceived, not him.

In verse 15, Paul reminds the woman that, even though Eve was the first in transgression, that she could still be saved. The views on this verse are numerous. Macknight put it like this, "However, though Eve was first in transgression, and brought on herself, her husband, and her posterity, the female sex shall be saved equally with the male, through child-bearing; through bringing forth the Savior; if they live in faith, and love, and chastity, with that sobriety which I have been recommending." This gives us a general look at I Timothy 2. We will come back to this passage for a more detailed look at verses 11 and 12, however we will examine some other relevant passages on this theme.

A LOOK AT OTHER RELEVANT PASSAGES

The New Testament gives clear and positive laws for teaching in all assemblies of the church. The rules that regulate the assembly are found in I Corinthians 14. These rules apply to the local church when assembled. Paul delivered instructions to "the whole church come together into one place" (verse 23).

(1) Tongue Speakers: In the early church, these persons had the ability to speak in a language they had not studied (I Corinthians 14:27-28). The gift has passed away but brethren today might still speak a language (foreign) not understood by the assembly. The only place that one can appeal in order to control such a one who wishes to speak without the use of a translator is I Corinthians 14. Paul said they must speak "by course" and with "an interpreter." Otherwise he must "keep silence in the church."

(2) The Prophets: Prophets were inspired teachers. Prophecy is also found to be a spiritual gift in the early church (I Corinthians 12:1-11). Although our teachers today no longer receive direct revelation, we do still have teaching. Our teachers are regulated by I Corinthians 14:29-32. "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." When these instructions are carried out the Bible teaches that "all may learn" (verse 31) and that without dividing into classes. God has a simple and complete plan for teaching the assembly. Mere man could never improve upon it. When these rules are carried out confusion will be avoided and the assembly will be edified (verses 4 & 33).

(3) Paul's Instruction to Women in the Assembly: Verses 34-35, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their

husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." It is thought by many that "your women" applies to the prophet's or teachers' wives that had just be addressed. These women were evidently asking questions in the assembly. However, if they had any questions they were to ask their husbands at home. Why could they not speak? "For it is a shame for women (ANY WOMAN-B.I.) to speak in the church." This would include not only the prophet's wife, but a married woman, a single woman, a widow, or any other woman; young or old. Someone asks, "But what if she did not have a husband to ask at home?" She would then have to find someone else to answer her question privately. No woman can speak in the assembly.

According to Thayer, the Greek word translated "silence" in this passage means "to keep silence, hold one's peace." He lists the following passages: 1k. 9:36; 18:39; Acts 12:17; 15:12 sq.; I Cor. 14:28,30,34 (Thayer's, p. 574). Notice the connection between "silence" and "not permitted unto them to speak" in verse 34. Compare the word silence found in verse 34 with the same word found in verses 28 and 30.

(4) I Corinthians 14 is for all assemblies, for all time: Notice verse 33, "for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." The instructions did not just apply at Corinth, as some would have us believe. It applied to "all churches of the saints." These rules are for all churches, in all places and for all time.

(5) Severe penalties to those who refuse to obey: In verses 36-38, the apostle continues, "What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. God's word certainly did not come "from us" but "to us." Therefore, it is not up to us to decide what we feel would be best when it comes to these items. Paul said that these things are "the commandments of the Lord." For those who refuse to recognize this teaching, Paul said, "if any be ignorant, let him be ignorant." The N.A.S.B. renders it: "But if any one does not recognize this, he is not recognized" (verse 38).

We have learned that no woman can speak in the assembly. let me inject at this point, that singing does not fall into this category. If singing and teaching are parallel, then we would have to sing solos (one at a time), and only the men could sing. Before we get back to I Timothy 2, let us be sure we understand some concepts from God's Word.

WHO MAY TEACH WHOM?

All Christians are instructed to teach God's word to the fullest of their ability, and as the occasion demands or the scriptures allow. But the scriptures do not teach that every Christian is to be a public teacher or preacher. The scriptures are very explicit as to who may teach whom. We learn from a study of scriptural examples that both men and women may teach the word of God to anyone. A man may teach a man, woman, or child. Also, we find that a woman may teach a man, woman, or child.

(1) A woman may teach a man God's word: The example of Aquila and Priscilla (a man and his wife) help us to understand how that a woman may assist in teaching a man. In Acts 18:26, we read of how this man and his wife expounded unto a man, Apollos, "the way of God more perfectly." Nowhere in God's word does it say a woman may not "teach over a man." We read she is not to "usurp authority over a man," but nothing is said of her "teaching over a man." We will discuss this in more detail when we come back to I Timothy 2:11-12. At present we are

laying a foundation so that we can better understand I Timothy 2, and some of the concepts that are discussed. From Acts 18, we have learned that a woman can teach a man if she does so in the proper place and time.

(2) A woman may teach a woman: Older women were instructed by Paul to teach the younger women the things mentioned in Titus 2:3-5.

(3) A woman may teach a child: We learn in II Timothy 1:5 and 3:15 that Timothy, as a child, was taught the scriptures by his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice.

(4) Privately, a woman may teach anyone: Anna, the prophetess, spake of Jesus "to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (Luke 2:36-38). So a woman may teach a man, woman, or child.

THE QUESTION OF WHERE?

We find no restrictions placed upon the man as to WHERE he teaches. He may teach both publicly as well as privately (Acts 20:20). The Christian woman, however, IS CONFINED AS TO WHERE SHE MAY TEACH. She is not free to teach everyone just anywhere. Simply stated, where a woman may teach she may teach anyone, even a man, and where she may not teach, she may teach no one, not even a child.

Men may teach both publicly and privately. Women may teach only privately. What do we mean by public? When the local church calls its members together we have a public assembly. Some argue that the modern "Bible Class" system is neither public nor private. It is an arrangement which is not found within the word of God. Under the class system, some will allow a woman to teach a child, but not a man. This situation is not found within the Bible, for where she can scripturally teach a child, she can also teach a man. Conversely, where she cannot teach the man, she cannot teach the child. There is no middle ground. So, again, it is not a matter of whether, neither of whom, but of WHERE a woman may teach. And the WHERE is determined by whether the local church is involved in calling the people together, or whether it is simply the work of an individual. The WHERE is important because there is a teaching situation under which the woman cannot speak at all, but must remain silent (I Timothy 2:11-12). Clearly, there is a place where she cannot teach, and where she must learn in silence. (For more study on these concepts, study the excellent tract, "The Teaching" by Jerry L. Cutter, my main source for the above arguments).

BACK TO I TIMOTHY 2:11-12

Now that we have laid a foundation by noticing several important concepts, let us return to our passage under examination, I Timothy 2:11-12. We will begin by noticing a few translations of this passage:

N.A.S.B. "Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet."

R.S.V. "Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent."

N.I.V. "A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent."

Amplified N.I. "Let a woman learn in quietness in entire submissiveness. I allow no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to remain in quietness and keep silence [in religious assemblies]."

DEFINING THE WORDS

TEACH

- (1) "The Analytical Greek Lexicon" page 98, "To teach or speak in a public assembly, I Tim. 2:12."
- (2) "W. E. Vine," Vol. IV, p. 111, "I. DIDASKO is used (a) absolutely, to give instruction, e.g., ... I Tim. 2:12."
- (3) "Thayer's Greek-English lexicon," page 144, "to teach; 1. absol. (a) to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses ... I Tim. 2:12."

TO USURP AUTHORITY OVER

- (1) "Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon," page 830, "... to govern one, exercise dominion over one ... I Tim. 2:12."
- (2) "Arndt & Gingrich," page 121, "... have authority, domineer over someone."

SILENCE

- (1) "W. E. Vine," Vol. III, page 242, "HESUCHIA ... denotes quietness, II Thess. 3:12; it is so translated in R.V. of I Tim. 2:11-12 (A.V. 'Silence') ..."
- (2) "Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon," page 189, "2. Silence Acts 22:2; I Tim. 2:11-12."
- (3) "Analytical Greek Lexicon," page 189, "... silence, silent attention, Acts 22:2; I Tim. 2:11-12."

TO THE HEART OF THE ISSUE

Now that we have considered the translations and have defined the words, let us go to the heart of the issue. The argument is made that a woman may teach a "Sunday School Class" or "Bible Class" if she acts under the direction of the elders, so long as she does not teach in such a way as to usurp authority over the man; if she teaches a man she is usurping authority over him - so the argument states. The answer is that I Timothy 2:11-12 does not say a word about a woman being able to teach just as long as she does not usurp authority over the man. If the position, that a woman may not teach over a man, is true, just when and where may she teach a man? May she teach him at all? If one says NO, then they have problems with Priscilla

assisting in the teaching of Apollos. Did Priscilla usurp authority over him when she taught him?

Paul prohibits two things in I Timothy 2:11-12: (1) "I suffer not a woman to teach," and (2) "I suffer not a woman to usurp authority over a man." The passage says nothing about a woman "teaching over a man." As we have noticed, "usurp authority over" is a prepositional phrase in English, but it is only one word in the Greek meaning to "have authority, domineer over someone" (Arndt & Gingrich). In short, "over" is not connected with "teach" in this passage. It is only connected with having dominion over the man, or the second part of this verse.

In a tract called "Teaching the Word," C. B. Head, writes the following. "Brother W. J. Leach developed an interesting study on this question in June, 1966 issue of GOSPEL TIDINGS, 'In Paul's statement here, the prepositional phrase **over the man** does not modify the verb **teach** but only the verb **usurp**. **Man** (andres) is in the genitive case in the Greek, and not in the accusative, as it would be if it were the object of **teach**. This is true because verbs of ruling are followed by words in genitive case (Dona & Mantley, p. 191). Moreover, there is no preposition corresponding to **over** in I Tim. 2:12. A good literal reading we are told, is: **For a woman to teach, I do not allow, nor to rule man.**'

"I Timothy 2:12 has double infinitives: to teach and to usurp authority ... Nor, neither, in this sentence is a correlative conjunction connecting two infinitives; so Paul is saying: 'I suffer not a woman **to teach** nor, neither (do I suffer a woman) to usurp authority over the man.' The meaning is absolutely crystal clear. Paul is saying there are two things I do not permit a woman to do: (1) 'To teach,' and (2) 'To usurp authority over man.'"

In his booklet, "Teaching the Word," Van Borneau pointed out that "The conjunction 'nor' in I Tim. 2:12 is from the Greek word 'oude' in Acts 8:21. But our class brethren often cite Acts 4:18 where 'mede' is used as parallel to I Tim. 2:12. So we shall study a few passages noticing the use of both words. These passages are similar, if not parallel, to I Tim. 2:12.

"(1) 'But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor (oude) to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence' (I Tim. 2:12). 'Over the man' modifies 'teach,' so we are told, thus women are only forbidden to teach 'over the man.' BUT 'silence' in addition to 'subjection' is also imposed on women in this passage.

"(2) 'Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, ...' (Lev. 19:14). Shall we say that the prepositional phrase, 'before the blind,' modifies the first prohibition? If so, the passage merely means, 'Thou shalt not curse the deaf before the blind.' In other words it is perfectly all right to curse the deaf, provided it is not done before the blind.

"(3) 'Give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither (mede) cast ye your pearls before swine...' (Matt. 7:6). Now let us give this verse the same construction that our class brethren give I Tim. 2:12. Here is what we get. 'Give not that which is holy unto dogs before swine.' So, brethren, we must be sure that no hogs are around when we give that which is holy unto dogs ...

"While we recognize the fact that a prepositional phrase may modify even a series of preceding prohibitions, yet it is not true that 'over the man' modifies the prohibition against women's teaching in this place. As surely as we take such a position, we force silence on women

everywhere. For, wherever the passage applies, there women must 'be in silence.'

Consider a parallel sentence to I Tim. 2:12, "I suffer not a boy to smoke, nor to usurp authority over his parents." According to the interpretation followed by some brethren in explaining I Tim. 2:12, the boy could smoke all he wanted, so long as he did not smoke "over his parents."

DRIFTING

It seems that many who wear the name "church of Christ" are drifting towards a female ministry. Lectureships and ladies seminars are being held across the land. Perhaps the only difference between what is being encouraged by some churches today and going the full female ministry route is the restriction that the sisters may speak to "women only!"

THE WOMAN'S PLACE - ORDAINED BY GOD!

Some people have strange ideas about the word of God. Perhaps you have heard people discussing some of these passages we have noticed and making comments like this: "Well, we just have to understand Paul. After all, he was not married and he probably was set in his ways, didn't understand women. Therefore, he wrote some things about women out of his own opinions." We have already shown where Paul said that "the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

It is beyond our purpose to attempt to explain everything that these verses teach; the one point we would press is that this plan for teaching was ordained by God. We have no right to change it, add to it, take from it, re-write it, or laugh it off as an old tradition that passed away with the customs of the day. God has ordained that man be the head and that the woman be in subjection. A study of I Corinthians 11 will be of further help to every student of the Bible as they study the concepts we have been noticing.

Some will ask, "What, then, can the woman do?" MUCH, indeed, and in many ways. The comfort and encouragement that an active, godly Christian woman-moved by love to Christ and to souls, and yet governed by Scripture - can render, is incalculable. Mary anointed the Lord for his burial. Martha served the Lord well. Dorcas made herself deeply beloved by her good deeds. Phebe was a servant of the Church and a succorer of many. Lydia entertained the apostle Paul in her house. Priscilla, with her husband, helped Apollos to understand the way of God more perfectly. Women labored with Paul in the gospel. Perhaps eternity alone will fully reveal all that Timothy owed to the early training received from his mother Eunice, and the influence of his grandmother Lois.

Yet, her place is emphatically not one of public testimony. There are 66 books in the Bible, and all their authors, who were distinctly chosen of God, were men. Not one was a woman. There are 12 apostles: all were men. There were seventy sent out by the Lord. We are not told that there was one woman among them. In Acts 6 there were "seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," chosen to serve tables; not one was a woman. There were many witnesses cited in I Corinthians 15 to prove the resurrection of the Lord. Individual men are mentioned as witnesses, but there is no mention of a single woman. This is interesting, as Mary is the FIRST individual to see Christ risen, and was entrusted by Him with a wonderful message to the disciples. Yet, she is excluded from the list of witnesses - her name is not mentioned.

Elders and deacons are described in I Timothy and Titus; but they were all men.

CONCLUSION

The woman's place in relation to the man is plainly laid down in God's Word. There is no need for misunderstanding. The responsibility is upon us, that we subject ourselves not to the word of men, but to "the command of the Lord." Service has no value in God's eyes unless it be rendered with a willing and subject heart, and in conformity to the regulations laid down in His unchanging Word.

In her beautiful, God-given place, woman is most admirable. Out of her place, she may become the most effective tool of Satan for the ruin of men. It was "that woman Jezebel" that was suffered in the church at Thyatira, to teach and to seduce Christ's servants - leading them astray from Jesus Christ.

In contrast, and as a beautiful example to the godly, is the aged Anna, who "departed not from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day." She happily gave her testimony, not in the **congregation** of the Lord, but in the temple.

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GOG AND MAGOG Ezek. 38-39

by Jack Cutter

When I was initially asked to take this subject, my first impression was that this will be "a piece of cake." However, the sources which I generally rely upon for guidance, very quickly changed my mind. For example, A. M. Morris, in his book "Prophecy Unveiled" commented upon every major prophecy in Ezekiel until he reached chapters 38 and 39. His comments were: "In (chapters 38 and 39) there is an obscure prediction, evidently relating to the future, and not sufficiently fulfilled to be identified in history." Suffice it to say this was a severe set back for me in my research on this prophecy. Another source said, "this is allowed to be the most difficult prophecy in the Old Testament. It is difficult to us, because we know not the king nor people intended by it; but I am satisfied they were well known by these names in the time that the prophet wrote." (Clarke). Therefore, it is with a great deal of caution and some degree of reluctance that I approach this subject today. Nevertheless, I feel quite comfortable with the conclusion that I have concerning this prophecy.

WHO IS GOG AND MAGOG?

Gog is mentioned in I Chronicles 5:4 as the name of a Reubenite, however it is probably referred to in Ezekiel as a name which Ezekiel has arbitrarily formed from the name of the country of Magog. (Keil-Delitzsch, Vol. 9, p. 159).

As for Magog, in Genesis 10:3 and I Chronicles 1:5, Magog is the name of a person. He is of the ancestry of Japheth. "The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras." Generally, the lineage of Japheth was blessed. In Genesis chapter nine, Japheth was blessed with Shem and Canaan was cursed (vs. 24-27). "Extend the territory of Japheth: may Japheth live in tents of Shem, and may Canaan be his slave." Since Magog is not mentioned again by name until Ezekiel's prophecy against him in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39, I can only conclude that through the centuries as Magog's descendants increased and as they grew into a nation that they had become idolatrous. As a result, they incurred the "curse" of God. In Ezekiel 38:15 we find: "You will come from your place in the far north, you and many nations with you, all of them riding horses, a great horde, a mighty army." Mr. Mede believed that the "Scythans," who were descendants of Magog, son of Japheth, meant the Americans, since the Americans were originally colonies of the Scythans.

Houligant declares for the Scythans, "Whose neighbors were the people of Rosh Meshech and Tubal, that is Russia, Muscovities and Tybareni or Cappadocians." (Clarke's) Remember, although the peoples represented are not named, these names were well known in the time when the prophet wrote.

EZEKIEL'S CALL TO PROPHECY

It is important to realize that Ezekiel was a prophet to the exile in Babylonian captivity. (Ezek. 1:1) Ezekiel went into Babylonian captivity with the second group taken from Judea. This group of captives were taken to a place about 200 miles north of Babylon on the river Kebar. If you recall, the first captivity included Daniel and this captivity occurred about eight years before the one which Ezekiel was taken into exile. It is clear according to chapter two that he was called to the office of a prophet as a prophet to the exiles in captivity. This is a very significant consideration in our study.

EZEKIEL 38 & 39 PARAPHRASED

At this time I will utilize Keil-Delitzsch's paraphrase of the passage under consideration. I hope to put the thoughts of this prophecy in a more concise way.

"God, in the land of Magog, Prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, will invade the restored land of Israel from the far distant northern land by the appointment of God in the last times and with a powerful army of numerous nations (ch. 38:1-9), with the intention of plundering Israel, now dwelling in insecurity, that the Lord may sanctify Himself upon him before all the world (vers. 10-16). But when Gog, of whom earlier prophets have already prophesied, shall fall upon Israel, he is to be destroyed by a wrathful judgment from the Lord, that the nations may know that God is the Lord (vers. 17-23), on the mountains of Israel will Gog with all his hosts and nations succumb to the judgement of God (ch. 39:1-8). The inhabitants of the cities of Israel will spend seven years in burning the weapons of the fallen foe, and seven months in burying the corpses in a valley, which will receive its name from this, so as to purify the land (vers. 9-16); whilst in the meantime all the birds and wild beast will satisfy themselves with the flesh and blood of the fallen (vers. 17-20). By this judgment will all the nations as well as Israel know that it was on account of its sins that the Lord formerly gave up Israel into the power of the heathen, but that now He will no more forsake His redeemed people, because He has poured out His spirit upon it (vers. 21-29)."

FIGURATIVE OR LITERAL APPLICATION

Mr Barnes says, "It is a gathering together of the enemies of Jehovah to make their last effort, and to be overthrown. The seer passes to the final struggle between God and Evil, and the triumphant establishment of Divine Rule. It is the same struggle which is depicted in the book of Revelation (20:7-10) where John adopts words and phrases of Ezekiel." While John in Revelation did use words and phrases of Ezekiel's prophecy, I do not believe that Ezekiel is prophesying or predicting a figurative event over 2,000 years in the future. The time circumstances and purpose of Ezekiel's prophecy indicates this prophecy had a fulfillment in the near future from the time that he wrote.

Some of the best scholars apply the prophecy to Antiochus Epiphanes. Historically Antiochus fulfills most of the details of this prophecy. I do believe this prophecy had a literal fulfillment and Antiochus does fulfill the prophecy in a more complete way than any other person of that time. However, there are some passages that are difficult to explain in taking this position. First, notice Ezekiel 38:1-2: "The word of the Lord came to me: Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." In taking this position, God (the prince) represents Antiochus Epiphanes. Magog represents

Syria.

Syria was the land that was to the far north of Judea. About 400 years after Ezekiel wrote, Antiochus did attack Judea and much of what Ezekiel prophesied did occur during that siege. The biggest difficulty in taking this position is found in 38:11: "you will say, I will invade a land of unwalled villages; I will attack a peaceful and unsuspecting people - all of them living without walls and without gates and bars." This seems to allude to Spiritual Israel after the Messianic Kingdom was established. However, if you will note verse 20, there were walls which crumbled when the lord attacked Gog. What could have happened is that the Israelites had built and inhabited territories in the mountains and plains away from the old walled cities and this was the prime target of Antiochus when he attacked Judea. Another passage which represents some difficulty is 38:17: "This is what the Sovereign Lord says; are you not the one I spoke of in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel? At that time they prophesied for years that I would bring them against them." What prophets prophesied before concerning this situation? If Antiochus is Gog, then Ezekiel prophesied against him. Since Ezekiel prophesied almost 400 years before this happened. Another was Daniel who wrote in chapter 11:31, 32, 36 that Antiochus purposed to invade and destroy Egypt, as well as Judea.

After considering various positions and especially the context of Ezekiel chapters 38-39, only a literal fulfillment of this prophecy, sometime in the near future from the time of Ezekiel wrote, was the design and purpose of this prophet. And, if Antiochus is not the Gog intended, then, some other historical situation of that time was.

While I do not believe as a whole that this was a type and anti-type prophecy. Let me quote to you some things A. M. Morris says concerning types and anti-types. "The whole system of types ceased to be effective in that nation (Israel) when the gospel of Christ went into effect. Hence, the primary question to be determined is as to the nature, and duration of these heavenly types. Each type was, in an important sense, a prophecy. It was not an end, but a means to an end. When we have learned that these types were local in nature and not universal; that they were for the fleshly descendants of Abraham and only for a given time, this limitation was to those who lawfully used them, and the time when they were to cease even for them prepares the way as nothing else can to understand the prophecies relating to the same time and people, and to their later history. Is it not self evident that if the types ceased with the introduction of the gospel, that all prophecy must and does harmonize with that controlling fact (preface, p. 8)."

Mr. Morris substantially documents with many scriptural proofs his positions, particularly with regards to types. So, if Bro. Morris is correct, and I cannot fault his conclusion, and if Ezekiel 38-39 was an anti-type situation, the types were legislated away forever in the anti-types when the gospel age went into effect. So, this prophecy applying this system of interpretation (type/anti-type) would not extend to this time, because they were all fulfilled at the outset of the gospel age.

WHAT ABOUT REVELATION 20:7-10?

It seems that John is following Ezekiel's writings closely, especially chapter 37. The bottomless pit represents all forms of wickedness; idolatry, superstitions, false religious leaders, etc. The chain represents the word of God. In chapter 9:2, the bottomless pit was opened. Here in chapter 20 it is sealed - closed. Papal Rome, the Mahometan scourge and religious tyranny on a world wide scale had been broken and defeated. In a sense this type of

wickedness was dead. The Word of God was being proclaimed now through the gospel around the world. So, the devil (the source of wickedness) was cast into the bottomless pit and a seal was placed upon it for 1,000 years.

In chapter 9:2 this pit was opened and 1,260 years later it was closed for 1,000 years. During this period the righteous dead live through the lives of those proclaiming the gospel around the world. This was the first resurrection of 20:4 (a figurative resurrection). The second resurrection, after the 1,000 years (implied in verse four), was the wicked (a figurative resurrection). After this, (1,000 years was over) wickedness of all kinds with religious tyranny influenced by the devil who was no longer bound in the Abyss, would wage a relentless war for a "little season" until the Word of God would virtually destroy him for ever. "When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth - Gog and Magog - to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever." (Rev. 20:7-10)

So, there are three resurrections in Revelation 20. The first two are figurative and separated by 1,000 years. The first of the righteous and the second of the wicked. And, then, the third resurrection, it is a literal resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. There is only one literal resurrection and it is at the end of the world (Rev. 20:11-15; Job 14:10-13).

Therefore, my conclusion is: Ezekiel 38-39 is a prediction prophecy not involving type or anti-type and that John in Revelation used the language of Ezekiel in his prophecy in chapter 20.

THE BIBLE PATTERN FOR EVANGELISM

by Bill H. Davis

THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD

"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," Eph. 3:10-11. In these verses Paul is speaking of God's great scheme of redemption for man. God displayed His wisdom to the heavenly host when He saved man through the church. This was according to the eternal purpose of God. The salvation of man was not a hastily reached idea or an after thought of God. He did not make a spur of the moment decision to save man: it was the purpose of God before the world began. The Apostle Paul declares in 11 Tim. 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our own works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began." To the Ephesians, Paul wrote, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." (Eph. 1:4). These verses show the great plan of salvation to be older than the world. It seems that it has always been the purpose of God to save man. In understand evangelism we should understand this purpose.

CREATED FOR FELLOWSHIP

But why is God so interested in man's salvation? The reason must lie in the purpose for which God created man in the first place. There are many things we do not know about this. Perhaps it involved a remedy for sin that had broken out in heaven, and to manifest the love and mercy of God in bringing about a plan to save man. One thing we do know is that God created man to live in harmony with Him. From the beginning it was meant for man to have companionship with his Creator. Because man was made in the image of God demonstrates that a relationship was originally intended. Man has a spiritual nature that was made in the likeness of God, and because of it, man can know God and live in fellowship with Him. Of all creation only man has the capacity for a relationship with God.

One reason man is discontent and unhappy is because he is trying to live contrary to his nature. He is like a fish out of water. A fish cannot function well out of water -- the realm for which it was created. It can function but not well and not for long. The same is true with man. He will never be satisfied with himself until he begins operating in the realm for which he was created. He can operate apart from God but not well, because he was made for fellowship with God.

GOD DESIRES FELLOWSHIP

One outstanding theme of the Bible is that God desires to be near His people. It would appear that the nature of God draws Him to be with His beloved creation. However, one thing must be realized—God is holy. He can have no fellowship with unholiness. To maintain a relationship with God means that man must be like God in holiness. "For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44). "But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (1 Peter 1:15).

Although man must be holy to have a relationship with God, even after man sinned God still desired to be with man. "The Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God" (Isa. 59:1). "Draw nigh unto God and He will draw nigh unto you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts ye double minded" (James 4:8). God's desire to be with His people is also seen by His dwelling in the tabernacle of the Old Testament, Ex. 25:8 and in the church today 1 Cor. 3:17.

The desire for a relationship with man is further seen in the price God paid to reconcile sinful man to Himself. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). The purpose of the coming of Jesus was to save the world, Luke 19:10. This He did by calling men to be like Him. The only way man can be like God is to duplicate the only example of how God would live in a human body—by duplicating Christ in one's life. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the father, He hath declared him." (John 1:8). Philippians 2:5-11 summarizes the great cost of Jesus by stating that Christ emptied Himself of the "outward expression of deity," became a human in a sinless body and willingly died for the sins of man.

SAVED THROUGH PREACHING

When Christ came, He viewed the world as a great mission field and His mission was to save it through preaching. Mark 1:38 says, "And He said unto them let us go unto the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth." Luke says, "for therefore am I sent" (Luke 4:43). The reason Jesus was sent by the Father was to preach the Gospel of the kingdom. Paul teaches in 1 Cor. 1:21, "for after that in the wisdom of God the world by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." It has always been the plan of God to save man by preaching the gospel.

"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." (Rom. 16:25,26). R. C. H. Lenski says of this passage, "This gospel, this proclamation, regard it as 'revelation of mystery' which was kept silent in age long time. ... During all those past ages no public proclamation in the world but only silence. ... Then came revelation. The silence is ended, the gospel now sounds forth as a world proclamation."

TO ALL NATIONS OF THE WORLD

Jesus made it clear that He wanted His message to go to all nations of the world. To His disciples, He said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:19,20). When Jesus gave the great commission to the Apostles, He was not just giving them so much work to do, rather He was giving them an extension of God's eternal purpose. They were to become His agents of reconciliation. Notice Paul's statement in II Cor. 5:18-20, "All things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, **as though God did beseech you by us:** we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." You see, they took the very purpose of God. It was as though God was making His appeal through them. To them, evangelizing all nations was not so much a command to be obeyed, as it was a duplicating the nature and purpose of God in their lives. It was not so much what they did as what they were. They were the instruments of God to bring about the great purpose of God which was the salvation of man. The purpose of God was fulfilled in them.

DISCIPLESHIP

When Jesus called a person to be His disciple, He was calling them to be like Himself. He never asked a person to do what He had not done or go where He had not gone. He once stated, "A disciple is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained will be like his teacher," (Luke 6:40). Lenski says, "the disciple was one who had imbibed the spirit of his teacher." To be a disciple one had to enthrone Christ in his heart and become completely permeated and saturated with the mind of Christ. So much so that he came to love, hate, and accomplish in his own life the same thing Christ loved, hated, and accomplished.

In the first century being a disciple left no choice regarding the pathway one could follow. Discipleship demanded a radical change in one's priorities, goals, and lifestyle. The modern day concept that being a disciple of Christ does not demand a radical change is a fantasy that has caused much of the ineffectiveness in evangelism. The first century church was successful precisely because it was a duplication and demonstration of the eternal purpose of God as manifested in the life of Christ.

When Jesus told the Apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature there was but a handful of disciples. They were so small that it seemed that they would not survive, much less preach to the entire world. Yet, within forty years Paul could proclaim that the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven (Col. 1:23). The church not only survived, it spread throughout the world. Their success is attributed to their lives being an extension of the life of Christ.

PERSONAL EVANGELISM

The early church grew, not because evangelism was a work of the church, but because evangelism was the heartbeat of the church. On the day of Pentecost there were three thousand baptized (Acts 2:41). In Acts 2:47 it says that the "Lord added to the church daily such as

should be saved." The number of disciples grew to five thousand in a short time (Acts 4:4). In Acts 5:28 they filled Jerusalem with their doctrine, and in Acts 5:42, "and daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

Then a persecution forced the church to leave Jerusalem. "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." (Acts 8:4). It is a mistake to think the persecution forced the church to start preaching. They were already preaching. By their transformed nature, they could not do otherwise. The persecution only drove them into new areas, and in this way it became a blessing in disguise.

People often say, we need a persecution (or depression) in our day, then the church would get busy. Or some say it would be easy to be evangelistic in a foreign mission field where the results are so great. But the truth is, one does not become evangelistic by persecution or going to another country. It is not likely that a change of atmosphere or conditions will turn a non-evangelistic church into an evangelistic one. It will take more than just a few superficial changes.

In order for the church today to become truly evangelistic there will have to be a change of our entire system of evangelism and a complete renovating of our way of viewing evangelism. Our system of getting the world into a building at a certain time and place for the purpose of preaching to them just does not work any more. It used to work, and it still works in some places, but it does not work well in most of America today. This is not to say that church buildings are unimportant or do not have a legitimate use. The church has always utilized buildings and will continue to do so. The church building within itself is not the problem. The problem lies in the use of a system that does not work properly, and in our attitude toward evangelism as a whole.

The church cannot close itself behind the walls of its buildings where evangelism is limited to a few weekly events. To limit the evangelistic output of the church to the pulpit and the building is to go contrary to the Bible pattern of evangelism. In the New Testament, evangelism was preeminently personal and individual. Every Christian went everywhere preaching. It was evangelism at the grassroots level. It was every member, everyday and everywhere. It was evangelism in the marketplace, in the streets, on the job, at school, in prison, across the backyard fence or wherever Christians were found. They did not venture out into the world at certain times to evangelize. It was not something they did on some occasions. Instead it was what they were, wherever they were, because of who they were.

The twentieth century church needs to understand this principle if it is to be productive in evangelism. Evangelism is not what the church does, it is what the church is. Evangelism is not just a thing the church members do on Thursday evening, but is something that affects their entire being. This does not mean that all Christians must become pulpit experts or door knocking specialists. It does mean, however, that each Christian evangelizes by their attitude and behavior. A brother who works eight hours a day at the factory can influence the lost by his honesty, integrity, and godliness. A loving mother can save her family by her care, concern, and affection. A student can persuade others by developing meaningful relationships based upon goodness, decency, and morality. The ways of evangelism are many once the attitude has become an extension of the purpose of God.

God's only means of saving lost humanity is through the church. It is because He loved us and saved us that we should want to fulfill His purpose of saving the world. We really have no choice in the matter. Just as we have no choice but to love, give, or serve, we have no choice

but to save the lost.

CONGREGATIONAL EVANGELISM

The main emphasis in the New Testament is upon individual evangelism, but the church as a congregational unit also has a responsibility to preach the gospel. This can be done in several ways.

First, a congregation can evangelize by supporting a preacher. Paul argued that he had the right to be supported by the Corinthians when he worked with them. He said to them, "if we have sown unto you spiritual things is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things." (I Cor. 9:14) Although Paul refused their support (II Cor. 11:8), he apologized later for not taking it (II Cor. 12:13).

Second, a congregation can evangelize by sending out a preacher. The congregation at Jerusalem sent Barnabus to work with the new church at Antioch (Acts 11:22). Then, later, after the Antioch congregation could stand alone, they sent Paul and Barnabas to preach in other places (Acts 13:2). When they went into new areas and established churches, after a period of time, they ordained elders in those churches (Acts 14:23). The pattern seemed to have been for a preacher to work with a church until it had developed capable leaders, then the preacher went to another place to repeat the same process.

The churches that Paul and Barnabas started, functioned for some time without either a preacher or elders. This would indicate that it is not unscriptural for a church to be without a preacher or elders. The ideal situation, however, would be for a preacher to develop the church until it had elders. It should not take a lifetime for a preacher to develop elders in a church. When it does take an extremely long time there is probably something wrong either with the evangelistic method or with the procedure of selecting elders.

Third, several congregations may support a preacher to evangelize. Paul said, "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service." (II Cor. 11:8) These churches acted independently in supporting Paul. There is no indication they pooled their support through a church, missionary society or an individual. Each congregation sent their support directly to Paul (Phil. 4:14-18).

The reason each church supported evangelism directly is because the local congregation is the only organization designed for that work. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (I Tim. 3:15). Any time the funds for a work are centralized and then distributed by an organization, group, or person it is a usurpation of the work of the local church. The church was designed by divine wisdom and is sufficient to accomplish the work God gave it to do. There is no authority for any brotherhood agency to stand between the local church and its work of evangelism. No matter how well such an agent may seem to function, it is still a supplanting of God's divine plan to preach the gospel to the world.

BORN OF WATER

by Billy D. Dickinson

The subject which we now have under consideration is one which is of the greatest importance. It is important because the salvation of our soul depends upon whether or not we have been born again! In John 3:5, Jesus made entrance into the kingdom of God contingent upon one experiencing the new birth. Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Of course, this statement was made in the course of a conversation that Jesus was having with a man by the name of Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews; evidently a member of the Sanhedrin (John 7: 50-52). The Bible says he had come to Jesus in the middle of the night, as he came confessing his personal conviction that Jesus was no ordinary man. He said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." It was then that Jesus explained to Nicodemus the universal need of all men to be born again. In John 3:3, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Its always been amazing to me how Jesus seemed to make this statement out of the clear blue, so to speak. There was certainly nothing said by Nicodemus which initiated this response; but, of course, Jesus always knew what an individual needed to hear. This was His message for Nicodemus: **"Ye must be born again"** (John 3:7). I understand this word which is translated "again" (Greek - another) is quite ambiguous in the Greek. It can mean to be born "from above," or it can mean to be born "anew" or "again." Obviously, Nicodemus took it to mean the latter and he thought that Jesus was saying that one must undergo a second physical birth. This is why he asked, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Of course, Jesus went on to explain to him that He was not speaking of a second physical birth; rather, He was speaking of a spiritual birth. Thus, Jesus gave an explanation of the matter with these words: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." I submit unto you that this is our Lord's explanation of what it means to be born again. Jesus is saying that to be born again means to be "born of the water and the Spirit."

So, it seems to me that if we are ever going to understand the new birth, what it means and what it consists of, this is the place where we need to begin, and John 3:5 must be reckoned with. Recently, I read through Billy Graham's book "How to Be Born Again," thinking I would find in it his views on John 3:5, and in particular what he believes "born of water" has reference to. Yet, to my surprise, in his book I found no explanation of John 3:5. This is absolutely astounding to me, because if one is truly going to explain what the new birth consists of, it seems to me that our Lord's explanation concerning it is the logical place to start.

WHAT DOES "BORN OF WATER" REFER TO?

At this time, we are especially interested in what it means to be "born of water." The

question and issue before us is this: What does the term "water" have reference to? I would like to begin by stating very simply that "water" in this text means exactly what it says -- it means **water**! If "Spirit" in John 3:5 means Spirit, then "water" certainly means water, and only a theological bias would cause a person to try to make it mean something else.

It is said that N. B. Hardeman was one time taking a train ride. One day as he was riding alone, he was reading his Bible. A man sat down beside him and said, "Sir, I would like to ask you a Bible question." Since Brother Hardeman was reading his Bible, I suppose the man must have assumed he was a preacher. The man continued, "Something has always troubled and bothered me. What does 'water' mean in John 3:5?" Brother Hardeman purportedly replied, (and he must have answered with a bit of sarcasm in his voice), "It means buttermilk!" The point he was trying to make was that it means just what it says, and that only a person who has been influenced by false doctrine could conclude that it means anything else.

Yes, "water" in John 3:5 means water, and it refers to the act of baptism, since this is the only ordinance given by Christ which involves water. Furthermore, the scholarship of the world will testify to the fact that what I have just stated is true! Indeed, when a person takes the position that "water" in John 3:5 does not refer to baptism, he has either knowingly or unknowingly set himself at variance with the scholarship of the world. Just a look at the various commentaries will prove this to be the case.

SCHOLARS AND COMMENTATORS

I would like to cite a few of the many sources that could be quoted to demonstrate that the scholarship of the world says that "born of water" refers to baptism.

RAY SUMMERS: "If matters of interpretation could be determined by counting the commentaries, this view (that "born of water" refers to baptism, BOD) would have a clear edge over all the others" ("Behold The Lamb," p. 68)

TERTULLIAN (AD 160-230?): "... 'Unless a man has been re-born of water and spirit, he shall not enter in the kingdom of heavens,' has tied faith to the necessity of baptism" ("The Writings Of Tertullian," Vol. 1, p. 248).

EARL L. DOUGLAS: "Being born of water means being baptized, and baptism is the sign of one's commitment to the kingdom" ("The Douglas Sunday School Lessons," 1961, p. 29).

ALBERT BARNES: "By water here is evidently signified baptism. Thus the word is used, Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5" ("Barnes' Notes On The New Testament," p. 276).

J. W. WILMARTH: "Baptism and renewal by the Spirit are the conditions of true citizenship in the kingdom of God on earth" ("Baptist Quarterly," July 1877, p. 309).

WM. CATHCART: "Nine tenths of the Christian family, living and dead, have applied these words of Jesus to baptism, the works of the Spirit, and the earthly church" ("Baptist Doctrine," p. 85).

FLOYD V. FILSON: "His rebirth comes by water and the Spirit, that is, by baptism in which the really effective renewal of life comes not from the water or the human minister but from the working of the Holy Spirit" ("The Layman's Bible Commentary," p. 45)

DR. J. R. GRAVES: "If born of water refers to anything but baptism we never knew it, it means nothing else, and no Baptist we ever heard or read of believed otherwise until Alexander Campbell frightened them away from an interpretation that is sustained by the concensus of all scholars of all denominations of all ages" ("Tennessee Baptist," Oct. 30, 1886).

Let me assure you that I could go on with the list. Of course, some of these sources still deny that baptism is essential to salvation; nonetheless, the majority of scholars and commentators will agree that "born of water" refers to baptism, and that's exactly what it does refer to.

One commentary I read insisted that "born of water" could not refer to baptism because baptism is never referred to as a birth in the word of God. Others have argued through the years that baptism is a burial, rather than a birth; therefore, "born of water" could not refer to baptism. To begin with, the claim that baptism is never referred to as a birth, or that it is never connected with the new birth, in the Scriptures is simply not true. In Tit. 3:5, Paul wrote, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Notice he writes of "the washing of regeneration." This refers to baptism, as again scholars will agree, and "regeneration" denotes the new birth or a renewal. So, he's speaking of the washing of the new birth. Some translations refer to this as "the laver of regeneration" or "the bathing of a new birth." Again, Paul wrote in Eph. 5:26, "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." Thayer says that this word "washing," as used in Tit. 3:5 and Eph. 5:26, refers to baptism, ("Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon," p. 382).

I believe Tit. 3:5 and Eph. 5:26 are parallel passages which shed light on John 3:5. Notice:

John 3:5 - Born of water, and the Spirit, enter the kingdom.

Titus 3:5 The washing of regeneration, renewing of the Spirit, saved.

Eph. 5:26 The washing of water, by the word, cleansed.

It should be plain to see that entering the kingdom of God is the same as being saved or cleansed from sins. To be "born of water" is the same as "the washing of regeneration" and "the washing of water" -- all which refer to baptism. And to be born of the Spirit is the same as the renewing of the Spirit which is effected by the word of God.

It is true that baptism is a burial. We are baptized into the death of Christ, as Paul wrote in Rom. 6:3, but in baptism we also rise to walk in newness of life. Not only in baptism are we buried with Christ, but we are also raised in the likeness of His resurrection (Rom. 6:5). In the Bible, when there is death and then there is new life, this is referred to as a birth. In this sense, Jesus is "the firstborn from the dead" (Col. 1:18). He is "the first-born from the dead" in that He died and then He received new life in the resurrection. Likewise, when a person obeys the gospel and is buried with Christ in baptism and then is resurrected out of water to walk in newness of life, this is pictured as a birth -- an entrance into the new spiritual life that is found in Christ Jesus! This is what it means to be "born of water." There can be no doubt that "water" refers to baptism in John 3:5.

OTHER INTERPRETATIONS FOR "BORN OF WATER"

Obviously, there are those who would vehemently deny that this is the correct interpretation. They claim that "water" does not refer to baptism in this passage and they have their own idea of what it means. Let us consider what others would like for us to accept as an alternative to the explanation I have given. Basically, there are two other positions which are widely held by religious people in regard to "born of water."

First, there are those who take the position that "born of water" refers to:

THE NATURAL BIRTH

They believe that "water" here refers to the water (actually it is amniotic fluid) which accompanies a natural birth. According to this view, our Lord is saying, "Except a man is born physically and born spiritually, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Quite frankly, of all the commentaries I read on John 3:5 very few (if any) took this position. I did find in "The Living Bible" where this footnote was given: "'Physical birth is not enough. You must also be born spiritually'... This alternate paraphrase interprets 'born of water' as meaning the normal process observed during every human birth. Some think this means water baptism." However, I think I know why relatively few commentaries take this position. The reason is because this position simply will not hold up. If you will excuse the pun, this position simply will not hold water! In reality, this interpretation reduces our Lord's teaching to an absurdity; there are at least three reasons why I must reject it.

The first reason I reject this interpretation is because it makes Jesus refer to two births separated by years, instead of one birth. (If this was my only objection to this view, it would be sufficient to prove it false.) Jesus is NOT discussing two births -- one birth of water and one birth of Spirit, rather He is talking about ONE BIRTH in which there are two essentials! This is evident because the Greek has only one preposition for both the water and the Spirit. Instead of saying "of the water" (one birth) and "of the Spirit" (second birth), it actually says "of the water and the Spirit" (one birth). This is why the "Revised Standard Version" and the "American Standard Version" both render the passage: "Born of water and the Spirit." We understand that in natural birth there are two essentials -- there is the begetting and the birth. When a child is born into a family, he was begotten by the father and born of the mother. Likewise, in the spiritual birth there are two essentials -- one is the Spirit and the other is the water. In the new birth, one is begotten by the Spirit (through the word of God) and born of the water. Hence, since this interpretation makes Jesus refer to two births separated by years, I must reject it.

The second reason I reject this interpretation is because Jesus is talking about a "man" being born again! Obviously, no man has ever been born; only babies are born. This is why I said this interpretation reduces our Lord's teaching to an absurdity. As a matter of fact, this is what Nicodemus thought Jesus was talking about! Yet, Jesus explained to him that he was not speaking of a physical birth, but a spiritual birth. Jesus said a MAN must be born AGAIN! This proves that He did not have in mind the natural birth, and as I have already pointed out, He defined what it means to be "born again;" it means to be born of water and the Spirit. Also, Jesus said in John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." What did Jesus mean by this? He was merely explaining to Nicodemus that he was speaking of a spiritual birth and not a physical one. The flesh of man, of course, is not in any way affected or changed by the spiritual birth. It is the spirit of man that

undergoes a change and is regenerated. So, Jesus here even sets in contrast for us the fleshy birth with what He is talking about -- a spiritual birth.

Thirdly, if Jesus here is referring to natural birth, when the water breaks and the child is born, then I suppose this would mean that all those who have experienced a "dry birth" will be lost. Jesus plainly said that only those who are "born of water" can enter into the kingdom. I suppose this would also mean that a person's salvation depends upon whether or not he can prove that water was present when he was born!

Well, for all of these reasons, I reject this interpretation. Also, there are those who take the position that "born of water" is:

EMBLEMATIC OF THE SPIRIT

Some argue that "water" here is emblematic of the Spirit and is representative of the cleansing of the Spirit. This view is as widely accepted as the notion that it refers to natural birth; perhaps even more so. I found where several commentaries took this position.

The idea is that "water" is used figuratively and is symbolic of the Spirit. This is the position that L. S. Ballard took with Thomas Warren in "The Warren-Ballard Debate." He said that the Greek word "kai," which is translated "and" in John 3:5 can also be translated "even," as it is in many passages. So, his contention was that the correct rendering of John 3:5 should read: "Except a man be born of water, **EVEN** the Spirit." Those who make this argument will often deny that they are saying that "water" means Spirit, but they say "water" is emblematic of the Spirit.

To begin with, it is true that sometimes kai is rendered "even" instead of "and." Vine, under "water," points out that some regard kai to mean "even," "in which case the water would be emblematic of the Spirit, as in John 7:38" ("Vine's Expository Dictionary Of New Testament Words," p. 1223). However, under "even" he also says that the "explanatory use of kai followed by a noun in apposition, and meaning 'namely,' or 'even' is comparatively rare. Winer's cautionary word needs heeding, that 'this meaning has been introduced into too many passages' (Gram. of the N.T., p 546). Some think it has this sense in John 3:5 ..." (p. 385). Notice that Winer says "this meaning has been introduced into too many passages." I submit unto you that John 3:5 is such a passage! You would think that if this is the correct rendering, there would be scores of translations which would bear this out; but this is not the case. I have checked as many translations as I could get my hands on. Here's what I found: Of the 20 translations I had available, 19 rendered the verse "water AND Spirit": King James Version; Revised Standard Version; American Standard Version; New English Bible; New International Version; The Jerusalem Bible; Wiclif (1380); Tyndale (1534); Cranmer (1539); Geneva (1557) - First English Bible divided into verses; Rheims (1582) - First English Roman Catholic version; Lamson; Moffatt; Great Bible (1539); Fenton Holy Bible In Modern English; Goodspeed; 20th. Century New Testament; J. B. Phillips; and William F. Beck. Only one gave "even" as an alternative translation for kai: The Amplified Bible. It renders the passage, "water and (even) Spirit." A footnote says: "Kai may be translated even." Incidentally, I understand this is the purpose of this translation, to give alternative renderings. To argue that kai must be rendered "even" in John 3:5 is to say that all the scholars who are represented by the above translations did not know how to properly translate this word.

In an attempt to show that kai can be rendered this way, L. S. Ballard made an appeal to

Zech. 9:9 and Rev. 20:2. This first passage says, "... behold, the King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt ..." His argument is that it did not mean two animals, but it was an ass. EVEN a colt. The second passage says, "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years." Again, his argument is that Satan and the Devil are not different beings, but the passage should be rendered, "the Devil, ~~EVEN~~ Satan." Well, even if that is the way these two passages should be rendered, it is plain to see that they are NOT parallel to John 3:5. The simple reason is that the ass and the colt are one in the same animal and the Devil and Satan are one and the same being, but "water" and "Spirit" are not one and the same thing! This is where the parallel falls short. (Bear in mind that Vine says as to whether or not kai should be rendered as "even" or "and" must be determined by the context.) Not only this, but they themselves have admitted that "water" does not mean "Spirit" in John 3:5. In the "Evans-Barr Debate," Vernon L. Barr denied that he had said that water means Spirit, rather he said it was "symbolic of the Spirit" (p. 322).

Now, notice how they cross themselves up. When you have one thing that is symbolic of something else, you have two things involved. Yet, in the examples they cite, is the ass symbolic of the colt? No! They are one and the same animal. Is the Devil symbolic of Satan? No! They are one and the same being. However, "water and Spirit," according to their own admission do NOT mean the same thing! If they do, then we have Jesus saying, "Except a man be born of Spirit and the Spirit ..." This proves that John 3:5 is not a parallel passage to the examples they cite.

It is true that sometimes the term "water" is used in a figurative sense in the word of God. However, there is nothing in the context or the text itself which would cause us to conclude that "water"; is used figuratively in John 3:5. As I have already pointed out, if "Spirit" means Spirit, then surely "water" means water. If we are going to take the position that "water" here is used figuratively, what is going to stop us from concluding that "Spirit" is also used figuratively?

A fundamental rule for interpreting the Scriptures is that a word or passage should be understood literally unless a literal interpretation would be repugnant to common sense, or there is something in the context that demands a figurative usage. There is, however, absolutely no reason, except on a theological bias, for concluding that "water" does not literally mean water in John 3:5.

For example, in John 4:14 it is obvious that Jesus uses the term "water" in a figurative sense, as he contrasts it with literal water: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." When one drinks of literal water, he shall thirst again; but when one drinks of the water Jesus here refers to, He says he will never thirst again. Obviously, "water" is used figuratively in this passage. Again, in John 7:38 we find another figurative usage of water: "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." By the context in which the term "water" is used in these two passages, we conclude that "water" is used in a figurative sense - probably to denote spiritual life. Thayer says, "allegorically, that which refreshes and keeps alive the soul is likened to water, viz. the Spirit and truth of God, John 4:14" (p. 634).

Yet, what is it in the context which would force us to conclude that "water" in John 3:5 should be taken figuratively? Until someone can point out what that something is, we have no alternative but to conclude that it is to be taken literally!

Of course, some are quick to point out that, since in these passages of John, water is used figuratively, we ought to assume that that is the way it is used in John 3:5. However, let me be just as quick to point out that there are MORE passages in John where the word water is used literally: 1:26,31,33; 2:7,9; 3:23; 4:7,46; 5:3,4,7; 13:5; 19:34. I believe it is fair to say that this is the way that water is used in the Book of John, with a few exceptions. That being the case, I must conclude that "born of water" means to be baptized in water.

CONCLUSION

Jesus taught that one must be "born again" - "born of water and the Spirit." Let us bear in mind that the word "born" in this verse (Greek - gennao) can refer to either the begetting by the father or the bearing by the mother. We are begotten by the Spirit through the word of God: "Of his own will beget he us with the word of truth" (James 1:18); "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit ... Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." (I Pet. 1:22,23); and "I have begotten you through the gospel." (I Cor. 4:15).

This is how we are begotten by the Spirit. Why would a man obey his Lord in baptism? It is because he has listened to the voice and instructions of the Spirit. Thus, when one is instructed by the Spirit, through the word of God, and his obedience to that word culminates in baptism, he is born into the family of God and becomes a new creature in Jesus Christ. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17). How does one get into Christ? "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27)

Remember -- **Ye must be born again.**

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

by Doug Edwards

One of the most remarkable books in the Bible is that of Daniel. It has an appeal that reaches out to all ages. Children enjoy the book because of its exciting stories: like Daniel being cast into the lion's den. Serious Bible students enjoy it because of its numerous prophecies, such as the 70 weeks prophecy. I hate to admit it, but Bible critics and skeptics enjoy it because of its alleged "textual and historical" problems. There is something in the book of Daniel for everyone.

There are three areas of study that I would like to present:

1. An overview of the book.
2. A time span of the book.
3. A purpose for the book.

The book of Daniel was written while the Jews were in Babylonian captivity. Why were they there? What had they done to deserve this punishment? In order to understand this we need to review a little bit of history.

One has to go back to Hezekiah to appreciate the background of Daniel's experiences in Babylon. Hezekiah was one of the good kings of Judah. His reform was short-lived (II Chron. 29-31). His son, Manasseh, was as wicked as his father was good. He placed idolatrous images all over Judah, including the very temple of God. He made his own son pass through the fire. He murdered so many people that blood filled Jerusalem from one end to the other (II Kings 21:16).

It was because of Manasseh's evil practices that Judah would have to suffer captivity. The prophet Jeremiah lived before and during the Babylonian siege. He told the inhabitants of Jerusalem that the reason Nebuchadnezzar was coming was because of Manasseh's sins. He wrote, "And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem." (Jer. 15:4).

Nebuchadnezzar would make three attacks on Jerusalem. In 606 B.C. he came and carried off Daniel and other young men. In 597 B.C. he returned and again carried off more captives, including King Jehoiachin, Ezekiel and thousands of others. Then in 586 B.C. he returned, destroyed the city and temple, and carried off the remaining people except for the very poor (II Kings 25:11,12). Daniel then lived and prophesied during this captivity.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

There are two basic divisions in the book: (1) chapters 1-6 are basically narrative, and (2) chapters 7-12 are basically prophetic. In order to get an overview of the book, a brief summary of each chapter follows:

CHAPTER ONE - Daniel is carried off to Babylon.

CHAPTER TWO - The dream of Nebuchadnezzar. The key to understanding the book of Daniel is found in this chapter. The dream involves four kingdoms, with Babylon being the first (vs. 36-45). The second and third kingdoms are Medo-Persia and Greece (8:20,21). The fourth kingdom is the Roman Empire. It was in the fourth kingdom that Daniel said, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (2:44). Fulfilled history tells us that the kingdom was established during the Roman Empire (Mark 1:14,15; 9:1; Col. 1:13). The rest of the visions (chapters 7-12) basically deal with the events of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and add additional information.

CHAPTER THREE: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are thrown into the fiery furnace.

CHAPTER FOUR: Nebuchadnezzar is made sick because of his pride.

CHAPTER FIVE: The feast of Belshazzar and the hand-writing on the wall.

CHAPTER SIX: Daniel is thrown into a lion's den.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Four beasts rise from the sea. A little horn comes from the fourth beast and persecutes the saints.

CHAPTER EIGHT: The vision of the ram and he-goat. These two beasts represent Medo-Persia and Greece.

CHAPTER NINE: The seventy weeks prophecy.

CHAPTER TEN: An angel is sent to tell Daniel about his people in the last days.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: A prophecy of the battles of the king of the south against the king of the north. This is probably one of the most remarkable prophecies in all of the Bible. It deals with detailed information concerning the struggles of Egypt with the Seleucid kingdom with the country of Palestine caught in the middle.

CHAPTER TWELVE: The end of the vision.

It might be appropriate here to talk about Daniel and his critics. The major charge that is brought against Daniel is that it must have been written during the Maccabean Age (about 160 B.C.) instead of during the Babylonian captivity. Critics believe that a brilliant, though unknown, Jew wrote this to encourage the Jews during this time of persecution.

The primary reason for their late date for Daniel is their disbelief in predictive prophecy. There are at least two reasons for accepting the traditional dating of Daniel. First, the author over and over tells us that he is Daniel and that he is writing from Babylon. If he is not, he is a liar. Second, the Lord Jesus believed that Daniel was a prophet. He said in Matt. 24:15, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place ..."

TIME SPAN OF THE BOOK

It is my understanding that Daniel deals with the last days of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament. It does not deal with a millennial reign of Christ on this earth. It does not deal with our future. The context in several places proves this to be true.

When Daniel was called in before Nebuchadnezzar in chapter two he told him the vision would deal with the "latter days." He said, "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these." When the phrase "latter days" is used in reference to the Jews as a nation it refers to the closing days of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament. Moses used this same phrase in Deuteronomy when warning the children of Israel about their future. He said, "When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice" (Deut. 4:30). He also said, "For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days ..." (Deut. 31:29).

Now it must be kept in mind that the other visions in Daniel are centered around the one in chapter two. Since the vision in chapter two deals with the last days of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament, the others must deal with this same period of time.

There are several passages in Daniel that remind us that these events would take place during this period of time. In chapter eight we find the vision of the ram and the he-goat. An angel is told to make Daniel understand this vision. He says, "... Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision... And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be." (Dan. 8:17,19). Was he talking about the end of time? No! He was talking about the close of the Old Testament period.

In the seventy weeks prophecy we are again given a time period in which these events would occur. Daniel writes, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy." (Dan. 9:24). Notice that he said this would happen on "thy people and upon thy holy city." This would happen to the Jews and to Jerusalem. A careful study of this prophecy will reveal that Daniel is talking about the first coming of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. This is not a prediction of our future.

In Daniel chapter ten an angel is sent to tell Daniel about the future of his people. He said, "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days." (Dan. 10:14). He refers to the Jews (thy people) and the close of the Old Testament (the latter days). Daniel is very consistent with his descriptions of his time span.

In chapter twelve, Daniel continues to tell us whom the visions concern. He sees two men standing on either side of a river and asks, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." (Dan. 12:6,7). We are told that

the end of these wonders would occur with the scattering of the holy people. This occurred in 70 A.D. with the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the remaining Jews.

In all of the passages noted above there is a consistency that is to be noted. Daniel is talking about the Jews and their last days. He is not talking about events in our future. It is a mistake to take Daniel out of its historical context. The book of Daniel dealt with the physical nation of Israel being God's nation. Today, God's nation is spiritual Israel - the church (Gal. 6:16; 1 Peter 2:9).

PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

It is a little bit difficult to determine all of the reasons for a book. Daniel does not list the reasons for his writing the book. We are able, however, to determine at least a few of the reasons for this book.

First, God is in control of the world. Put yourself in the shoes of one of these Jews in captivity. You are homesick, discouraged, and down-hearted. You ask yourself, Why? Does God really take care of our destiny?

The answer to all of these questions is that God really does care and He really is in charge of the world. He can even shape the events of the world to suit His purposes. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar, "And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding." (Dan. 2:21). One of the purposes of this book is to tell the Jews that no matter how dark the future may look God is still in control. He even controls the destiny of the pagan nations and will use them to accomplish His purposes.

There is a wonderful thought in all of this for the Christian. As in the days of Daniel, God still controls the world today. He continues through His providence to care for His people today. We may go through hard times and think that He is not there, but He is. Make no mistake about it - God is in control of this world.

The second purpose for the book of Daniel is to show the Jews that the Messiah would come and sit on David's throne. What happened when the line of David fell and the Gentiles took over? It looked like God could not keep His promise. Now God had promised that the descendants of David would sit on His throne. God said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." (Psalms 89:3,4). The people had to understand that the punishment was not God ignoring this covenant, but rather fulfilling it.

The family of David had become corrupt since the time of Solomon, and God was punishing them through the captivity. The Jews were warned that this would happen if they sinned. God again said, "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my laws, and walk not in my judgment; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes." (Psalms 89:28-32). The Gentile dominion of the Jew was not to be understood as treachery on God's part. Daniel told the Jews that the Messiah would come and bring forgiveness of sins (Daniel 9:24-27).

A third purpose for the book of Daniel was to inform the Jews of their last days. The angel told Daniel, "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days." (Daniel 10:14). For some the future is dark with the destruction of the city and scattering of the holy people (Dan. 9:26; 12:7). For others it is a time of hope with many being purified and raised to everlasting life (Dan. 12:2,10).

A fourth purpose of the book of Daniel is to show the establishment of God's kingdom on the earth. Daniel said, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." (Dan. 2:44). As we have learned this was to take place during the Roman Empire.

CONCLUSION

The book of Daniel is important in God's scheme of redemption. It discusses the fate of the Jews and the coming of the Messiah. It should not be neglected in our study of the Scriptures. It is true that it may be more difficult to understand than some, but it is a book that contains many blessings for its readers.

DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT HAVE PATTERN AUTHORITY

by Johnny Elmore

The subject which demands our attention is truly an important one. It is important because most, if not all of us, believe that we must have divine authority for all that we preach and practice. The subject also involves discussion about exactly what is an example and what makes an example binding? This is important because some preachers of the church of Christ have become so liberal that they now deny that authority can be established by examples or necessary inferences.

INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

Reuel Lemmons, former editor of FIRM FOUNDATION, stated at the close of the Arlington Meeting in 1968, "I have listened closely to the three ways of establishing authority - command, example, inference. And I am persuaded that this needs closer examination. I believe that Bible authority rests solely on the revelatory nature of scriptures, and that dealing with necessary inference and approved examples involves the use of the human mind, and therefore interpretation. Since no scripture is given for private interpretation, there is actually no Biblical ground for disfellowship in differences that are centered either in necessary inference or in approved example."¹

Brother Lemmons later affirmed in an editorial that the **only** way a thing can be proved essential for men today is by a **command**.² Another brother, Milo Richard Hadwin, stated: "Those within the Restoration Movement who have written on the subject usually have assumed that at least some of the New Testament examples are binding. Most of the writing has sought to determine when examples are binding. In contrast, the New Testament seems to provide no basis for concluding that its examples are binding. It does not speak in terms of a pattern of examples. Neither churches nor individuals in the New Testament are presented as patterns to be imitated in specific detail."³ This thesis finally led the same writer to say: "The implication is that if examples have no authority in themselves to require imitation, then the example of Acts 20:7 has no authority to require the exclusive observance of the Lord's supper on the first day of the week."⁴ He also said: "The other involves the plurality of elders in each congregation. Titus was commanded to 'appoint elders in every city' (Titus 1:5). However, only an example exists of appointing 'elders in every church' (Acts 14:23). The latter establishes the **right** to have a plurality of elders in every church, but this example alone would establish the necessity."⁵ So we can see that some of the most basic teachings of the New Testament have come under attack.

Not long after I began to preach, I adapted a sermon from N. B. Hardeman in which he asked the question: "How Does the Bible Teach?" Hardeman showed that the Bible teaches in three ways: (1) By precept - direct statement or positive command; (2) approved example; and (3) necessary inference. With some modifications, I still believe that is true. Hadwin's study is wrong in

its conclusions but it does have some interesting information. He shows that the view that the Bible teaches by example comes to us with the weight of antiquity, tracing expressions of the restoration plea as far back as 262 A.D. He shows that even John Calvin in 1537 proposed that the Lord's Supper "ought to be dispensed every Lord's Day at least; such was the practice in the Apostolic Church, and ought to be ours ..." He also shows that two documents launching the Restoration Movement in America stress the importance of New Testament examples. In 1804, Barton Stone and others disbanded the Springfield Presbytery because they "soon found that there was neither precept nor example in the New Testament for such confederacies ..." In 1809, Thomas Campbell wrote in his "Declaration and Address," "Nor ought anything to be admitted, as of Divine obligation, in their Church constitution and management, but what is expressly enjoined by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles upon the New Testament Church; either in express terms or by approved precedent."⁶

Alexander Campbell later wrote: "The apostles were commissioned by the Lord to teach the disciples to observe all things he had commanded them. Now we believe them to have been faithful to their master, and consequently he gave them to know his will. Whatever the disciples practiced in their meetings with the approbation of the apostles, is equivalent to an apostolic command to us to do the same. To suppose the contrary, is to make the half of the New Testament of non-effect. For it does not altogether consist of commands, but of approved precedents. Apostolic example is justly esteemed of equal authority with an apostolic precept." He continued, "... the order of worship they gave the churches was given them by their Lord, and their example is of the same force with a broad precept."⁷

However, it has been pointed out that Campbell departed from this rule. In fact, it seems he opposed those who saw patterns in the details of what the New Testament church did. Concerning cooperation, he wrote: "There is too much squeamishness about the manner of cooperation. Some are looking for a model similar to that which Moses gave for building the tabernacle. These seem not to understand that this is as impossible as it would be incompatible with the genius of the gospel... A model for making types, paper, ink, and for printing the Bible, might as rationally be expected, as a model for the cooperation of churches ..." ⁸ Was it not the abandonment of this rule that brought about the wholesale apostasy of the disciples?

BOOKS ON EXAMPLES

In 1958, Brother J. D. Thomas wrote a book, "We Be Brethren," which was purported to be "the solution of brotherhood problems."⁹ Some of the things in the book may be helpful, but the main contribution seems to be what Brother Thomas very egotistically referred to as the "Standard Authority Diagram." It consists, basically, of an analysis of generics, specifics, and expedients. The required items in any authorized action are indicated by heavy, black lines, and the optional items are indicated by wavy lines.

The real problem with this was quickly pointed out by critics. Brother Roy E. Cogdill charged: "He puts the 'wavy line' of distinction where it arbitrarily suits him and in his use of examples he arbitrarily designates one as binding and another as not binding and expects the rest of us to accept his judgment on the matter."¹⁰ I believe that is a valid criticism. In 1974, Brother Thomas wrote a sequel, "Heaven's Window," which to my way of thinking provided no more help than the first. Maybe it is just me, but I found both books wordy and obscure.

In 1975, Brother Thomas B. Warren wrote a book, "When Is An Example Binding?" I found this book to be helpful. Brother Warren prefers to call what has been generally termed "examples" as

"accounts of action." I do not believe that is original with him but I believe it is a valid point. He probably got it from Roy Deaver, who wrote: "Literally hundreds of times the question has been asked: 'When is an example binding?' This is the wrong question. If it is an example it is binding, and if it is not binding it is not an example. The question ought to be: when does the Bible account of an action constitute an example?"¹¹

DICTIONARY DEFINITIONS

Now my dictionary gives five definitions of the word "example": "1. One or a portion taken to show the character or quality of all; a sample. 2. That which is to be followed or imitated; a pattern. 3. A precedent, model, or parallel case. 4. A warning case, esp. a punishment inflicted to serve as a warning. 5. An instance illustrating a rule or precept, as a problem to be solved."¹² Perhaps all would agree that the last four definitions are relevant to our study, and that the definitions all contain the element of essentiality or something that must be observed or followed. I believe that this is also evident from the meanings of the Greek words which are translated "example." Let us notice those words briefly.

Original Words For Example

(1) DEIGMA (digh'-mah) It is defined as "a **specimen** of any thing, **example, pattern**: set forth as a warning, Jude 7."¹³ Although this is not a model to be followed, it is a specimen of something to be avoided, namely, the conduct of Sodom and Gomorrah. This reminds me of a man who was asked: "What model is your car?" The man replied: "This car ain't no model - it's a horrible example."

(2) HUPODEIGMA (hoop od' igue mah) This word is defined as "**an example** ... with a gen. of the thing to be imitated, Jas. 5:10."¹⁴ Thus, we are to imitate the patience of the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord.

(3) HUPODEIKNUMI (hoop od' ike' noo mee) The proper meaning is "**to show** by placing **under** (i.e. before) the eyes."¹⁵ This is rendered, "I have shewed you all things" in the KJV, where the ASV has Paul saying, "In all things I gave you an example" (Acts 20:35).

(4) TUPOS (too' pos) This word has several meanings, but one definition is "an example." It is used "in the technical sense, viz. the pattern in conformity to which a thing must be made," as in Acts 7:44 and Heb. 8:5."¹⁶ It is used "in an ethical sense, a **dissuasive example, pattern of warning**: plur. of ruinous events which serve as admonitions or warnings to others" as in I Cor. 10:6, and as "**an example to be imitated**: of men worthy of imitation as in Phil. 3:17."¹⁷

(5) HUPOGRAMMOS (hoop og ram mos) This word is defined as "**a writing-copy** and as it concerns the conduct of Jesus as "**an example set before one**" (I Peter 2:21).¹⁸

(6) PARADEIGMATIDZO (par ad igue mat id' zo) This word means "**to set forth as an example, make an example of**" or in a bad sense "**to expose to public disgrace**" as in the case of Mary in Matt. 1:19.¹⁹

From all of this it must be clear that the idea of exemplary conduct is taught in the New Testament and that an example is something that must be imitated or avoided, as the case may be.

I think that Warren's book is helpful because it stresses the inductive method in interpreting the Scriptures. Incidentally, we do interpret the Scriptures. There are no commands addressed specifically and directly to me, Johnny Fimore. Even the Great Commission was addressed directly to the apostles, and the only way I know that it is bound on me is to infer from the teaching of the Scriptures that it is. We are responsible for what is implicitly taught in the Scriptures. I like the statement of Robert Camp who wrote: "The reason I am bound by God's word is not that I read it but that HE wrote it. The reason I am bound by those things implicit in His word is NOT that I inferred it BUT that HE implied it."²⁰ I might also point out that what we are talking about is the study of hermeneutics, the science of interpreting the Scriptures. I am reminded of what the farm boy said when asked the difference between agriculture and farming. He said that agriculture is something like farming only farming is actually doing it. What we are talking about is actually interpreting the Scriptures.

Warren's basic thesis in his book is that in order to decide accurately whether a given Biblical instruction, whether statements, commands, questions, accounts of action, etc. is binding on men living today, we must carefully analyze the specific statement, taking into account such things as word meaning and syntax, carefully with the evidence in both the immediate and remote contexts, and then draw only such conclusions as are warranted by the evidence. Essentially, what is advocated is simply good sound hermeneutics based upon the evidence.

Apparently, it is hard to be strictly objective. I found that both Thomas and Warren were not always strictly objective. It appears that Thomas' main purpose was to defend the cooperation schemes of institutional churches, and Warren fell into the same trap. Warren classed the pattern of cooperation found in the New Testament as "optional and permanent." On II Cor. 11:8, where the apostle Paul says: "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service," Warren says: "The **details** of this sending are not given in the Scriptures. It is not made clear whether (1) the sending churches sent the wages **directly** to Paul (that is, **without** its first going to the **church** in Corinth and then that church giving it to Paul) or (2) the sending churches sent Paul's wages to the **church** in Corinth so that the church there (in Corinth) could then give the wages to Paul. Since the Scriptures have **not bound** one way of sending the wages to a preacher by cooperating churches (i.e., whether **directly** to the preacher or **indirectly**, by way of the receiving church), it is sinful for any man to try to bind either of these ways to the exclusion of the other. Man must not bind where God has not bound (I Tim. 4:1-5)."²⁰ This statement is contradictory to Warren's own rule of drawing only conclusions warranted by the evidence. There is absolutely no evidence of any church sending to the treasury of another church to be used to support preachers. In fact, this passage plainly teaches the opposite! Goodspeed renders II Cor. 11:8,9: "I robbed other churches, letting them pay me so that I could work for you! And when I was with you and wanted money, I did not burden any of you, for when the brothers came from Macedonia they supplied what I needed."

I want to give some practical rules or tests for determining when an example is binding. Some of these may be obvious and taken for granted by all. Most of these are embraced in the book by Roy E. Cogdill, "Walking By Faith," although I have tried to re-phrase them so as to leave out the jargon.

A POSITIVE RULE

I am almost tempted to do on examples as one Supreme Court justice did. When he was asked about his rule for determining pornography, he said: "I know it when I see it." We may feel

that we know an example when we see it, but Clinton Lockhart gave a good rule in his book on interpretation: "Every communication of thought, human and divine, given in the language of men, is subject to the ordinary rules of interpretation."²¹ That means that the rules for determining whether accounts of action are binding are the same as for commands or necessary inferences. Examples are not to be interpreted by a different method or rule. Therefore, we could say that we do have a binding example when the approved actions of the early church reveal God's will.

NEGATIVE TESTS

I am reluctant to call these "rules," so I refer to them as "tests." The essential or binding nature of examples is not established by a single test, but by a process of elimination.

I. AN ACCOUNT OF ACTION IS NOT BINDING WHEN UNIFORMITY OR CONSTANCY OF ACTION IS ABSENT

Positively stated this would mean that when there is only one example of a practice, or when in every occurrence the practice was the same, unless some other passage of scripture can be produced authorizing another practice or showing that the same thing was practiced another way, under the same circumstances, then that example should be followed. If uniformity does not exist, then the optional character of an account of action is established. Let us make an application.

(1) Every person who was converted in the New Testament era believed and was baptized without delay. The uniformity of such conversions shows that faith and baptism are essential to conversion. If we could find one case in which the person was saved by faith only or by going to the mourner's bench, then we would not have uniformity.

(2) The early church observed the communion only upon the first day of the week. If this establishes the right of the church to observe it upon the first day of the week, then it also establishes that it can be observed only upon the first day due to the fact that there is no evidence of its being observed any other day. If we could find one case in which the early church observed it on any other day, then we would not have uniformity.

(3) Kneeling in prayer. Some have pointed out that in the New Testament, Christians are only described as praying while kneeling, rather than standing. However, other exemplary characters prayed in other postures. Jesus evidently prayed while sitting (Matt. 26:20,26), and after falling on his face (Matt. 26:39). The publican who stood while praying was pronounced justified by Jesus (Luke 18:13,14). Therefore, the consideration of uniformity is lacking.

Other actions, such as meeting in an upper room for the communion, the burial of the dead by young men, praying at the ninth hour, and selling all possessions and distributing to the needy are negated by other considerations.

II. AN ACCOUNT OF ACTION IS NOT BINDING IF IT IS CONSTRUED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO VIOLATE AN EXPRESSED AND ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLE

By that, we mean that it must not conflict with the teaching of other clear statements,

commands, examples and necessary inferences. It is certain that the Holy Spirit did not teach one thing by command and then teach by example or necessary inference something contradictory.

(1) The communion on the first day of the week only. We use Acts 20:7 to establish the time for the communion. We have a clear statement in I Cor. 11:26 to the effect that "as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." The word "often" is a relative term. If we had no more information, we would always be in doubt. But Acts 20:7 tells us how often - "upon the first day of the week." This example of "how often" does not militate against the express statement but rather complements it. Combined with the information that there was a set time of assembly (I Cor 16:1,2), that disciples were not to forsake it (Heb. 10:25), that the assembly was connected with the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:20), this is evidence that this is an example revealing "how often." Acts 20:7 even shows that this customary assembly is for the very purpose of breaking bread. There is no conflict with any other statement, example or necessary inference.

(2) What about the "upper room" argument? It is argued that we have uniformity because the meeting of Acts 20:7 was in an upper room (Acts 20:8), on the third story (verse 9), and at the institution of the Lord's Supper the place of meeting was in an upper room (Mark 14:15). However, assembling in an upper room is not an exclusive example for we read of brethren assembling in a private home (Acts 12:12), by the riverside (Acts 16:13), and in a public hall (Acts 19:9). But even if no variation could be shown, it is not harmonious with other precepts. In John 4:21-24, Jesus positively rules out anyone place or location for worship as being over another. Any place where one can worship in spirit and in truth fills the requirements of this passage. Any place "where two or three" (Matt 18:20), can be gathered in the name of Christ will fulfill the requirements of place. Consequently, the general law of worship forbids any particular place to the exclusion of others. Moreover, I Cor. 11:20 reveals the fact of assembly. No assembling together could exist without an appointed place, but since the Lord did not appoint a place and the general law of worship specifically denies that there would be a divinely designated place, we can only conclude that the upper room is only a circumstance, and an account of action which is not binding on all Christians for all time.

(3) Selling all possessions and distributing to the needy. This has been suggested as an example, but as an example to be binding it would violate an expressed principle in Acts 5:4, where Peter said to Ananias, "While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?" Because it would violate this clearly expressed principle, it must not be construed as binding.

III. AN ACCOUNT OF ACTION IS NOT BINDING UNLESS IT IS SUSCEPTIBLE OF UNIVERSAL APPLICATION

This just simply means that everything taught in the New Testament which is applicable to men today must be within the realm of possibility. This test alone eliminates the features of the gospel which were local and confined to the miraculous age. The gospel with its requirements and blessings is for all people in all the world for all time.

(1) What about baptism in water for remission of sins? Surely this demonstrates that which is of universal application. Enough water is everywhere that there is life. Where there is not enough water to baptize, men can not live.

(2) What about the communion on the first day of the week? The elements of the communion are such that they are accessible to all men in every part of the habitable world.

IV. AN ACCOUNT OF ACTION IS NOT BINDING WHEN CHOICE IS INVOLVED

No account of action is binding unless it is relevant, material or essential.

(1) Baptism. No choice is involved in the action of baptism as to immersion or sprinkling since only immersion is authorized. There is a choice involved in the place of baptism since the action, design and results will be the same in any event. Therefore, the action of baptism, immersion, is bound, but the place is not.

(2) Communion. There is no choice in the elements of the communion since the elements are taught by command, example and necessary inference. Therefore, it is essential that one unleavened loaf of bread and one cup containing the fruit of the vine are used since anything else could not constitute the communion of the body and blood of the Lord. There is a choice in the place of worship since the outcome is the same so long as it is in spirit and in truth whether it is in one story house or a rented room on the third floor.

(3) Elders. Congregations have no choice about whether they shall have elders or not. Contrary to what some believe and teach, it is very material as to whether the church has elders. I have stated that every congregation is in one of four categories. It can be scripturally unorganized. I believe this is shown by Heb. 5:12, and by the fact that a time element is involved in developing leadership. The congregation has no choice in that. It can be unscripturally organized. By that, I mean it can have offices and organization that are unscriptural. This is not an option. It can be scripturally organized. This is not a choice. When there are men qualified, I believe they must be appointed. It can be unscripturally unorganized. This is not a choice. Any congregation which has men qualified and does not appoint those men is in violation of the teaching of the Scriptures. Therefore, the example of Acts 14:23 is relevant, material and essential, and binding upon men today.

(4) Do congregations have a choice about how to cooperate? Can one congregation act as a central treasury and undertake a work which is too large for it to do? It was argued by J. D. Inomas that since cooperation itself is optional, and congregations have a choice as to whether to cooperate or not cooperate, then we have latitude to choose any method of cooperation. Roy Cogdill showed that he differed with his own brethren and that Guy N. Woods argued that cooperation is absolutely necessary to fulfilling the Great Commission and that one church could not do its duty and meet its obligation without cooperation.

V. AN ACCOUNT OF ACTION IS NOT BINDING AS AN EXAMPLE UNLESS IT EXEMPLIFIES WHAT IT IS AN EXAMPLE OF

I will admit that this test seems trite and almost calculated to stultify someone's intelligence, but we have all undoubtedly heard examples proposed that do not meet the test of competence.

(1) Household Baptisms. It has been argued that the references to household baptisms are examples of infant baptism. How do they know this? They infer it. Although that might be a reasonable inference, it is not a necessary inference because there are many household which do not have infants. On the block where I live in Ardmore, there are ten homes on our side of the street and no one of them contains an infant. The accounts of household baptisms in the New Testament are not competent to prove infant baptism.

(2) Daily communion. Some have claimed that Acts 2:46 constitutes authority for partaking of the Lord's Supper on some other day than the first day of the week. The claims make that this is an example of the communion being eaten every day of the week. But unless the expression "daily" can be shown to modify the second phrase "breaking bread from house to house" in such a way as to demand that the action of the second expression occurs every day, and unless they can show that the "breaking bread" refers to the communion and not to anything else, there is no example at all. It fails the competency test.

VI. AN ACCOUNT OF ACTION IS NOT BINDING IN STATEMENTS THAT APPLY TO PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES

(1) Miracles and signs. The early disciples revealed and confirmed the word by miraculous power, but such is not binding today. The reason is not because God has any less power but that his purposes for performing miracles through men has ceased.

(2) Not preaching to the Gentiles. From Acts 2 through Acts 9, the gospel was not preached to Gentiles. Acts 10 and 11 show that miracles had to occur before the early Christians understood the truth on this matter. It would be sinful for any child of God to refuse to preach the gospel to any race because of this early action.

(3) Jewish customs. Some of the involvement of early Christians in Jewish customs, such as vows and purification, was corrected by the teaching in Ephesians and Hebrews, and therefore are not examples to men today.

(4) Some of the things concerning marriage written by Paul in I Corinthians seven were "for the present distress" and therefore limited in application.

(5) The community of goods practiced by the Jerusalem Church was because of an emergency situation (Acts 2:45; 4:32). To contend that this action is binding in all cases is to be guilty of extending the example beyond its legitimate province.

(6) Burial of the dead by young men. (I promised to deal with this). Who could deny that this was a special situation in Acts five? Maybe this would be applicable when men start falling dead because of lying.

There are many incidental circumstances which do not reflect God's will. Modes of travel, local customs (such as footwashing and praying at the ninth hour). Paul's occupation as tent maker and other things could not be bound as God's will today. Over a hundred years ago, Bro. L. B. Wilkes, who was an editor of "Apostolic Times" along with J. W. McCarvey and Moses Lard, debated the Methodist polemic, Jacob Ditzler several times, wrote of the early Christians: "They doubtless did many things with the divine approbation which were right and were necessary by the circumstances that surrounded them, which are not required of us. But all their conduct that grew out of the circumstance of their discipleship and that was not local and temporary in its nature, having the approbation of God, is evidently law to us."

VII. ANY ACTION OR ATTITUDE NOT AUTHORIZED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT BY PRECEPT, EXAMPLE OR NECESSARY INFERENCE IS EXCLUDED

As we have repeatedly said - tests for determining when an account of action is binding are based upon scriptural authority, not arbitrary rules of human reasoning. All that the

Scriptures teach by precept, example and necessary inference is binding for Peter applied Moses' prophecy to Jesus in Acts 3:22 when he said: "Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." The apostle Paul told the Thessalonians, "for ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus" and "He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man but God, who hath also given unto us his holy spirit" (I Thess. 4:2,8). Therefore, by inference, we understand that we are to observe all that is taught by Christ through the examples of the New Testament.

But we are also restricted by the Scriptures to the things taught therein. John said: "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" (II John 9). This passage limits us to the total teaching of the example. To go beyond the total teaching of the example is to venture into the area of "silence" for authority.

I want to notice two things brought up by Thomas which I have not included as rules or tests of an example.

(1) **COMMON SENSE:** On this Thomas says: "There is no way to interpret the Bible without the use of common sense! By this statement we do not mean to imply that there are no good objective reasons for certain decisions, because there always can and should be good reasons for our decisions. Never could an objective revelation be turned loose, however, to the fancy of a totally subjective or perhaps 'intuitive' method of interpretation."²² I submit that the last statement is his weakness on the "common sense" argument. The inability of partisan "common sense" to free itself from subjectivity disqualifies it as a determinant for when an action is binding. It seems to me that "common sense" is the "court of last resort" for practices which have lost out in an objective search of God's word.

(2) **COMMON MIND:** Thomas attempts to build quite a case of establishing credibility for the "common mind" or the "public truth." He said: "The concept of the 'common mind' means simply that normal men will come to agreement if they sincerely and reasonably and thoroughly examine all the facts that can logically affect a given problem."²³ Notice how he justifies individual cups by the "common mind." About us, he says: "These people feel that the single container for the whole congregation is a binding requirement, yet most people hold that the number of containers is not a pattern obligation but only an optional choice. The common mind does not agree that the one container is a pattern."²⁴ We do not apprehend the truth of God's word by counting noses. The "common mind" has just about ruled out the authority of God's word.

I conclude by stating that in spite of many efforts to overthrow it, the pattern principle of the New Testament stands. Facts revealed in New Testament accounts of actions and attitudes, whose optional character cannot be established by the tests we have given, are to be regarded as binding.

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NO NOT TO EAT

I Cor. 5:11

by Jerry Dickinson

Introduction

To introduce my study of I Corinthians chapter five, there are two aspects that must be considered:

- i. There are five categories or types of discipline. We should not lump all cases of discipline into only one group. Different offenses call for different types of discipline. Different persons should be (and can be) treated or dealt with differently.
 - A. Personal - Matt. 18:15-20
 - B. Immoral - I Cor. 5:1-13
 - C. Disorderly Walker - II Thess. 3:6-15
 - D. False Teacher - II Tim. 6:3-5 and II John 9-11
 - E. Heretic - Titus 3:10 (also Rom. 16:17,18)

- II. The second is the purpose of discipline:
 - A. Command of God - II Thess. 3:6
 - B. Save the sinner's soul - I Cor. 5:5 and II Thess. 3:14
 - C. Purify the Church - I Cor. 5:1,6,7
 - D. Teach fear and respect - I Tim. 5:19,20 and Acts 5:11

CHAPTER STUDY OF I COR. 5

Verse 1: "Have his father's wife" - Whether he had married the woman (his step mother no doubt) after his father's death, thus constituting incest (Lev. 18:8; Deut. 27:20), or whether he was simply living with the woman, this was a case of immorality that even the immoral Corinthians and gentiles would not condone. Corinth was a wicked city; standing at this time in Corinth was a temple dedicated to Aphrodite with 1000 priestesses, harlots, a gigantic brothel in the name of religion. "To Corinthianize" had become a synonym for an

impure life.

Verse 2: "Puffed up" - They had no sense of shame and humiliation at such. Sense of shame is sorely needed in the world and in the church, too, today!

Verse 3: "Judged already" - Paul, as an apostle, still judges over the Church in matters such as these. Yes, we do indeed still have apostles in the Church today. The Apostles judge and instruct us through their writings. How apropos are Paul's words for us!

Verse 4: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" - In the strongest and most imperative of terms Paul gives his commandment (see II Thess. 3:6). Note the solemnity and magnanimity of his words.

"When ye are gathered together" - The action of discipline is to be carried out in the assembly. The marking is to be done publicly. Two or three brethren are not to get together and decide to just quit calling on a brother (sometimes without even telling him), but the Church is to act as a unit. This action is to be made known at an assembly - "When ye are gathered together."

Verse 5: "Deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord."

To deliver is defined by Thayer, "to give over into one's power or use." Of this verse he says: "The phrase seems to have originated from the Jewish formulas of excommunication, because a person banished from the theocratic assembly was regarded as deprived of the protection of God and delivered up to the power of the devil."

Thayer says "destruction of the flesh" means, "The external ills and troubles by which the lusts of the flesh are subdued and destroyed."

The idea seems to be that by expelling the man from the congregation and fellowship of the saints, he will realize the terrible condition he is in because he gratified his fleshly lusts and desires, and the result will be that he will "crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24), repent, and, thus, his spirit will be saved.

Note: The Church did put this man away (II Cor. 2:10), and Paul writes later to tell them to forgive the man and accept him back after his repentance (II Cor. 2:7). Note some of the translations for this verse:

"... for the destruction of his lower nature ..." (Williams)

"... for the destruction of his fleshly lusts ..." (Conybeare)

"... that what is sensual in him may be destroyed ..." (20th. Century New Testament)

"... that man should be left to the mercy of Satan so that while his body will experience the destructive powers of sin ..." (Phillips)

Verses 6-8: "Purge out the old leaven" - An analogy is made between unleavened bread and the Church. A little bit of leaven will leaven a great lump of bread; soon sin that is condoned by the Church will corrupt the Church. The man needs to be disciplined for his

sake, but also for the sake of the Church. As a parent, as a school teacher, If I let one child get by with talking back to me, soon others will try it. Chaos and disorder will be the ultimate and inevitable result.

Verses 9-11: "If any man be called a brother" - According to Paul, we can have more to do with a fornicator or drunkard who is not a Christian than we can with a Christian brother or sister guilty of such sins. We can keep company and associate with alien sinners who are immoral (always trying to win them to Christ, of course) but we may not keep company or associate with brethren who commit the same sins.

"No not to eat" - Obviously, per the context, this refers, not to the Lord's Supper, but a common meal. If it were the Lord's Supper referred to, we could eat it with people in the world, and we know that is not true. We can keep company and eat with people in the world (Paul avers), but we must not keep company or eat (a common meal) with a disciplined brother.

To eat is from "sunesthio" and Thayer defines it, "to eat with, take food together with." The word refers to the physical act of sharing a meal with someone.

In Biblical times eating with someone was an act of intimacy, friendship, fellowship, and communion (cf. Gen. 26:30; 31:46; I Kings 13:15; Prov. 23:6; Matt. 24:49; Mark 2:16; Acts 11:3; Gal. 2:12).

The point for us, today, is that any act or association that indicates recognition of fellowship or communion is forbidden. Clearly, we should not eat a meal with a disciplined Christian. Neither should we go fishing with them, go on vacations with them, or play cards with them. They are to be avoided - we are not to keep company with them that they might be ashamed and come to repentance.

Verses 12-13: "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person" - We expel the person, not by force, but by our behavior towards him. By avoiding the person, not keeping company, and not eating with him we "drive him" from our midst in the hope that he will be brought to sorrow and return to us repenting.

This action was taken by the Church at Corinth and according to II Corinthians chapter two it worked. The man was withdrawn from and the majority (II Cor. 2:7; many is literally majority) of the Church would not associate with him. He saw his terrible condition because of their actions and turned repenting. Paul admonished the brethren to accept him back. What rejoicing there must have been in Corinth when that brother stopped sinning and came home.

Brethren, it will work today! We could save the souls of many in the Church who are living in sin by implementing the disciplinary procedures so explicitly set forth in the Scriptures. Really, we have no choice. They are the commandments of the Lord!

THE DAY OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

"Three Days/Three Nights" - Matt. 12:40

by Carl Johnson

Introduction

In Matt. 12:40, Jesus said, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." These words are very puzzling to many today, because of their apparent inconsistency with the accounts given elsewhere of the time between His death and His resurrection. According to the commonly accepted tradition of the church, Jesus was crucified on Friday, dying between 3 p.m. and sundown, and was raised from the dead very early in the morning on the following Sunday. Many readers of the Bible are puzzled to know how the interval between late Friday afternoon and early Sunday morning can be figured out to be three days and three nights. It seems rather to be two nights, one day, and very small portion of another day.

Some scholars have thought the contradiction to be real, and have for this reason proposed that perhaps Matthew's account is an interpolation; others have conjectured about the actual time Jesus spent in the tomb. Sabbatarians, one of the most vocal being Herbert W. Armstrong with his worldwide Church of God, argues "for a Wednesday crucifixion and a Sabbath resurrection. The purpose is to remove the significance of the first day, thereby to bolster Sabbatarianism."

It is reasoned: first, the passover of the year Jesus died fell on a Thursday; secondly, the preparation day on which Jesus was actually crucified was the preparation for this passover, a Wednesday. The following day is thus identified as a "high day" sabbath (John 19:31) referring to the passover; thirdly, Jesus rose "exactly three days and three nights at the precise moment, three 24-hour days after His death and burial; therefore, fourthly, Jesus rose on Saturday after his Wednesday death."

This study will attempt to show exactly when Jesus was crucified and resurrected, and then harmonize these findings with the words in Matt. 12:40.

I. THE DAY OF THE CRUCIFIXION:

- A. The passover (which always fell on the 14th. of Nisan) preceding Jesus' death, was on a Thursday. Phillip Schaff refers to "astronomical calculation, which shows that in A.D. 30, the probable year of the crucifixion, the 15th. day of Nisan (day after passover) actually fell on a Friday." Eldersheim places this passover, the betrayal, and Jesus' trial on "Thursday night."
- B. The preparation day on which Jesus died is clearly identified as "the day before the sabbath" (Mark 15:42); yea, that which saw the sabbath begin to dawn (Luke 23:54,

margin). Again, many think this sabbath to be the passover day, because of John's describing it as a "high day" (John 19:31), and even calling it the passover (John 18:39).

To understand John's "high day" sabbath, remember the succession of Jewish feasts. The passover fell on the 14th. day of Nisan, commemorating the last meal in Egypt and the messenger of death passing over Israel's marked houses, sparing their firstborn (Ex. 12:13,14). This fell on Thursday and Jesus and His disciples observed it then. See the chronological sequence of events.

C. SUMMARY: Only three days are named in the whole series of events: Preparation Day; The Sabbath Day; First Day of the Week.

II. **MATT. 12: 40** - Was Jesus in the tomb a literal seventy-two hours? Jesus' time reference, "three days and three nights" should be understood as an "idiomatic Jewish usage." It is an example of **synecdoche** with the whole of this time idiomatically placed for the part. Such was done often by the Jews.

A. Examples of Synecdoche in the Bible:

1. Joseph placed his brothers in ward three days, but on the third day (thus not an entire seventy-two hours) they were released (Gen. 42:17,18).
2. **Rehoboam** told his people to return to his presence after three days and they returned on the third day "as the king bade" (11Chron. 10:5,12).
3. **Esther** sent word to Mordecai that she would approach the King after three days and nights, an activity she undertook on the third day (Esther 4:16; 5:1).
4. Jesus idiomatically predicted His resurrection in the time frame of "after three days" (Mark 8:31; knowing that He was to rise "on the third day" itself (Mark 9:31; 10:34; 1 Cor. 15:4).
5. The enemies of Jesus deemed His resurrection a threat only "until the third day" (Matt. 27:63,64). Why not on the third night? If He was to rise "after three days" we would think the sepulcher be made sure until the fourth day. Evidently they understood the time included in the expression "after three days" as terminating on the third day. And as Jesus had been buried near the close of a day, and they expected Him to rise, if at all, on the third day, they must have counted the small fraction of a day that remained after His burial as one of the three days. Their expression, "till the third day," also shows that they expected Him to rise before the third day would end, and that they therefore count a part of that day as a day.

B. **Exact use** of cardinal numbers - Jewish writers used the qualifying term "full" or "whole" before the substantive when they wished to be exact in the use of cardinal numbers for years, months, etc.

1. A law in Leviticus provided that if a house in a walled city were sold, the owner might redeem it "within a **whole** year after it is sold; for a **full** year

shall he have the right of redemption" (Lev. 25:29).

2. It was after "two **full** years" that Absalom took revenge on Amnon, and when he returned from banishment on account of slaying Amnon, he dwelt "two **full** years" in Jerusalem before he sees the King's face.
3. Zedekiah, the false prophet, said that the vessels of the house of the Lord, which had been carried to Babylon, would be brought back within "two **full** years" (Jer. 27:3).
4. Stephen said Moses was "**full** forty years old" when he slew the Egyptian and fled.
5. Luke says that Barnabas and Saul remained with the church in Antioch "a **whole** year," and that Paul dwelt in his own hired house in Rome "two **whole** years."
6. If Jesus had meant that He would be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights as we understand the words, He would have said three **full** days and nights or three **whole** days and nights.

The conclusion must be that Jesus died on Friday, the day of preparation for the usual Sabbath (termed a "high day") and rose on Sunday, the third day, early in the morning.

WHAT DAY WAS JESUS CRUCIFIED?

Matt. 26: 27 -- Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

Mark 14:12 -- And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover ...

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb ... (New International Version)

Luke 22:1 -- Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh which is called the Passover.

Luke 22:7 -- Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed ... (New International Version)

Numbers 9:2,3 -- Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season. In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season ...

Celebrate it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month ... (New International Version)

Deut. 16:6 -- But at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun ...

There you must sacrifice the Passover in the evening, when the sun goes down (New International Version)

Matt. 26:20 -- Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

Comment: The Passover and the Lord's Supper were observed in the evening, the beginning of the Jewish day.

Matt. 26:30,31 -- And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night.

This very night you will all fall away on account of me. (NIV)

Verse 34 - this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times. (NIV)

Comment: The same day (at night), Jesus was betrayed and Peter denied Him.

Mark 14:30 -- That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

John 18:3 -- Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

Matt. 27:1 -- When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death.

Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people came to the decision to put Jesus to death (NIV).

Comment: The same day (early in the morning), the plot to kill Jesus was in progress.

Luke 22:66 -- And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council.

At daybreak the council of the elders of the people ... (NIV).

John 18:28 -- Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the place of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. (NIV)

Comment: Early morning - still the same day.

Matt. 27:15 -- Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

Now it was the governor's custom at the Feast to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. (NIV)

Mark 15:25 -- And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

Comment: Jesus crucified the same day He ate the Passover with His disciples; the same day as His betrayal and His trial.

Mark 15:33 -- And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. (NIV)

Mark 15:42 -- And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath.

It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath.) So as evening approached, Joseph of Arimathaea. (NIV)

Comment: That same day was Preparation Day; the same day that Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified.

John 19:13,14 -- When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation day of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

When Pilate heard this, he brought Jesus out ... It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. (NIV)

Comment: The same day (beginning with the Lord's Supper) that Pilate delivered Jesus and the time of His crucifixion and His death was Preparation Day. The Preparation Days was the "day before the Sabbath."

John 19:31 -- The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. (NIV)

Comment: Jesus was on the cross on Preparation Day (the day before the Sabbath). Legs of thieves were broken to speed death (Preparation Day) so bodies would not be on the cross on the Sabbath (the next day).

Matt. 27:57 -- When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph.

As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathaea. (NIV)

Luke 23:52-54 -- This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. Then he took it down, and wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. It

was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin. (NIV)

Comment: Jesus taken and buried on the Preparation Day (the day before the Sabbath)
John 19:20 -- for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city.

John 19:41,42 -- Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulcher was nigh at hand.

At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there. (NIV)

Comment: On the Preparation Day (the same day as the Lord's Supper, betrayal, denial, crucifixion) Jesus was put in the sepulcher.

Matt. 27:62,63 -- Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

The next day, the one after the preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. Sir, they said, we remember that while he was still alive that impostor said, 'After three days I will arise again.' (NIV)

Comment: The next day - the one after Preparation Day. Preparation Day was the one before the Sabbath.

Matt. 28:1 -- In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week ...

After the Sabbath, at dawn ... (NIV)

Luke 24:21 -- But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

Comment: Jesus was raised on the third day, the first day of the week.

I Cor. 15:4 -- And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

Mark 16:9 -- Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene ...

When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week ... (NIV)

Luke 24:6,7 -- He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and He crucified, and the third day rise again.

The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again. (NIV)

SUMMARY: Only three days are named in the whole series of events: Preparation Day: The Lord's Supper, betrayal, denial, trial, crucifixion, death, and burial.
The Sabbath Day

First Day of the Week

Footnotes

Phillip Schaff, "History Of The Christian Church" Vol. I, Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdman's Publishing, pp. 133-135

Alfred Eldersheim, "The Life And Times Of Jesus The Messiah," Grand Rapids, Mich., Eerdman's Publishing, p. 546

Wendell Winkler, "Difficult Texts Of The New Testament Explained"

J. W. McGarvey, "Jesus and Jonah"

"Smith's Bible Dictionary"

"Unger's Bible Dictionary"

"Vincent's Word Studies"

"The Pulpit Commentary"

"Keil-Delitzsch - Commentary on the Old Testament"

"Barne's Notes on the New Testament"

"Analytical Greek Lexicon"

"Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament"

"The System Bible Study"

"In the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week." (Matt. 28:1)

"Toward the first day of the week" - lit. unto one day of Sabbath; i.e. one day after the sabbath.

"The word 'end' here means the same as **after** the sabbath; i.e. after the sabbath was fully completed, or finished, and may be expressed in this manner: 'in the night following the sabbath, for the sabbath closed at sunset, as it began to dawn.'" Barnes Notes

"After the Sabbath, at dawn ..." (NIV)

"Now after the sabbath, toward the dawn" (Revised Standard Version)

Mark 16:1,2 -- "The sabbath was past, and very early in the morning, the first day of the week."

GENERAL ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

COMPANIONS OF PAUL

by Edwin S. Morris

We believe that women have an important work in the Church but we believe the scriptures teach what her work is. Let us study the scriptures on this matter.

"I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the Church which is at Cenchræa." (Rom. 16:1) It denotes one who renders service of any character to another. This is the only instance of the word "diakonos" in the New Testament of a woman. The word "diakonos" is used in other scriptures but not in an official sense. The use of the word "diakonos" here translated "servant" does not prove that Phebe occupied an official position.

To select a person for a particular work does not necessarily make him an officer in the common acceptation of that term. A man could be selected to hold a series of gospel meetings but that does not make him an officer. To select a man to arrange the service of the church or arrange the teaching schedule does not make him an officer of the Church.

Notice other scriptures where the word "diakonos" is used:

"Then said the King to the **servants**, bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness." (Matt. 22:13)

"And He sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, if any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and **servant** of all." (Mark 9:35)

"His mother saith unto the **servants**, whatsoever He saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my **servant** be." (John 12:26)

In these scriptures where the word "diakonos" is not used in an official sense.

"That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also." (Rom. 16:2) To receive her in the Lord was to treat her as a worthy Christian should be treated. Thayer defines "succourer" as "A female guardian, protectress, patroness, caring for the affairs of others and aiding them with her resources." From what the apostle says she is likely to have been a woman of property. Cenchræa was a port of considerable commerce; and it is clear that Phebe had gone to Rome on important business in which the faithful at Rome might assist her. That she was in much confidence of the Apostle cannot be doubted.

We find no recognition in the scriptures of any such class as "Deaconness." Many women did voluntarily devote themselves in a womanly way to teaching, and to helping those who preached, waiting on the sick and doing whatever work presented itself for them to do.

Lydia - Acts 16:14-15, "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us."

This reference to Lydia's household indicates that she was a woman of at least some wealth and these either being her slaves or the work people in her trade. Constrained - the Greek verb is found only here and in Luke 24:29 and implies hesitation on the part of Paul and his companions. Paul's independence and the fear that some one would think he preached for money, make him depend on his trade for support. Lydia must have been a determined and convincing woman to break down his resolution in this case. She constrained them because she wanted to share with them temporal things because these men had so unselfishly shared with her the gospel of Christ. No doubt Paul had spent nights with no place to stay and in seclusion. She provided him a comfortable place to abide.

Some would try to contend that this was a church of women. From Acts 16:3 and 15:40 we find that Paul, Silas and Timothy were together at this time. Paul and Silas were cast in jail in verses 23-25. But no mention of Timothy being in jail. Then in verse 40, after they had been released from prison it says "when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed."

When Paul departed from Philippi, that church sent again and again to his support. In a letter to the Church of Christ at Philippi, he expressed the desire that the women who had labored with him in the gospel be supplied with all needed things. In Phil. 4:3 "And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlaborers, whose names are in the book of life." A fellowlaborer is a companion in work, fellow worker - one who labors with another in furthering the cause of Christ. Notice in Romans 16:3 that Priscilla and Aquilla are referred to as **helpers**.

"And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy." (Acts 21:9) Just how these women exercised their valuable gift is not indicated by Luke. It certainly was not done in conflict with what Paul teaches in I Cor. 14:34-35 and in I Tim. 2:11-14. What these women taught in making known the word and will of God certainly included the contents of these very scriptures regarding the position of women in the church. It is interesting that in each instance where women are forbidden to speak or teach in the church, Paul appeals to the original order and to what the law says. His arguments are based not on custom but on Old Testament scripture.

I Cor. 14:34 "But they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law."

I Tim. 2:13 "For Adam was first formed then Eve."

In the case of Priscilla and Aquilla, they worked as a team, worked in and through their home. The church assembled in their home (I Cor. 16:19 and Rom. 16:3-5). Women do not take an active role in public worship, but their influence and input was very important to the growth of the church then and now.

Things that women can scripturally do as members of the Church:

1. Be a Dorcas - Make coats and garments.
2. Be a Lois or Eunice - Be an example and teach children and grandchildren.
3. Be a Lydia - She opened her home and served.
4. Be a Priscilla - teach in the home.
5. They can gain others. I baptized six men whose wives were responsible for them studying with me.
6. They can render personal service.
7. Women have an active role in the home. Guide the house (I Tim. 5:14)
8. Christian Duties in I Tim. 5:10: Well reported of for good works; bring up children; lodge strangers; relieve the afflicted; follow every good work.
9. Older women to teach the younger women Titus 2:5: to be sober; to love their husbands; to love their children; to be discreet; to be chaste; home workers; obedient to their own husbands.
10. Visit lonely women, widows, or lonely families.
11. Teach misguided women.
12. Train women what it is to be a preacher's, elder's or deacon's wife.
13. Study to act and teach others to act correctly in avoiding immodest dress, hair-cutting, pants, evils of social life such as smoking, drinking, and drugs.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY TO NON-BELIEVERS ORPHANS IN BENEVOLENCE?

by Jimmie C. Smith

INTRODUCTION

Let me make it clear in the beginning that the position I wish to expound is a matter of **Bible Authority**. Truth cannot be determined by appeals to emotions or making prejudicial arguments. If this question is to be decided on the basis of emotionalism, I concede defeat now. But, if emotionalism is the criterion, neither can I prove to the sectarian that baptism and church membership are essential to salvation: I can by the Bible.

Let it be clearly understood that I am **not** advocating the neglect of orphan children (or any needy person) and if there is anyone in the entire world that stirs my emotions, it is a neglected child, or a child who has neither father or mother, relatives, or a loving person who will supply their physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

It has been repeatedly said, "The care of orphans is what started the Church of Christ on the road of institutionalism."

When emotions become embroiled, people do not ask "What saith the Scriptures?" Such occurs in the discussion of war, racial prejudice, benevolence, worship, and a host of other subjects. Emotions are the volatile fuels for prejudice. When people say, "They can take money out of the church treasury to buy horse manure to go on the preacher's lawn, but not a dime to help a non-christian," then emotions become the criteria of right and wrong.

COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS

Please observe that in every case of benevolence where a church or churches engaged in helping the needy, the needy ones are always, without exception, spoken of as saints. In Acts 11:27-30, Luke says the disciples in Antioch "determined to send relief to the brethren." Not a word about relief for the people of the world.

Paul gave the Gentile churches orders to send help to the needy **saints** (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Some will say, "What if there was a man or woman who was a saint, yet had some children who were old enough to obey the gospel, but had not, could any of the money go to them?" Yes indeed! All the church would be doing was helping them to fulfill their responsibility as a parent. Anyone ought to be able to see that such a case would by no means place the responsibility upon the church to take care of the needy of the world.

In Romans 15:25, Paul says: "But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister to the saints." Again

we learn that the churches of Macedonia who were taking part in sending relief to Jerusalem prayed that Paul would take upon himself "the fellowship to ministering to the saints" (II Cor. 8:4). Then again in II Cor. 9:1 we read again of ministering to the saints. IT IS SAINTS IN EVERY CASE.

DOING GOOD UNTO ALL MEN

"Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men." (II Cor. 9:13) We need to ask the question about "all men."

If (as some teach) the relief went literally unto all men, it was a WHOLE OF A CONTRIBUTION! It would have been large enough to go to every man on earth in need and not a "want" was left unsupplied to either saint or sinner. Even on its face value, I believe no man can accept such a conclusion, therefore, "all men" must be limited.

In verse one Paul says "for as touching the ministering to the saints," teaches us just who it was that received this help. It did not say "saints and sinners." In verse twelve we find that it supplied the "want of the saints." The money was collected "for the saints" (I Cor. 16:1). An alien is not a saint! Did Paul tell them the collection was for "saints" and then give it to someone else? Did Paul deceive them?

What does verse thirteen teach? First, "men" is not in the original, rather it is supplied by the translators. The New American Standard Version renders this verse by: "Because of the proof given by this ministry they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all." Then what it teaches is that it was primarily for the Jewish saints, but not exclusively for these saints.

Second, observe that Paul speaks of this relief from the Gentile churches to the needy Jewish saints as an "experiment" -- an inspired experiment of course and not something Paul thought up on his own. It is implied by the word "experiment" in this verse that there existed an aloofness or coolness on the part of the Jewish Christians towards the Gentile Christians. Paul hoped and prayed that these relief funds from these Gentile churches would help to remove this aloofness on the part of the JEWISH Christians toward the Gentile Churches. Although Paul makes it clear to the Corinthians that their giving on the first day of the week would be for the needy Jewish saints he also included Gentile saints when he used the phrase "and unto all."

Third, in Romans 15:25-27, Paul makes it crystal clear that the collections made on the first day of the week by the members of these Gentile churches was ear-marked for the Jewish saints in Jerusalem. Notice then who the "them" and the "all" are in II Cor. 9:14: "And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you." Were sinners praying for the Corinthians? Not only that, but "which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you?" If "all" includes unbelievers, people of the world, then it must be accepted that here we have unbelievers praying for believers. Is anyone ready for that?

HOW THE BIBLE USES THE PHRASE "ALL MEN"

Acts 4:21 "... for all men glorified God for that which was done." Do you think that those who beat the apostles glorified God for that which was done? Why not? Those who were Christians

glorified God for that which was done. Not those who beat Peter and John on this particular occasion.

Acts 20:25-26, "...that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Had Paul preached to every man everywhere? Why no! This statement is qualified by verses 24 - 26 in telling that he preached among them and he said he would bear record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men. How many men? Those among whom he had preached.

Heb. 8:11, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Does every man know about Christ today? Did every man upon the face of the earth know about Christ then? No! But those to whom he had preached and those who accept him as the Christ. This is what it means to "know Christ," to obey Christ; and that is the "all" here. The "all" must be determined from the context.

What about Gal. 6:10? If, as some teach, this is the churches responsibility and includes unbelievers, then the opportunity is **ever** before the Church. It is not a matter of "as we have opportunity let us do good unto all men," but a matter of the church using the opportunity that is ever present. There are pleas of "CARE" and of "UNICEF" and of the world in general to be heard and answered by the church if Gal. 6:10 teaches church obligation.

Of course it does not, but it does teach individual responsibility based upon the opportunities which come our way. The parable of the good Samaritan points out very clearly what the individual Christian should do when he has the **opportunity** to help a person who is not a Christian, as recorded in Luke 10:29- 37.

As you read Gal. 6:3-10 notice the personal pronouns: "For if a **man** think **himself** to be something, when **he** is nothing, **he** deceiveth **himself**. But let every **man** prove **his** own work, and then shall **he** have rejoicing in **himself** alone, and not in another. For every **man** shall bear **his** own burden. Let **him** that is taught in the word communicate unto **him** that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a **man** soweth, that shall **he** also reap. For **he** that soweth to **his** flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but **he** that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let **us** not be weary in well doing: for in **due** season **we** shall reap, if **we** faint not. As **we** have therefore opportunity, let **us** do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

One can clearly see that these verses deal with individual action. I know that the letter was addressed to the churches, but such a letter can set forth also individual responsibility. The book of Acts was addressed to an individual, yet it deals much with the church. The question is often asked; "Does verse six authorize individual support of a preacher or from a common fund?" It is individual! But by such scriptures as II Cor. 11:8 we also learn that it is scriptural for a church to support a preacher. For those who wish to make Gal. 6:10 church action they must answer the question: "Are verses twelve and thirteen dealing with individual or church action?" "Do you circumcise churches?"

THE CHURCH AND NON-BELIEVERS

All passages dealing with individual action, such as Gal. 6:10 and James 1:27 are irrelevant as to what the Church can do. James 1:27 does not authorize a "group" of Christians

to do anything, because it says "himself" - an individual. Certainly the church should be pure, but that is taught by such scriptures as Eph 5:26-27. It is often argued that since I Tim. 5:16 mentions church care of widows, and James 1:27 lists widows and the fatherless together, the church may care for the children. There are **two** widows mentioned in I Tim. 5:16: (a) the one for whom the individual is responsible, and (b) the one who is the responsibility of the church. Since James 1:27 is obviously emphasizing individual responsibility it is much more reasonable to conclude that the widows mentioned there are those of class (a) in I Tim. 5:16 (widows who are of individual responsibility). That being true, the widows and the fatherless of James 1:27 are to be cared for by the individual!

God has never charged the church with caring for the world's needy, but he has charged it with preaching the gospel to the world. In its work the church is all-sufficient as an institution to preach the gospel (void of any assistance from any Missionary Society); but as it become more apparent daily, America cannot financially underwrite the developing nations and neither can she feed the entire world without the farmers being remunerated. If a materialistic nation cannot, the church surely cannot, even if commissioned to do so (which she is not).

The care of the needy is a duty of a general scope and nature in society. Many organizations exist for the care of the needy, and they are not interfering with the mission of the church. James Burton Coffman said in his commentary on Romans: "The Gentile Christians of the ancient Roman Empire were not laid under tribute for the purpose of helping to support the relief load in the city of secular Jerusalem; and, likewise, the church of the present time should plan some nobler work than that of merely carrying the bedpan for a sick society, a role to which some sociologist would restrict the holy mission of the church." (page 499).

The resources of the church would be exhausted before it got started taking care of all the indigent, maimed, mentally incompetent, blind, destitute, disabled, deserted dependents of society today. It could not do the work which God has assigned it if it should undertake such a burden of benevolence. Paul said for the Church "not to be charged" with the burden of benevolence that belonged to individuals that it might "take care for those" whose care it has been charged with by divine will (I Tim. 5:16). The Church's work is spiritual - concerned with the salvation of souls - and to be discharged by the teaching and preaching of the gospel (I Tim. 3:15).

VICTIMS OF CALAMITIES AND ORPHANS

May the church contribute from its treasury to feed hungry victims of calamities such as earthquakes, typhoons, and such like who are not members of the Lord's Church. Let us place this in its proper perspective! Suppose these unfortunate small children are in the home of a Baptist preacher or a kind old Catholic priest and they are in need. The preacher/priest has taken in more children that they can feed and clothe. Could the Church relieve that need? Could the Church take money from the its treasury to help anyone who is not a Christian in case of calamity, in case of a typhoon, if there is a need?

The issue is the use of the Lord's money! To illustrate, I know of no scriptural objection to the Red Cross (an organization to assist in times of trouble) so long as it stays in its place. But, if it should begin to accept funds from churches, then the organization and its method of finance, the entire arrangement, would become unscriptural. It should be evident that this whole issue of benevolence towards those who are not Christians is a part of the **social gospel concept**? A belief that the church was designed to serve the body and needs of man in

this world. God never intended that the church serve as a glorified Red Cross or sanctified Salvation Army.

Christianity is a religion of authority. We are not compelled to prove the use of the treasury for the sustenance of non-members wrong. The burden of proof lies with those who propose or practice such doctrine. They are compelled to prove their practice scriptural!

Do you realize that there is no specific command or example of a congregation caring for orphans in the Bible. Neither is it inferred that congregations were to ever take the oversight of such. There is **no teaching** which specifically authorizes a congregation to engage in "child care." There are some commands to individual, but even in the individual realm, God never expects more of a man than they personally can perform.

CONCLUSION

Aside from the scriptures I feel compelled to make some observations and comments concerning institutional care. Anyone knows that a child growing up in an institution is handicapped. It grows up under the emotional strain of knowing or at least thinking that no one wants it and it cannot be part of a normal home.

According to Louis R. Turcotte, director of Tulsa Family and Children's Services, 70% of the children who spend a year or more in an institution remain public charges for life and 80% develop some type of emotional disturbance (8 out of 10 being normal when they arrived). Tulsa Tribune, Dec. 4, 1959, Thurston "The Department Child" pages 2-4, sets forth these levels of child care. First level, independent home; second level, supplemented home; third level, foster home; fourth level, institutional home.

The orphan asylum care is the lowest level of child care permitted in civilized countries (Simpson-Britnell debate, page 137)

THE WORK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

by Paul Walker

The story of an idea is, of necessity, the story of many things. Ideas, like large rivers, never have just one source. A river has its tributaries, which add to the river's greatness and power. Like that, an idea, in its final form, is composed largely of later additions. God had an idea about the church and His concept was beautiful. He first thought about the Church of Christ as that great, invisible, universal, spiritual Body of Christ which was needed on earth. Paul expressed that truth in Eph. 3:9-11, where he wrote about the "fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Yes, the concept, the dream for the church belongs to God, the Father, but He used Jesus Christ, His Son, and the third member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, to help make His dream a reality. Later, men helped to round out the church in her final form so that today, nineteen hundred years after the birth of the church, local congregations around the world, made up of individuals called "lively stones," cause the church to grow and function as God intended.

The first chapter of Acts shows the steadfast aim of Christ in regards to His church. The forty days after His resurrection, He constantly talked about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. The kingdom had been on His mind and in His heart before the cross, too. Luke says this about his Master (8:1) "He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with Him."

The Master used His personal, earthly ministry to lay down certain definite ground rules that would govern His church. His many lessons to His disciples were given to establish great principles of truth. He had worked hard to properly equip the twelve for the great work ahead: stripping away their earthbound notions of the kingdom. They were often blind, though, and could not fully understand His full message.

Also, in the first chapter of Acts, we find that the day had arrived when it was time for Jesus to return home. He had come to earth to fulfill a mission and He had done His part well. Now it was time for the Holy Spirit to do His part in making the Father's dream for the church a reality. Thus, we find these words recorded, (Acts 1:4,5) "And being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. for John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." In verse eight, the Master continued, "But ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Continuing in verse nine, Luke says, "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up: and a cloud received Him out of their sight." Thus, the Divine circle was completed. Paul drew the picture of that circle of love in I Tim. 3:16, "And without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified

in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." The story of the church is part and parcel of the story of Christ. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us; when His work was finished, He was received up into glory. Likewise, the Holy Spirit came down and settled upon the Apostles and the church was born with power and it will remain here until Christ comes to receive His Bride up into glory. The same thing that happened to his physical body will happen to His Spiritual body. That grand and glorious connection between His physical and Spiritual body has been blurred in the minds of the masses; yet it is a fact that has always existed. And the more that Divine connection between Christ and His Church comes into clear focus, the more we will know and love the local church. God's vision has always been 20/20, but man has had a lot of difficulty seeing the real purpose and function of the Church of Christ upon the earth.

After Jesus was taken from His disciples, they all went up into the upper room and with "one accord and in supplication and in prayers" waited with Mary, Jesus' mother, and with the brethren. As we look back that sad and lonely group in the upper room, we can feel the great calm before the storm. Something special and spectacular is about to happen and we are going to be part of it. Everything that had to be done had been completed by Jesus.

Now, I think I see Him looking back upon that little group of loyal disciples and remembering that day along the rocky coast of Caesarea Philippi, when He said to Peter "upon this rock I will build my church." Before He closed His eyes in sleep upon that special day so long ago now, I think He must have climbed the mountain to pray; and said, "Well, Father, today I made the announcement to Peter and the others about the church." O, that must have been a red-letter day on God's calendar. But now, it has been ten days since Jesus has left them and today is the day all heaven has been waiting for.

Down below, God sees the material is ready for the launch of His Son's church into the world. You know, in our modern day space age, I think the word "launch" has taken on a very special meaning. Jesus had used the word Himself back in one of the gospels, when He said to Simon Peter, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for the drought." Now, Jesus is about to witness His Spiritual Body, the church, be launched into the world.

Thinking about the great sounds and excitement surrounding the events on Pentecost, is much like thinking about the events leading up to the launch of a spaceship. The rocket stands tall and slender pointed toward heaven; then slowly during count-down the umbilical cord, the service cord, drops away. Suddenly, long tongues of fire dart out in all directions from the base of the rocket. Giant clouds of vapor billow up so that the whole rocket ship is baptized in its own cloud of vapor and fire. Like the rocket ship, that old Gospel Ship is about to go off into the world for the Apostles are silently and prayerfully poised in Jerusalem to be used by the Holy spirit as instruments of God to make a dream come true.

Ten days have been counted down and in Acts chapter two, it begins: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Now we must not overlook the key word to the great mystery concerning the church. The key word is found in verse five, "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout **MEN** ..." There is the key to the mystery: **MEN!** For you see, as I have already pointed out, an idea, in its final form, is composed largely of later additions. Without men (people) the church would be meaningless.

Like Jesus Himself, you see, (in human form) the church, His Spiritual Body, would require flesh and bones. In order to be vital and effective and to make known to the world the "manifold wisdom of God," it would become absolutely necessary for the invisible church to become visible; to become a family, a cluster of individuals who would worship and serve God and like their Master, go about doing good. So, I cannot afford to be a coward and hide away in the safety of the great invisible church. But, I must be brave and live an active, vital, vibrant life as a member of a local, visible congregation. Thinking about the church in her global, universal sense only, is like gazing up at the full moon on a cold, December night. You could stand outside in the cold, and look up at the big, bright, shiny moon and freeze half to death. That is the way it is with the great, invisible church. Looking at her from a distance, and refusing contact with her, one could freeze to death Spiritually and never know the real warmth of Christian fellowship in a local congregation.

The Bible shows us that on the day of Pentecost, the birthday of the church, about three thousand people repented of their sins and were baptized and received the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Church of Christ then became a reality in the world. And since my assignment is the WORK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH, I will now turn away from the universal church concept to focus on the church local. Most of the time, in the New Testament, the word "church" is used to refer to the local church; a local family of believers or it is used to refer to a group of local churches.

I wish to approach my subject as an artist would approach his canvas to paint a picture. Certain things are essential if one is to paint a good picture. First, as I approach the canvas to paint a picture of the local church work, I see with Spiritual eyes of understanding from a study of God's word, that two lines have already been drawn on the canvas for me. God drew them. I simply must trace over them, just as when I paint a sunset, I must know that it was God - not I - that collected the clouds and colors for a lovely sunset; I simply copy them as I see them.

There are two things about the local congregation we must know and never forget. First, there is the vertical line of authority and truth. This line gives me power as Jesus stated to the apostles, "Ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8), and in Matt. 28:18, He said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Second, I must understand the horizontal line on the canvas - the line of love and brotherhood - the reaching out to touch the hand of another. Jesus, in His ministry, demonstrated that kind of horizontal outreach. For example: Mark tells us in chapter one about a leper who approached Jesus and said, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." In verse 41 he says, "And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touch him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean." Now, people did not go around touching lepers; they were to be shunned. But, Jesus touch them. Probably the first kind touch of a human hand that leper had ever felt. Paul had learned about the horizontal outreach, as he wrote to the Galatians (6:10), "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Note that Paul said, "Let us do good"; not "let us think about doing good." I read about a dear Christian worker, a sister in Christ, who practiced horizontal love. Her name was Dorcas. We read about her positive Christianity in Acts 9:36, "this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did." Note that the Bible does not say Dorcas WISHED to do good works, or that she LONGED to do good works, but she DID good works.

Yes, when I look at the canvas and see the vertical line intersected by the horizontal line, I see the perfect composition; the sure Biblical arrangement; and arrangement that has order so that all parts, features, factors, come together to make a balanced, harmonious whole.

When I allow God to draw the vertical line and cross it with the horizontal line, I have before me the beautiful, central theme for the church - the cross of Jesus Christ. When Paul was with the church in Corinth, his central theme was the cross, as we notice in I Cor. 2:2, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Jesus said (John 15:5), "Without me ye can do nothing." Paul knew what Jesus had meant by that statement, for he wrote of that line of power and divine authority to the Ephesians (2:8,9), "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Paul wanted the church at Ephesus to know and he wants your congregation and mine to know, that the vertical line of power and authority has been well established and we dare not tamper with perfection.

In this day of liberal thinking when men have homogenized Christianity - have taken Divine truth and mixed it with their own thinking - they have come up with a smooth blending of several parts. There are certain things we simply have no control over and one is the authority of Christ. The Apostles learned that lesson and it became the heart - the meat of their teaching. Peter shouted: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." A vital part of their message to the churches was: "We ought to obey God rather than man." (Acts 5:29). There are few recognizable centers of authority in our land today, but let it ever be said that the church is one center where the authority of Christ will always be recognized and respected. As preachers, elders, leaders in congregations around the world, let us all be wise and strong and let it be known to our congregations and to anyone else who would care to know that our work in god's church is not to change the teachings of Christ, but to amplify and magnify them.

Our salvation is not of works. Man cannot boast about his own salvation. In thinking about what God has done for us that we have no control over, I think about this: We could all go down to Memphis, Tennessee and line up on the bluff of the Mississippi River. We could have us a little running and jumping contest. Some of us, because we are older and not as strong as we once were, could not jump very far into the water of the Mississippi. Some of you, though, because you are young and athletic could get a good running start and jump much farther out into the water. But, not one of us, no matter how strong and athletic, could jump all the way across the mighty Mississippi and land flat-footed on the Arkansas side. And, that is the way it is with things divine. We can do many, many, important things in the church; one thing, though, we cannot do, we cannot reach heaven by our own strength! If we reach heaven we will need to know that we cannot improve on God's Gospel. We will need to remember that His worship cannot be changed to fit our notions. We may feel, at times, that certain items of worship could be altered a bit for convenience sake, but the vertical line of authority has been set and we dare not change it.

The idea that the church should evolve during the course of the centuries under the leading of the Holy Spirit, is unknown to the Lord's Apostles. It must first be noted that the New Testament presents church matters in the imperative and not in the indicative mood. That simply means that it was not the manner or the custom of the Apostles to merely "suggest" but to "command." The imperative mood was to command, entreat, exhort. It meant that the Apostles could and did have the power to restrain, control and direct. And, the churches knew that the men called Apostles had that kind of power and authority from Christ. Paul wrote to Timothy (II Tim. 4:1,2), "I charge thee therefore ... preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine." Paul wanted Timothy to know and to teach the congregations, that the Gospel and Doctrine of Christ was mandatory and not optional.

Going back to Ephesians chapter two, where we have already noticed Paul's vertical line of

Grace, we now notice his horizontal line of brotherhood and good works. Verse ten says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Thus, we see that Paul has given the perfect image of the cross; the vertical line of grace and gospel, and the horizontal line of outreach consisting of good works.

Continuing with the analogy of a picture of the work of the local church, I must remember that in painting such a picture, the movement between the four walls of the picture frame must be strong and dynamic action. But, I must be careful here, lest I leave the impression that our action, our dynamic movement as Christian workers, is performed inside a church building only, between the building's four walls. Some people have had that notion and thus have developed into nothing higher than spiritual dwarfs.

Jesus was a churchman. Throughout the week He walked along the path with everyone else, but on the Sabbath, God tapped Him on the shoulder and He turned aside into the house of worship. That was "His custom" as we learn from the Bible. But the Master's activity was not confined to a building. He simply refused to be limited, restricted, or defined by a building; otherwise He would have been out of touch with the real world. Jesus went out among the people - that was His horizontal line - to speak words of truth and life; to feel the weight of the burden of people; to feel the pounding heart of compassion and concern. These things He did away from the building or worship.

The Apostles learned that lesson too. In I Tim. 6:17-19, Paul wrote to Timothy, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." The rich here are encouraged to practice benevolent works; the horizontal line of reaching out to others. Such action and movement is seen in the life of our Lord and in the lives of many men and women mentioned in the New Testament. In II Tim. 2:21, Paul writes about a man who purges himself and becomes "a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." Again, the theme of Christian movement is seen and felt in Titus 2:14, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." We are not surprised that such teaching was done by the early church leaders, for they were admonishing the Christians to do what the Master had done: go about doing good.

In looking at the work of the local church the question is often raised, "what can I do to help?" That is a good question. What can be done to help our congregations to become more effective in reaching the lost for Christ? first, I must say, if we really want to grow we must have the desire to help build up the kingdom - the church. Jesus said (Matt. 6:33), "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness ..." That word "seek" means to pursue with diligence. To put the church first means that we must get our priorities lined up right. On a scale from 1 to 10, the church had better not be a 3! How can I help? Know, above all else, that you must be willing to work. Just like we sing: "I want to be a worker for the Lord." Know the fact that your congregation will grow only when you grow. If we, as preachers, should all return to our home congregations and find six church members at our door saying, "We did not think you would ever return home from that Bible Study; we are here to volunteer to work for the Lord and to seek first His kingdom and we would like for you to tell us what to do?" What would you think? What would you tell them?

Perhaps we should say to Christian workers, have you counted the cost? Are you willing to give up some things that really matter to you? Have you considered that working together with others to move the church forward is a complicated business? Are you willing to be quiet and open - to observe and to be slow to judge? Are you willing to deal with potential frustration which always comes when you are in the business of helping people? Yes, these are questions church workers need to consider seriously if they want to become good workers.

The business of doing the work of the Lord is hard work. Helping out gets heavy. How heavy? Let the apostles Paul tell us: "... no man stood with me; all men forsook me." (II Tim. 4:16). Ask Jesus if helping out gets heavy? Remember Him in Gethsemane? Matt. 26:47 says, "Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with a great multitude with swords and staves..." Then in verse 56, "... all the disciples forsook him, and fled." Yes, helping out gets to be heavy work.

What can we say to that man, woman, boy, or girl who would like to become a soul winner? First, compliment them and give them all the encouragement you can, for the Bible says in Prov. 11:30: "He that winneth souls is wise." Tell them they have the tools with which to work: they have God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, and the gospel of Christ. Tell them to talk WITH the people they want to bring to the Lord, and not to talk AT them. Tell them to remember that words can be the freezing of reality, and thus can be a great stumbling block to growth. With our words we can slam doors shut that would take an army to ever open again. Let us train our young men to use diplomacy in approaching lost souls with the gospel. Let us remind them that they are ambassadors for Christ, their king; that they represent their king in spiritual matters; therefore, they must be Christian gentlemen and hold forth the word of truth with love and great skill. Let us urge them to read and reread the apostle Paul's examples of Christian kindness and courtesy before kings and governors, such as we find in Acts 26:2,3: "I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews: especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently." Paul spoke the truth in love and urged his followers - the followers of Christ - to do the same.

When we meet lost souls, we must learn to listen to what they are saying - for what is coming forth from their hearts. That is what Jesus did. He was the Master Teacher and the good teacher is one who is a good listener. He invites us to "come ... take my yoke upon you and learn of me..." The words teach, teacher, disciple, learn - all have to do with the word "educate." And, it is very interesting to note that the word "educate" comes from the Latin "educare" - think about it: eduCARE - which means, leading, guiding, and caring. That was the perfect example the Master gave us to follow. Yet, many times, we think we have to stand up and do all the talking. Maybe we will just have to learn that, at times, we may have to shed the role of preacher and become a "common Joe" like the "common Joe" we are trying to reach with the gospel.

Recently I was called to testify in a court case. Standing out in the lobby at the courthouse, I had some time to spare, so I reveled for a few minutes in one of my favorite pastimes - observing people. I noticed that during the break, between court sessions, the Judge came out into the hall to get a cup of coffee, and as he came out he had his long, black robe folded over his arm and acting like everyone else. He got bumped into and spilt some of his coffee and had to wait in line like everyone else. But, back in the court room, with his robe of authority on again, he changed back into his hard, stern, official role. Yes, at times, we may have to do like the judge: we may have to shed our role as THE PREACHER or THE ELDER and

come down on the level with the person we are trying to convert. Maybe that is the way we will have to do if we expect to grow.

Every congregation has a responsibility to grow and to do the work of the ministry. Paul put it so well in Eph. 4:11,12 - "And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelist; and some, pastors and teachers: for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ." Nothing is wrong with the official titles mentioned by Paul; in fact, they are needed. Yet, to stay in the OFFICIAL role and miss the opportunity to really communicate the gospel is, in my opinion, quite unwise.

Let us again return to our canvas to examine where we are in painting the picture of the work of the local church. To paint a good, well-balanced picture, the artist must have his perspective right. Perspective gives the painting depth and beauty. He must consider the foreground, middle ground, and background. Notice a child's drawings - the ones done with crayons on notebook paper - trees, houses, mountains are always big and up front. Tell him to draw you a mountain and he fills the whole page with an enormous mountain. Why? Because he has not yet learned perspective. And a lot of people in the church have that problem. For example - take church growth. We are not growing, someone says; we have been here on this block for ten years and our neighbors have been in their location across town for ten years; they have 125 members and we only have 75 members - we have simply not grown! Now, if we are not careful, we will lose perspective here. First, does a large membership always mean real growth? We can answer that question by asking this: does having eight children in a family represent true growth - more love, more security, more spiritual maturity, as well as physical maturity - than a family of four? If you say to your friend that you have two precious children and he responds by saying: "Man, you don't have a family, if you have only two kids; why, I have eight kids - ten in our family!" Now, does the fact that he has eight children and you only have two make his family bigger and better? Does bigger always mean real growth? You see the point. Bigger does not mean better every time, of course. Bigness, large numbers, do not necessarily mean real growth.

When, then, can it be said that a family is growing? When there is good physical and spiritual growth; when there is lots of love and patience and understanding. And, in the same way, we can say that a congregation is growing when Christ is at the center of things; when God's word is being taught and practiced; when there is love, fellowship, and proper respect for every Christian - these are the things that constitute real growth. Paul recognized spiritual maturity when he saw it and some of the important things to consider when looking at Christian growth he points out in Eph. 5:14-16: "... but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Thus far, in painting the picture of the work of the local church, I have suggested lines that are drawn, but I dare not conclude the painting without drawing at least one circle. And that circle is the one that pictures all the members of a local congregation gathering around the table to eat the Lord's Supper. We remember the disciples loving and tender circle of warmth when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. We recall that in the kingdom, in the early New Testament church (Acts 20:7): "... the disciples came together to break bread." That circle of love and communion is worth more to us than silver and gold. Do not be ashamed that the local congregations gather around the Lord's Table every first day of every week. It is my sincere belief that many, many, great Bible teachers today, who find themselves caught in the trap of human religion, would give their right arm to be able to persuade their denominations to

practice weekly communion, but they know that to bring about such a reversal in church practice would take a miracle. O, that beautiful circle of love around the Lord's Table we have all grown to look forward to every Sunday and it grows sweeter with each passing year. Just to think about it brings to mind the warm and tender words of Paul in II Cor. 13:11-14, "finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be one in mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. Greet one another with an holy kiss. All the saints salute you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."

No painting would be complete without highlights. So, here are some highlights for our painting of the local church. I have chosen to call them:

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

1. Thou shalt not fail to practice sincere humility, as taught in I Peter 5:6
2. Thou shalt not fail to see that the local church is in the center of all mission efforts. In the great commission, Jesus commanded both preaching and teaching and Acts 14:21-22 gives an illustration of fulfillment of Jesus' instruction, "And when they had preached the gospel to that city ... they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch. Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith..." Yes, two great functions carried out by the local church are evangelism and edification.
3. Thou shalt not fail to reach out to others in the church; and to kindle a flame - to inspire. We are told in Heb. 10:24 to "... consider one another to provoke (stimulate) unto love and to good works."
4. Thou shalt not fail to hate sin with a pure hatred, remembering the words of the Bible, "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil..." (Ps. 97:10).
5. Thou that dwell "in the Lord" must know that ye must not only dwell - but "grow in the Lord." Peter says, (II Peter 3:18), "But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
6. Thou shalt not fail to train young men to teach and preach the gospel - remembering Paul's admonition to Timothy (II Tim. 2:2), "And the things that thou hast heard of me ... the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."
7. Thou shalt not criticize thy brother nor thy sister in the local congregation in such a way as to discourage them - always remembering Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.
8. Thou shalt not forsake the church assembly, knowing that each time you deliberately fail in church attendance, you loosen your attachment; your commitment (Heb. 10:25).
9. Thou shalt not believe the negative voices that say that the congregations in the Brotherhood are dead, remembering that all across our Land, we hear beautiful, lively singing; sincere and sound preaching and teaching; in-depth Bible study; young people's meetings (where the young men are given the opportunity to develop their teaching skills); where we see more local and foreign mission outreach than at any other time in recent memory.

10. Thou shalt not practice in the local church a "one-man ministry," nor shalt thou practice a thing called "any-man-ministry," knowing that, above all else, the Body of Christ must build up itself through mutual edification.

In closing, the story is told that the man who painted the Last Supper took his painting to an old Russian art master and asked his opinion of his work. The old master looked the painting over; studied it in great detail and then said, "The man in the middle - you don't love him!" O, how that hurt the artist's feelings and he shouted, "Sir, I do love him for he is my Lord - that's Jesus!" "But you don't love him," the old master repeated, "for if you loved him you would have painted him better." Well, today I have tried to paint a picture of the work of the local church. If my picture has not been a good one; maybe it is because I still do not love Christ and His Church enough!

"ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD"

ROMANS 8:28

by Alfred Newberry

INTRODUCTION

- A. The problem of suffering has always been difficult for Christians, both in the First Century and in the Present.
- B. We believe that we serve an omnipotent God with whom all things are possible.
 - 1. Since God owns all things then why should Christians have financial problems?
 - 2. Since God made **all** life, why doesn't He cure Christians of all their illnesses?
 - 3. Since God can control all things, why doesn't He shield us against all harm, accidents, and injuries? - As Satan said, why doesn't He command His angels concerning us and have them lift us up in their hand so that we will not strike our foot against a stone (Matt. 4:6).
 - 4. In other words, why doesn't the all-powerful God make this life a utopia for faithful Christians?
- C. This problem was probably more acute in the First Century because many Christians had miraculous power.
 - 1. Some could heal the sick.
 - 2. Some could raise the dead.
 - 3. It is very probable that many had problems with the fact that this power could not be used to turn this life into a utopia.
- D. The New Testament is replete with passages explaining to Christians that adversity is inevitable and how a Christian should respond to the problem of suffering.
- E. One of the major themes of Romans 8 is encouraging Christians in dealing with adversity.
- F. Verse 28 is a veritable keystone in this encouragement, both in this chapter and in the entirety of the New Testament Scriptures.

I. THE 3 MAJOR INTERPRETATIONS OF "ALL THINGS" EXAMINED.

- A. The major problem in the interpretation of verse 28 is the meaning of the expression "all things."
1. Clearly, the expression "all things" in the Greek as in the English means different things.
 2. Thayer says, "of a certain definite totality or sum of things, the context showing what things are meant."¹
- B. There are three quite different major interpretations of "all things" (Table I) and the understanding of the verse is very much dependent upon which interpretation one accepts.

THREE VIEWS OF ALL THINGS

I. UNIVERSAL OR "UNRESTRICTED" VIEW

II. RESTRICTED VIEW

III. SPIRITUAL VIEW

TABLE I

- C. First, some hold the universal view (Table II) or unrestricted view, which says that "all things" includes every event which occurs in a person's life including any sin they may commit.
1. Some have even taken this verse to mean they should thank God for the sins of others.
 2. "... Then one day it struck him; he had never tried praising God for his father's condition. Excitedly he shared the thought with his wife, 'Honey, let us thank God for Dad's alcoholism and praise Him for that condition is part of His wonderful plan for Dad's life.'²
 3. A Roman doctrine in the 15th century said, "If Adam had not eaten the forbidden apple, then our Lady would never have become Queen of Heaven. Therefore blessed be the day that apple was eaten, and therefore let us sing, 'Thanks be to God.'³
 4. One man said this view would include among other things:
 - a. "The works of the Devil"
 - b. "Lust of the flesh"
 - c. "Failures of the human being to do good and resist evil"
 - d. "All of the category of human frailty and infirmity as far as our relationship to sin is concerned"

THE UNIVERSAL VIEW

- I. PLEASANT THINGS
- II. UNPLEASANT THINGS
- III. ROUTINE THINGS
- IV. SINFUL THINGS

TABLE II

D. Secondly, some believe what we might call the "Restricted View" which says that we must place two Scriptural restrictions on "all things" -- but only these two. (Table III)

- 1. "Those that love God"
- 2. "Those who are called according to His purpose"
- 3. This view forms what one might call a matrix because of the categories superimposed upon each other.

RESTRICTED VIEW

I. PLEASANT

- A. Religious
- B. Non-Religious

II. UNPLEASANT

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|-----------|
| A. Religious | : | |
| B. Non-Religious | : | "CHRONIC" |
| 1. Self-Inflicted | : | "ACUTE" |
| 2. Non-Self-Inflicted | : | |
| | : | |

TABLE III

- a. Pleasant, unpleasant and routine -- religious and nonreligious things.
- b. The pleasant category (Table IV) is not a major area of controversy.
- c. The category of the unpleasant (Table V) is the major area of controversy and is broken down into acute and chronic, religious and nonreligious, and in the nonreligious area: self-inflicted and non-self-inflicted.
- d. The category of routine experiences (Table VI) is a second point of controversy -- some find it difficult to believe that the mundane can result in good.

RESTRICTED VIEW -- PLEASANT THINGS

I. RELIGIOUS

1. Worship
2. Teaching Others
3. Hope
4. Faith
5. Christian Association

II. NON-RELIGIOUS

1. Relaxation
2. Recreation
3. Entertainment
4. Music
5. Eating
6. Vacations

TABLE IV

E. The third major view is the "Spiritual View" (Table VII).

1. One man said, "human suffering in this chapter is to be limited to human suffering brought on as a result of living for the Lord and would not necessarily be taken in any other sense."
2. He went on to say, "all things is limited to all spiritual things for our spiritual and eternal good as are outlined in this chapter."

RESTRICTED VIEW -- UNPLEASANT THINGS

I. RELIGIOUS (Acute and Chronic)

1. Persecution
2. Church Discipline (Administering or Receiving)
3. Lord's Chastisement
4. Denying Sin
5. Confrontation With False Teachers

II. NON-RELIGIOUS (Acute and Chronic)

A. Sel-Inflicted

1. Due to Ignorance
 - a. Illness
 - b. Accident

2. Due To Carelessness
 - a. Social Conflict
 - b. Loss of Property

B. Non-Self-Inflicted

1. True Accidents
2. Death of Loved Ones
3. Crime
4. Most Illness

TABLE V

RESTRICTED VIEW -- ROUTINE THINGS

I. RELIGIOUS

1. Traveling To Services Or Meetings
2. Cleaning The Building
3. Repairing Song Books

II. NON-RELIGIOUS *

1. Sleeping
2. Hygiene
3. Working
4. Cleaning House
5. Yard Work

*A very significant amount of our time is spent doing these things

TABLE VI

SPIRITUAL VIEW

I. RELIGIOUS

- A. Pleasant
- B. Unpleasant
- C. Routine

TABLE VII

II. THE VERSE AND CONTEXT EXAMINED

A. There is a minor variation in the wording of the text.

1. KJV - And we know that all things work together for good ...

2. NIV - And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.
3. The NIV is the least plausible and is based mainly on the Alexandrians and the Vaticanus.
4. The NIV rendering might lead some to a predestination or miraculous working of the Holy Spirit position.
5. When understood properly, both renderings are essentially equivalent.

B. The context examined

1. The contextual examination must be limited (because of time) to verses 22 & 23 and 29-39.
2. Verse 22 says that mankind has suffered adversity all through time up to the present.
3. Verse 23 says that Christians can also expect to suffer adversity as long as we live in this world.
4. Verses 29 & 30 discuss the doctrine of predestination.
 - a. This is not predestination of the individual but of the Christian system.
 - b. This has little bearing on the identity of "all things" because the predestined system is such that regardless of what "all things" are, they work together for good.
5. Verses 31 thru 34 say that if God is for us to the giving of His Son, He will surely be for us in lesser things.
6. Verses 35 thru 39 are encouragement for Christians to endure all of the adversities of life so they shall not cause us to abandon Christ.
 - a. If all the things mentioned are only the ones which directly result from our Christianity, then is Paul saying, "the religious adversity will not separate us from Christ, but we never know about the non-religious adversity?"
 - b. Verse 39 (NIV) "neither height nor depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

C. Verse 28 examined

1. "We know"
 - a. Lord & McGarvey say Paul's statement came partly from observation and partly from revelation.⁴
 - b. "He had ample opportunity to verify in the school of life the kind of claim he was making."⁵
2. "Work together"
 - a. This says plainly that the experiences of life work together as a composite or aggregate whole.
 - b. It does not say "individually"
 - (1) This is a critical truth in understanding the routine things of life.
 - (2) Certainly some momentous events so impact our lives that their effect is more individually identified.

3. "For good"

- a. There are many misinterpretations of this expression.
 - (1) It does not infer a one on one correlation of events to ensuing good.
 - (2) It does not infer in any way that we will escape the pain of adversity -- we will suffer the full force of adversity in most cases.
 - (3) It does not teach us to "promise people that Christianity is going to make everything goody, goody all the way to heaven."
 - (4) It (or anything else in this verse) does not teach, "But whenever that you try to promise people that when they become a child of God that they are not going to endure certain sufferings and heartaches along the way."
- b. Paul does not imply in this verse that life will become a utopia -- as a matter of fact he is teaching just the opposite and trying to prepare us to endure the great pain of adversity.
- c. Paul does not restrict the "good" to be that which we humans might expect or predict.
 - (1) As with many of God's blessings, the "good" may well come in God's own way in His own time.
 - (2) As we shall see, the "good" may well be improvements to our character we did not even know we needed.
- d. This verse is teaching the concept of the "silver lining" in the clouds; that the troubles of life are not mindless adversities but will ultimately produce good.
- e. The concept of "good" will be examined in the next major point.

FOUR MANIFESTATIONS OF GOOD

I. REFLEXIVE

II. RECIPROCAL

III. "GLORIFICATION" OF GOD

IV. ETERNAL REWARD

TABLE VIII

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III. THE EXPRESSION "GOOD" EXAMINED (Table VIII)

A. "Good" can occur in at least three forms during this life.

1. Good can be **reflexive**

- a. This means that the person who suffers the adversity becomes the beneficiary of the good.
- b. An excellent example of this is the Lord's chastisement which will be discussed later.

2. Good can be **reciprocal**
 - a. This means that other people benefit from the adversity that occurs in one's life.
 - b. An outstanding example of this is martyrdom.
 - (1) It is a well-known fact that often the death of a martyr greatly encourages their fellow comrades.
 - (2) This is often why governments do not execute political prisoners.
 - c. A far less dramatic example of reciprocal good is encouraging others to endure adversity.
 - (1) Phil. 1: 14 -- And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.
 - (2) Paul frequently discusses his adversity for this very reason.
3. Good can be the **glorifying of God**
 - a. For example, those who endure persecution glorify God.
 - b. This point will be discussed in detail later.

B. "Good" is always, in part, **eternal life**.

1. Whatever is necessary in obeying a command is a part of the command.
 - a. This works in two directions.
 - b. It allows us to have such things as church buildings.
 - c. It constrains us to endure the adversities which are necessary in life.
2. The entire composite of our lives, "the pleasant, the unpleasant, and the routine," are all **necessary** and go together to make up a life pleasing to God so that we may go to heaven.

IV. THE "ROUTINE" WORKS TOGETHER WITH ALL THINGS FOR GOOD.

- A. There are many routine and mundane aspects to our lives both in the religious and nonreligious areas.
 1. This is a direct result of living in a physical world with physical bodies.
 2. Actually a significant percentage of a Christian's time is spent working, sleeping, cleaning, bathing, etc.
- B. No where does Rom. 8:28 say that we can expect a one on one correlation between these things and good.
 1. Mow the lawn
 2. Change the oil
 3. Clean the oven
 4. Sweep the floor
 5. Clean the rest rooms in the church building
- C. The Scriptures teach, however, that good results from the routine.
 1. The proper routine leads to a life which avoids sin.

- a. I Tim. 5:14,15 "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan."
 - b. I Thess. 4:11,12 "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing."
2. Much of what Paul is commanding is a proper set of routine or mundane things in life. He points out that this results in **good**.
- a. Good for ourselves
 - b. Good for others
 - c. Glorifies God
 - d. Works toward eternal life

V. THE "ADVERSE" WORKS TOGETHER WITH ALL THINGS FOR GOOD

- A. Because adversity is **necessary**, we glorify God when we endure it.
- 1. The system which insures the free-moral agency of man, the life span of man, and the containment of sin makes adversity a necessary element of this world.
 - 2. For very valid reasons, God cannot shield us from these adversities -- therefore, when we accept these things it glorifies God.
 - 3. Illustration of a company whose business is fallen off and must go on a four day work week.
 - 4. Illustration of a family who cannot take a vacation due to financial problems.
 - 5. In the same way, we glorify God when we accept the adversity of life; we must not be like Job's wife who said "curse God and die" and Job said such was the talk of a fool (Job 2:9).
 - 6. Adversity is necessary to eliminate the problem of "fair-weather" worshippers.
- B. The Lord's chastisement works together with all things for good.
- 1. Heb. 12:11 "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."
 - 2. Albert Barnes: "All chastisement is intended to produce pain, and the Christian is as sensitive to pain as others. His religion does not blunt his sensibilities, and make him stoic, but rather it increases his susceptibility to suffering."⁶
 - 3. The Lord's Chastisement may well come in a variety of forms.
 - a. Through the Word
 - b. In some cases through church discipline
 - c. Through painful events
 - (1) Some as part of life
 - (2) Some providentially generated
- C. Adversity works together with all things to make us spiritually stronger.

1. Rom. 5:3 "We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance." (NIV)
2. II Cor 12:7-10 (Paul's thorn in the flesh)
 - a. This may well be an example of the Lord's chastisement.
 - b. Paul suffered some type of "chronic" problem.
 - (1) Much of Paul's suffering was acute - something which lasted for a relatively short period.
 - (2) This chronic problem was very difficult for Paul.
 - c. Because of the **good** that was being generated in his life due to this adversity, Paul said, "That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weakness, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (NIV)
 - d. The Lord's statement indicates this is a generic principle.
 - (1) "My strength is made perfect in weakness"
 - (2) Conclusion: This principle applies to all Christians in all ages.
- D. Adversity works together with all things for good to move us to rely upon God.
 1. According to Acts 12, the disciples gathered at Mary's house to pray when Peter was imprisoned.
 2. According to Acts 16, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God after being thrown into prison.
 3. II Cor. 1:8,9 (NIV): "We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves, but on God, who raises the dead."
 4. In this modern world, we have grown to expect someone in this world to be able to "fix it" regardless of the problem.
 - a. Sick -- Doctor
 - b. Troubled -- Counselor
 - c. Threatened -- Police
 - d. Suffer Injustice -- Lawyer
 - e. Suffer Loss -- Insurance
 5. The things no one can fix, move us to rely on God.
 - a. Incurable illness
 - b. Dreadful problem no one can solve
 - c. Destructive weather
 - d. Death of others
 - e. Our own death

CONCLUSION

- A. In the last verses of Romans 8, Paul strives to encourage Christians to endure the adversity of life, with four great thoughts:

1. Verses 31 & 33: No one can be against us if God is backing us.
 - a. They may be able to persecute us for a short period.
 - b. Ultimately, the Lord will destroy our adversaries.

2. Verse 32: God gave His son for us and we can be confident He will give us lesser things.
 - a. If a man can lift 100 pounds, he can definitely lift 10 pounds.
 - b. If a man is willing to give you \$100, certainly he will give you \$5.

3. Verse 35: A rhetorical question - what adversity is there which shall separate us from the love of Christ?
 - a. A rhetorical question is not asked for information.
 - b. Rather it is used as a forceful figure of speech to emphasize the truth.

4. Verses 38 & 39: Paul expresses confidence in these Christians that nothing would be able to separate them from the love of Christ.
 - a. When a person we respect tells us he sincerely feels we can accomplish a certain thing, it motivates us to accomplish that goal.
 - b. This is a superior form of positive motivation.
 - c. It is important to point out that Paul includes **all** adversity; not just those induced by our religion.

- B. The supreme encouragement, though, is found in verse 37.
 1. "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." (NIV)
 2. How is it possible to be more than a conqueror? How can one do more than win?
 - a. A conqueror wins the war.
 - b. We are more than conquerors because we also win all the battles.

- C. Faithful Christians are "more than conquerors" in "all things."
 1. We are certainly "more than conquerors" in the **pleasant** things of life.
 2. We are "more than conquerors" because the **routine and mundane** aspects of life work for good.
 3. We are "more than conquerors" because even the **adversity** we endure ultimately benefits us and benefits others.

- D. One of the rewards of Heaven will be an undying, nondecaying sensation of victory, because we are more than conquerors!

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DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEK PROPHECY

by Terry Baze

INTRODUCTION

The prophecy under consideration is one of the most beautiful prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the wondrous work of the first advent of the Messiah. It is however, one of the most difficult texts of scripture to completely understand because of the differences in translations and the many disagreements in interpretations concerning the meaning of this prophecy. I found the following quotations concerning this passage to be of great interest.

"This is one of the grandest prophetic passages, and yet, if there ever was an exegetical crux, this is it... Some interpreters despair completely of arriving at any certainty in their exposition, being overawed by the multiplicity of existing interpretations."¹

"Here commences the celebrated prophecy of the seventy weeks - A portion of scripture which has excited as much attention, and led to as great a variety of interpretation, as perhaps any other. Of this passage Professor Stuart (Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy, p. 104) remarks, 'I am fully of the opinion, that no interpretation as yet published will stand the test of thorough grametico-historical criticism ...'"²

This particular prophecy is of great interest because it is supposedly a powerful argument in support of the doctrine of Pre-millennialism.

The importance of the prophecy of the 70 weeks in dispensational teaching can hardly be exaggerated. The points of agreement (with the traditional chronological view, TB) are to be carefully noted. The most important are:

1. The 70 weeks represent weeks of years, or a total of 490 years.
2. Only one period of weeks is described, as is proved by the fact that the subdivisions (7, 62, 1) when added together give a total of 70.
3. The 'anointed one, the prince' (v. 25), and the anointed one (v. 26) are the same person, the Messiah.
4. The first 69 weeks or 483 years had their terminus in the period of the first advent; their fulfillment is long past.

The points of difference are also important; They center on two questions; 1. Have the great events described in verse 24 been fulfilled, or is their completion

still in the future? 2. Is the 70th week past, or is it still to come?³

"The Pre-millennialist make a great ado over Daniel's 70 weeks, or 490 years. In fact, Clarence Larkin, in his book entitled **Dispensational Truth**, which is advertised as the greatest book on Dispensational truth in the world, has formulated a chart of Daniel's 70 weeks. In the chart on the 70 weeks, he finds a place for the church, or contingency, in the place of the defaulted kingdom promises. This he designates as 'the times of the Gentiles,' and he also finds a place for Daniel's seventieth week, which week, according to him, incorporates 'the rapture, the tribulation, or war against the Antichrist, and the revelation or return of Christ in the flesh to the earth to reign over an earthly kingdom for 1,000 years.'"⁴

A correct exegesis of this prophecy is our purpose and is all that is necessary to disprove the Pre-millennialist views about this prophecy.

OUTLINE OF DANIEL NINE

Verses 3-19: Daniel's prayer and confession.

Verses 20-23: The appearance of Gabriel and his mission stated.

Verses 24-27: The vision of the seventy weeks.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In order to have a proper understanding of Daniel's vision it is necessary to realize the historical context of Daniel's prayer in chapter nine.

"Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem in 605 B.C. and the first deportation of the Jews occurred in that year. The 70 year period then would last until 536 B.C. Belshazzar, who was probably the son of Nabonidus and therefore the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, was king of Babylon from 553-539 B.C. In Daniel chapter five, the kingdom was taken from him and given to Darius the Mede. Cyrus had given control to Darius for a brief time (Dan. 5:30,31; 9:1; 10:1; 11:1). Darius, who became king at 62, was an officer in Cyrus' army. The two years of Darius' reign are included in the nine years which are assigned to Cyrus in the Babylonian annals (538-529 B.C.). The close relations of Darius with the Jews account for their speaking of him as the king and dating the year of his death to the first year of Cyrus. This was the glorious year of their own restoration to their land."⁵

When Darius the Mede received the kingdom, Daniel was established again as an influential agent of the government. This change of events caused Daniel to examine the books (prophecy of Jeremiah) with regard to the approaching end of the desolation of Jerusalem. "Daniel began to calculate how that 68 years of the 70 year period of desolation, as prophesied by Jeremiah, had already passed, and that, therefore, the period of destruction was essentially up. Further, Cyrus, who had not yet arrived to take over his rule from Babylon, had already embraced Marduk, the Babylonian god. Daniel thus saw no indications whereby Jeremiah's prophecy would be, or could be, fulfilled. There was no indication that Cyrus would in any way favor God's chosen people. Within this context of circumstances, Daniel prayed unto Jehovah and made confession for his own sins, and particularly for the sins of his nation."⁶

"We are reminded of the 70 year decree which came on Israel because of its wickedness.

Since that time of punishment has just about run its course, Daniel begs for the liberation of the nation. The bulk of the chapter is taken up with the rehearsal of his confession and prayer. He is then given word of another decree which consists of 70 sevens."⁷

The meaning of this decree is our primary concern in this study. "The chapter is to be dated somewhere around 539 B.C. at which time Cyrus gave the decree that Israel could go home."⁸

THE MOST POPULAR INTERPRETATIONS

(No position takes the 70 weeks as a literal 490 days)

- I. **The Pre-millennial View:** Lindsey, Walvoord, the majority of dispensationalist.
 - A. The command to restore Jerusalem in verse 25 is the decree of Artaxerxes in 445 B.C. to Nehemiah (Neh. 2:1ff).
 - B. The 70 weeks stands for 490 literal years (taken from the prophetic day equals a year method used in Num. 14:34, and Ezek. 4:6). There are 483 years from this decree till the Messiah was cut off at the end of the 69 weeks.
 - C. The prophetic clock stopped at the cross and has not started since that time.
 - D. The last week (seven years) will begin with the rapture. This seven year period constitutes the tribulation period, the last half of which is the great tribulation.
 - E. The one who causes the sacrifice and oblation to cease in verse 27 is the Antichrist.

II. THE TRADITIONAL CHRONOLOGICAL VIEWS

- A. The first view:
 1. The commandment to restore Jerusalem in verse 25 is the decree in 445 B.C. given to Nehemiah. The date varies anywhere from 444 B.C. to 454 B.C. depending on the historian.
 2. The 70 weeks stands for 490 literal years like the Pre-millennial view, 445 plus 483 (the 69 weeks) equal 38 A.D., the approximate time of Jesus' baptism and public ministry.
 3. In verse 27, the midst of the 70th week, or three and half years later, Jesus is cut-off, or crucified.
 4. The last three and half years after the crucifixion is the time after the cross which was spent preaching the gospel to the Jews. That makes up the last week.
 5. The destruction of Jerusalem is not included in the 70 weeks time period, or if it was, God granted the Jews a grace period of about 30 years.

B. The Second View:

1. The commandment to restore Jerusalem is the one given to Ezra in 458 B.C.
2. When you add 483 years to 458 B.C. this equals about 25-26 A.D., which was the time of Jesus' baptism and public ministry, when you subtract the four years error in our present day calendar.
3. The rest of this view is identical with the one above.

III. THE SYMBOLIC POSITION

The 70 weeks are simply a number that is symbolic of God's complete and final dealings with Israel, or according to some, all mankind. There is no literal 490 year time period involved.

- A. One view states that this is a prophecy concerning the end of time based on the interpretations of verse 24 and verse 27: Keil-Delitzsch, Leupold.
- B. Another view states that this is a prophecy dealing with God's final work among the Jewish commonwealth.

EXEGESIS AND COMMENTS

The books Daniel refers to in chapter 9:1,2 are undoubtedly the writings of Jeremiah, found in Jer. 25:11 and 29:10. These verses speak of the 70 years captivity the Jews have been engaged in. Daniel is reading about the year 539 B.C., and it was about 538 B.C. that Cyrus gave the decree to the Jews to go home.

The events spoken of in verse 12 happened in 586 B.C., and verses 16 and 17 let us know that both the city and the sanctuary were in ruins.

Wayne Jackson, in his paper on "Daniel's Seventy Weeks," had some interesting thoughts on why the captivity lasted for 70 years: "The Law of Moses commanded that Israel should observe every 7th year as a Sabbatical (Lev. 25:1-7), but Israel ignored this law. In addition to punishment until Canaan had enjoyed its Sabbaths - II Chron. 36:21. If each of the 70 years represented a violation of a Sabbatical year, as II Chron. 36:21 indicates, this suggests that Israel had ignored this law for 490 years."

However, Jackson states that Israel never kept this law that there is no record of them ever doing so.⁹ This law was given to Israel about 1446 B.C., soon after the Exodus. Subtracting the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, leaves one at the year 1406 B.C. The Babylonian captivity began in 606 B.C., which means that Israel ignored the law for 800 years, not 490 years, as Jackson supposes.

Daniel 9:24

SEVENTY WEEKS: - the KJV, 70 weeks; RSV, 70 weeks of years; NIV, 70 sevens.

Strong: Seven - sheba - seven, as the sacred full one, an indefinite number

Seventy - shibiym - 70, a multiple of seven

Weeks - shebua - sevened, a week, seven, week of years -- this word is also used in verse 27, "one week," "midst of week" Deut. 16:9, Dan. 9:24,25; 10:2,3

Gesenius: Tells us the Greek word is "hebdomad" or "heptad", meaning a seven or a week.

This word is translated "week" or "weeks" in every Old Testament usage, except for Ezek. 45:21 where translated "seven days."

"This fair translation would be 70 weeks are determined; that is 70 times seven days, or 490 days."¹⁰ This word is never used in the Bible to refer to year - weeks.

The question that arises, is whether these 70 weeks are literal or not? There are a number of possibilities:

1. **Literal Interpretation:** 490 days, months, or years?
2. **Figurative Interpretation:** the 490 days are to be taken as a symbol.

THE LITERAL INTERPRETATION

Reasons to support it

1. Neither 490 literal days, weeks or months makes sense or fit the context.
2. The context of the 70 year period of captivity suggest that literal years are under consideration. The angel gives a decree seven times that figure, or 490 years. "Daniel had been making inquiry respecting the 70 years, and it is natural to suppose that the answer of the angel would have respect to years also; and thus understood, the answer would have met the inquiry pertinently - not 70 years, but a week of years - 7 times 70 years."¹¹
3. Based on Num. 14:34 and Ezek. 4:6, where days represent years, proves that this method was used prophetically.
4. The Sabbatical year of Lev. 25: "Lev. 25:8 - The Jews had Sabbatic years, by which their years were divided into weeks of years, as in this important prophecy, each week containing seven years. The 70 weeks spoken of therefore refer to 490 years."¹²
5. "Jehovah dispatched the angel Gabriel to show Daniel not just another 70 year period, but rather, a period of seven times a 70 year period, or a period of 490 years. In short, God showed Daniel that Jerusalem would be rebuilt as of old and that it would stand for 490 years, that is, a period of 490 would be carved out of time during which time Jerusalem

would stand in order that Jehovah's long-range purpose for the Jews and for all mankind, for that matter, might be accomplished."¹³

6. "Thus these 490 years express in the form of Divine revelation, that a definite period of time has been decreed for the accomplishment of all that which is necessary for the restoration of the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, which is a Messianic term in itself. Within this definite period of time will be finished all the plan of God's redemption of man which he made known thru the prophets to the fathers thru divers portions and divers manners - Heb. 1:1,2."¹⁴
7. "A period of 490 years beginning at a particular time, would be required for the temple and the city to accomplish the great object for its existence. The angel further set forth the objects or purposes for which the temple and the city were to be rebuilt."¹⁵

Reasons Against a Literal View

1. Nothing is stated to relate the 70 years to the 490 days mentioned. Taken literally, you have 70 years for the captivity, and 490 days for the vision. One is agreed to be literal, the other is forced to be figurative: there is no connection. Years are not even mentioned in connection with the 70 weeks.
2. Numbers 14:34 and Ezek. 4:4-6 do state that a day equals a year. But how does one know this? The context tells them so. We are not told this in Daniel 9:24. This idea is not the rule in interpreting all prophecy (Gen. 15:13, 400 years; Jer. 25:11, 70 years; Isa. 7:8, 65 years). The only two cases in the Bible where we know for sure that a day equals a year is in Numbers 14:34 and Ezek. 4:4-6, and we know this only because the text says that it is so.
3. In Lev. 25 the word used is "Shabbath", while "shabua" is used in Dan. 9:24. They come from entirely different roots. There is no connection in either context that one refers to the other.
4. There is no proof that a day equals a year. To literalize the passage, makes 490 days, not years.

THE FIGURATIVE INTERPRETATION

"Based on the symbolic significance of numbers in apocalyptic literature, we reach this conclusion. The number 'seven' and its associated numbers and multiplies speak of completeness, totality and perfection."¹⁶

Following are some scripture references dealing with the significance of the number seven: Gen. 4:24 - Divine activity completed in creation. Ex. 24:1,9; Num. 11:16,24,25 - 70 elders representing the people. Isa. 23:15,17 - Tyre to be forgotten for 70 years. Jer. 25:11,12 - the Babylonian captivity to last for 70 years. Gen. 41 - Pharaoh's dream. Ex. 12:15,19 - seven days of unleavened bread. Lev 4:6,17 - the blood to be sprinkled seven times. Leviticus is full of passages stating various reasons for uncleanness and the consecration for such always lasting seven days. Lev. 23:15,16 - seven Sabbaths. Seven or fourteen often the numbers of animals to

be sacrificed. Ex. 23:11,12 - the Sabbatical year. Gen. 4:15,24 - seven fold vengeance on Lamech. Josh. 6:4,15,16 - in the fall of Jericho, seven priests, trumpets, days, and seven times on the seventh day. Mourning lasted for 7 days - Judges 14:17. Naaman dipped seven times in Jordan - II Kings 5:10-14. Daniel used seven in regard to Nebuchadnezzar learning his lesson in chapter four. In the New Testament; Matt. 18:21,22 - forgiveness seven times seventy. Revelation - seven churches, spirits, candlesticks, stars, angels, lamps, seals, horns, eyes, trumpets, thunders, heads, crowns, plagues, vials, mountains, and 7,000 slain.

"God is saying to Daniel, 'Yes, I know 70 years were decreed and are now fulfilled, but Daniel, I have another decree. It is one which carries within it the outline of my completed work in regard to your nation.' The 70 heptads stand for the completion of God's work in regard to the Jewish commonwealth. The work which God will work concerning national Israel would of course take place in history and therefore must consume time, but time (chronology) is not what the 70 sevens are speaking of. Numbers speak of states of affairs, conditions of things (time, times and half a time, in 7:25 and 1,000 years in Rev.). When these 70 weeks have run their course, God will have finished altogether his work with the Jews as a commonwealth. Since we have no chronological system that will fit, we must use the symbolic approach. 70 A.D. is embraced in the 70 weeks. If that is true, no chronological approach will be able to handle the elements of the vision."¹⁷

The main objections to a figurative view, are that a chronological view works (according to some, even though many differ as to how). Also, that there is nothing in the context to indicate it is not chronological; the 70 years of captivity were literal, why not a literal time period in the 70 weeks? Why the divisions of 7, 62, and 1, if this is to be taken symbolically?

* * * * *

DETERMINED

Strong: Chathak - to cut off, to decree, determine. Verses 26 and 27 - charats - to decide, decree, determine.

Gesenius: Destruction decreed by God. See Is. 10:23; 28:22; Dan. 11:36.

"The meaning would seem to be, that this portion of time, 70 weeks, was cut off from the whole duration, or cut out of it, as it were, and set by itself for a definite purpose."¹⁸

UPON THY PEOPLE AND UPON THY HOLY CITY

This 70 week period has reference to Daniel's people, the Jews, and His holy city, Jerusalem. What follows must be confined to this context.

Why were 70 weeks determined, what is to be accomplished? There were six things to be

accomplished:

Finish the Transgression
Make an end of sin
Make reconciliation
Bring in everlasting righteousness
Seal up vision and prophecy
Anoint the most Holy

TO FINISH THE TRANSGRESSION

Strong: Finish - kala; to restrict by act, hold back or in, prohibit, finish, forbid, keep back, refrain, restrain, shut up, be stayed, withhold.

This means to cover or seal up. It is a figurative description of the forgiveness of sins.

Strong: transgression - pasha; a revolt (national, moral, or religious). rebellion, sin, trespass.

Gesenius: by metonymy, used as a penalty of transgression.

There are at least two views on what this means. One being that "transgression would be finished; that is the cup of iniquity of the Jewish people would be filled to the brim. They would reject the Messiah. The full height and depth of their iniquity was yet to be shown, but would be shown with the 490 years. In putting the Messiah to death, they reached the culmination of all their wickedness. No greater sin was possible - Matt. 23:32; 1 Thess. 2:16."¹⁹

The correct view is probably as follows; "By the end of the 490 year period of time the gospel would be preached and sin would be shut up. Sin would be enclosed, shut up, or incarcerated as if imprisoned. In short, the progress of sin would be restrained." Remember, that these six things all deal primarily with the work of the Messiah and His dealing with the problem of sin.

MAKE AN END OF SINS

Strong: verse 24 - end - chatham - to close up, seal, make an end

Gesenius: to finish, Dan. 9:24 - until the predictions of the prophets be fulfilled.

This is the same word as "seal" in the latter part of this verse. The word is also used in verse 26, and there, Gesenius says, "the end, the destruction of a people - Gen. 6:13; Ezek. 7:2; Amos 8:2, a wicked bringing destruction - Ezek. 21:30,34; 35:5; Dan. 8:17,19; 12:13."

Even though the English word "end" is used in verse 26 the Hebrew word is different. There it is "gets," and as you can see from Gesenius, they have different meanings.

Strong: verse 26 - end - gets - an extremity, after, utmost, border, end.

"To seal sin, remove it from sight. treated as if it were hidden from view, and a seal, which may not be broken, placed on that which covers it."²⁰

SINS - Strong: chattath - an offense and its penalty, occasion, sacrifice, or expiation.
Gesenius: a miss, misstep, slip with the foot.

"By the end of the 490 years Christ would have made His blood atonement for mankind, whereby sins could be completely covered and removed. Until Christ shed His blood, no sins could be forgiven fully and in the absolute sense. Heb. 9:22; 10:4."²¹

"To make an end of sin offerings which our Lord did when He offered His spotless soul and body on the cross once for all."²²

MAKE RECONCILIATION FOR INIQUITY

RECONCILIATION - Strong: kaphar - to cover, to expiate or condone, to placate or cancel, appease, make atonement for, cleanse, disannul, forgive, purge, pardon.

Gesenius: to cover, to cover over, to expiate, pardon, to obtain forgiveness.

INIQUITY - Strong: avon - perversity, evil, fault, iniquity, sin, mischief.

There are three things specified in regard to sin thus far: sin would be restrained, sealed up, and covered over. The great work referred to here pertained to sin, and would be designed to remove it. The New Testament stresses repeatedly that the purpose of the Lord's earthly sojourn was to deal with the problem of sin (Matt. 1:21; 20:28; 26:28; I Cor. 15:3ff; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:20; I Pet. 2:24; Rev. 1:5). The ultimate finality of Christ's work in dealing with sinful humanity is underscored in Heb. 9:26-28. He was manifested to put away sin. It is interesting to note also, that in Isa. 53, the prophet uses the same terms: transgression, sins, and iniquities. Everything in verse 24 was fulfilled at Christ's first coming.

EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS

Gesenius: This passage in Daniel 9:24 ... speaks of the everlasting righteousness to be brought in thru the atonement of Christ.

RIGHTEOUSNESS - Strong: tsedeg - that which is altogether the right, just, right.

Gesenius: liberation, welfare, the reward of virtue.

This, then, speaks of the righteousness that will endure, that which was introduced by Christ to cause true righteousness to come into the world (Rom. 1:17; I Cor. 1:30; II Cor. 5:21; Jer. 23:5,6; Matt. 3:15).

SEAL UP VISION AND PROPHECY

SEAL: this is the same word as "end" in this same verse which was discussed previously.

VISION: Strong - chazown - a sight, dream, revelation.

Gesenius: a divine vision from God.

PROPHECY: Strong - nabiyy - inspired man, a prophet

Hence, all visions and prophecies will be closed or shut up. With the accomplishment of His work in fulfilling God's plan of redemption, prophecy was confirmed, fulfilled, validated and thus sealed up. The Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in Him and thus sealed up.

TO ANOINT THE MOST HOLY

ANOINT: Strong: mashach - to consecrate, anoint

HOLY: Strong - qodesh - a sacred place or thing - a consecrated, dedicated thing.

The phrase "most Holy" literally means holy of holies and can refer to a person, place, or thing. Some believe this refers to Christ, others, the church, and some, the temple. The same word for anoint is found in verse 25 and translated Messiah, which of course means, the anointed one. This probably refers to the anointing of Christ by the Holy Spirit at His baptism.

"We must clearly understand the fact that all the six items presented in verse 24 are Messianic. The termination of the 70 weeks then, coincide with Christ's first advent. When Christ ascended into heaven and the Holy Spirit descended, there remained not one of the six items of verse 24 that was not accomplished."²³

DANIEL 9:25

The commandment to restore and build Jerusalem

COMMANDMENT: Strong - dabar - a word, a matter or thing, commandment, decree, provision.

RESTORE: Strong - shuwb - to turn back, return to starting point, retreat.

BUILD: Strong - banah - to build, repair.

The words "going forth," apply to the issuing of a decree or order. The question that arises is who issued the order? What command does this refer to? There are three possibilities: The decree of Cyrus to Zerubbabel in 538 B.C., from which 50,000 returned in 536 B.C. The decree of Artaxerxes to Ezra in 458 B.C., and the decree of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah in 445 B.C. (cf. Isa. 44:26; 45:1ff; II Chron. 36:22,23; Ezra 1:1ff; 6:14).

CYRUS' DECREE 538 B.C.

This decree came about a year from the time that Daniel received this vision. This had been prophesied by Isaiah about 150 years before it actually happened in Isa. 44:24ff, 45:13. These prophecies specifically mention the building of the temple and the city.

II Chron. 36:22ff and Ezra 1:1ff also record this decree. Since Daniel was to realize the decree a short time after having received the vision, it is only natural that he would understand it as being the fulfillment of the vision. The decree was given at 538 B.C. and the first return to Jerusalem was led by Zerubbabel in 536 B.C. Ezra 2:70 and 3:1 mention that they dwelt in their cities (remember that 50,000 returned). The foundation of the temple was laid in 535 B.C. (Ezra 3:8,10). Apparently someone started the project of building the walls (Ezra 9:9), but someone stopped them. In 520 B.C., under Darius, Zerubbabel and Jeshua resumed building. Being called into account by Tattenai, who was governor, they appealed to the edict of Cyrus. It was found and brought forth an edict from Darius permitting the work to continue. The temple was finished in 516 B.C., 20 years after the first return of the Jews to Jerusalem.

Many have tried to claim other decrees than this one, but both scripture, time, and events surrounding it leads support to Cyrus' decree being the one which Daniel 9:25 refers to. It is also important to note that Ezra chapter four coincides with the "troublesome times" mentioned in verse 25. Ezra 5:3 also mentions the house and the wall being built.

Those in opposition to Cyrus's decree state that 538 plus 483 does not come out at the Messiah's appearance, that this commission was only to build the temple (II Chron. 36:22,23; Ezra 1:1-3), and that 538 minus the 49 years for the building of the city would be 489 B.C., while the walls were still not completed until 444 B.C.

ARTAXERXES DECREE TO EZRA

In the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, a decree was issued to Ezra in about the year 458-457 B.C. It is recorded in Ezra 7:6,7 and 9:9. The proponents of this decree state that it is significant that this decree is recorded in Aramaic, while the rest of the book is written in Hebrew. It is also important to note that permission was granted to take as many as he desired and he was given unlimited resources to accomplish his work. Ezra was empowered to ordain laws and to restore the commonwealth.

By far, the most interesting thing about this decree is the chronology, for it is amazing as to the accuracy in some points. Taking the year 457 B.C. and subtracting 483 years equals 26 A.D., which, if you consider the error of four years in our present day calendar, leaves you with the exact time of our Lord's beginning His public ministry. This of course coincides with the rest of the prophecy, except for the destruction of Jerusalem occurring in 70 A.D..

Those in opposition to this decree state that nothing is mentioned about building the city and there is no evidence that Ezra had anything to do with any building of the city. The commission was only to restore the laws, and only about 1,800 returned with Ezra as compared to 50,000 with Zerubbabel. Also, when you take the 49 year period for the rebuilding of the city from 457 B.C., that leaves the completion in 408 B.C., and it was 444 B.C. when the walls were completed.

ARTAXERXES DECREE TO NEHEMIAH

In the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, he issued a decree to Nehemiah in the year 445 B.C. As has been already stated, this is the Pre-millennialist view as well as many Traditionalists. The reasoning for this decree is as follows: In Neh. 1:1,2, Nehemiah learns of the condition of Jerusalem. In 2:3 he tells the king he is sad because of her condition. In 2:5

his request to go build the city was granted and verse eight tells of a letter given to him that pertained to the building materials needed. In 2:13 the first thing after his arrival in Jerusalem is to survey the walls and the city. In chapters three and four the walls are rebuilt (in "troubled times," verse 25). This was the only decree that specifically mentioned the building of the city, and it is claimed that the chronology works.

In opposition to this, the purpose of Nehemiah going was to assist in accomplishing the work undertaken by Ezra, which was being retarded. His mission was accomplished in 52 days after arriving (6:15), not 49 years as fits our prophecy. Taking 49 years from 445 B.C. equals 396 B.C. and there is no proof at all for such a date being the completion of the city. Also, the chronology to the coming Messiah does not work, because 445 B.C. minus 483 years equals 38 A.D., which is about 12 years off.

So, we have the views and their problems presented. None of these dates corresponds to the chronological view of a 49 year period for completing the restoration of the city. This lends support to a figurative application of the 70 weeks. Using 49 as a multiple of seven and yet only a small portion of the 490, consider the following: the 49 stands for the complete restoration of Jerusalem, its temple and the Jewish commonwealth. The purpose of which being only to fulfill God's long range purposes for the Jews, for which the 490 day period stands. It seems therefore, that of the three decrees, Cyrus' is the most likely to being the one referred to in this prophecy, then Nehemiah's, then Ezra's.

TO RESTORE AND BUILD: literally, to build again, cause to return

UNTO THE MESSIAH:

Strong: mashiyach - verses 25 & 26 - anointed, a consecrated person (king, priest, saint). The Messiah. This corresponds to the "anointing the most Holy" in verse 24, because Messiah means anointed. The word occurs four times in KJV. (Dan. 9:25,26; John 1:41; 4:25). The Greek word that is synonymous with anointed and Messiah is Christ. The Hebrew word occurs frequently in the Old Testament and is translated "anointed" everywhere except in this prophecy.

The Latin Vulgate renders this, "Christ, the leader or ruler."

The Syriac Version - "Christ, the king."

THE PRINCE

Strong: nagiya - a commander, civil, military or religious.

Gesenius: prince, ruler, leader.

The same word is used in verse 26 as well. This word could apply to any ruler or leader, but the word Messiah qualifies which one is referred to. This prince is obviously different than the one in verse 26, because this one is cut off before the other comes.

SEVEN WEEKS AND 62 WEEKS

The reasons for these divisions are not stated. Evidently they are to be characterized by

some event or events. Each portion of time is designated for something of significance. The literal view makes this verse mean 49 years and 434 years, a total of 483 years from the command to the Messiah.

THE STREET SHALL BE BUILT AGAIN AND THE WALL

STREET: Strong - rechowb - avenue or area, broad place

WALL: Strong - a trench: Gesenius - cut in, dug, ditch if a city.

This word (wall) is never translated this any place else. It is naturally used in the fortification of a city, however. It evidently refers to the restoration of Jerusalem and that this is the significance of the 7 weeks or 49 years. The street would return to its former state and be built - Zech. 8:4,5.

EVEN IN TROUBLOUS TIMES

Strong: troublous - akar - to disturb, afflict, in a time of distress. Ezra 4:21-24; Neh. 4:4-8,16-18.

DANIEL 9:26

AFTER 62 WEEKS MESSIAH BE CUT-OFF

AFTER: This does not specify when, but does not mean during, it means after. The Messiah is cut-off after the 62 weeks, not during. He was cut-off in the midst of the 70th week (verse 27) and this destroys the Pre-millennial view, for they believe the 70th week has not yet arrived.

CUT: Strong - karath - to cut-off, down, asunder, destroy:

Gesenius - punishment of death:

Vulgate - "Messiah shall be slain"

Syriac - "Messiah shall be slain" - (Note also Isaiah 53:8)

After the 62 weeks which follow the 7 weeks allotted to rebuild the city, the Messiah would be cut-off. This coincides with verse 27, "he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease," because at His death he nailed the Mosaic law to the cross with its sacrifices and oblations. (cf. Col. 2:13-15; Eph. 2:13-16; II Cor. 3:7ff; Heb. 7:11; 8:13; 9:25-28; 10:8,9; Matt. 5:17; Jer. 31:31-34; Matt. 26:28)

BUT NOT FOR HIMSELF

The margin states, "and shall have nothing." The word conveys the idea of nothing. Some possibilities as to the meaning are: that Christ did not die for Himself; that He had no

successor or follower; that He had no rule or authority (seemingly), since most people misunderstood the nature of His kingdom and teaching; His death and His rule and reign.

THE PEOPLE OF THE PRINCE THAT SHALL COME

PEOPLE: a people, tribe, or race, soldiers (Judges 5:2).

PRINCE: same as verse 25.

Again, this prince is distinguished from the Messiah, because he comes after the Messiah is cut-off. The prince also comes for the purpose of destruction - verses 26 & 27. Most agree that this refers to Titus and the Roman army. The Pre-millennialist, however, take him to be the Anti-Christ.

SHALL DESTROY THE CITY AND THE SANCTUARY

The word "sanctuary" is the same word as "holy" found in verse 24. This has reference to Jerusalem and her temple. The actual date when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans was in 70 A.D.. This statement also implies that both the city and the temple have been under consideration in the commission given in verse 25.

THE END SHALL BE WITH A FLOOD

This refers to a gushing, an outpouring or overwhelming. It predicts the ravages of the Roman army in destroying Jerusalem. As Jesus prophesied in Matt. 24:2, not one stone would be left on another.

UNTO THE END DESOLATIONS ARE DETERMINED

DESOLATIONS: Strong - shamen - to devastate or destroy

Gesenius - to be laid waste, desolated - Dan. 9:26,27; 11:31.

"The city and the sanctuary will go down in judgment and disaster in war. It will not be by accident, but by divine decree. These desolations are determined. A full end is decreed."²⁴

There is every indication here, that the destruction of Jerusalem is included within the 70 weeks, because it is prophesied here, even before the final week is specifically mentioned in verse 27, and then it is implied that the "overspreading of abominations" and the "consummation" are included in the last half of the final week.

This would, however, destroy the chronological view, which ends the 70 weeks three and half years after Christ's death. This view states that the destruction of Jerusalem, though mentioned here, does not necessarily have to fall within the 70 weeks and that the text does not clearly state that it does. Others simply believe God extended a grace period of 30-35 years to the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem. All of which brings us to verse 27.

DANIEL 9:27

HE SHALL CONFIRM THE COVENANT WITH MANY FOR ONE WEEK

CONFIRM: Strong - gabar - to be strong, to prevail, be mighty, strengthen

Gesenius - to be strong, to prevail, the power is that of binding, to make firm.

"A covenant" is a better translation than "the covenant." Literally, "he shall make firm a covenant with many one week." The word "for" is not in the Hebrew text.

"He" - this could either refer to the Messiah or the other prince. It evidently refers to the Messiah, for the other prince came to destroy.

There are several ideas concerning what exactly is the "covenant" mentioned here. Some possibilities include: the New Covenant, the Abrahamic, or Davidic Covenants. Since much of the context of the prophecy is dealing with the advent of the Messiah and His work, it is safe to assume that He is the one considered here and the covenant is the one He ratified with His blood. (Matt. 26:23; Heb. 10:9,10)

ONE WEEK

The traditional chronological view to this week is that the new covenant began to be taught to the Jews starting with John the Baptist until three and half years after the death of Christ. Then the gospel went to the Gentiles.

The problem with this view is that Christ did not confirm His covenant with the Jews for only seven years. Jews still heard and obeyed the gospel in many places for years, the gospel did not stop being preached in Judea after three and half years. Another problem is that the chronology cannot be proven. Evidently, Paul was converted in the summer of 35 A.D., barely two years after Pentecost in Acts chapter two. He did not preach to Gentiles until the fall of 37 A.D.. He did not begin his first missionary journey until 48 A.D., 15 years after Acts chapter two. Peter preached to Cornelius in about 40-41 A.D., which is seven or eight years after Acts chapter two.²⁵

Another view, which I believe to be the correct view, is that the New Testament was enforced or confirmed during the final week. When the Messiah was cut-off, the New Testament was confirmed. When He was cut-off, He confirmed the covenant with Abraham (Rom. 15:8; Gal. 3:23-29).

The only problem that would exist with this interpretation is simply that if a literal week (seven years) is under consideration, there is more to the meaning here than simply that the covenant was made during this time.

IN THE MIDST OF THE WEEK - SACRIFICE AND OBLATION TO CEASE

MIDST: Strong - chetsiy - half or middle. In the "half" would suggest three and half years in the chronological view.

SACRIFICE AND OBLATION TO CEASE

The sacrifice and oblations are those offered in the temple and the need and effectiveness of these ceased when the Messiah was cut-off.

AND FOR THE OVERSPREADING OF ABOMINATIONS

OVERSPREADING: Strong - kawaph - edge or extremity - of a bird or army - a wing, a quarter, a pinnacle border, corner, end, uttermost part. Gesenius - a wing, applied to armies (Isa. 8:8) - the highest summit of the temple (Dan. 9:27)

ABOMINATIONS: Strong - shigguts - disgusting, filthy, an idol, idolatrous, detestable.

Margin - with the abominable armies

Vulgate - and there shall be in the temple the abominations of desolation.

Septuagint - and upon the temple shall be an abomination of desolation.

Syriac - and over the sanctuary shall there be the abomination of ruin.

Lit. - "upon the wing of the abominations one causing desolation."²⁶

Evidently this refers to something pertaining to the city or the temple, because that is what the prophecy is about. The purpose of their coming was to destroy. Also, Jesus in Matt. 24:15 prophesied of this same event and referred to this prophecy of Daniel in doing so. It no doubt, then, refers to abominations in the temple brought in by the ones who desolated the temple and city, the Romans. Josephus, for instance, says that when the city was taken, the Romans brought their ensigns into the temple and placed them over the eastern gate, and sacrificed unto them there.

AND HE SHALL MAKE IT DESOLATE

DESOLATE: Strong - ruined, wasted, desolated.

"He (the Messiah) shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. And upon the wing - the porch of the temple - abominations, and a desolator."²⁸ This evidently refers to Titus and the Roman army as introduced in verse 26 for the language is so similar: "Shall destroy the city" (v. 26); "desolations determined" (v. 27).

EVEN UNTIL THE CONSUMMATION

CONSUMMATION: Strong - kalah - a completion, destruction, end. This is the completion of everything pertaining to the city and the temple. Remember (verse 24), 70 weeks are determined.

AND THAT DETERMINED

This was not accidental, it was by Divine decree. This was God carrying out His purpose. What was determined? "Seventy sevens" - "war" - "desolations" - "destruction" - "the end." It is important to remember that the people here in view are the Jews.

UPON THE DESOLATE

The reference here probably is to Jerusalem, as she would be desolated in ruins, totally destroyed.

CONCLUSION

Daniel has asked concerning his people and the city - Jer. 5:16-20. The angel answers, telling Daniel that 70 weeks are determined upon the people and the city. Within the first seven weeks, Jerusalem and the Jewish commonwealth will be restored. Also, within the 70 weeks (at 69 weeks) the Messiah will come and accomplish His work, being cut off in the midst of the 70th week. Remember, however, that 70, not 69 1/2 weeks are determined upon Jews and Jerusalem. What is determined? Verse 28b - the destruction of the city and sanctuary ... the end ... desolations determined ... the consummation. It is certainly implied from the context that the destruction of Jerusalem is predicted within the 70 week period. Using the number 490 to symbolize God's complete and final work among the Jewish people and commonwealth the prophecy makes sense. If the destruction of Jerusalem is included in the 70 weeks, this must be the correct interpretation for it destroys any chronological view completely.

So the prophecy begins with Jerusalem and the temple in ruins and that is where it leaves her.

In conclusion, there is absolutely no place in the 70 weeks for a "time of the Gentiles," a "rapture," a "tribulation," and a "revelation" as Pre-millennialist claim. The Pre-millennial view of Daniel 9:24-27 is absolutely false, and just another indication of those who wrest the scriptures in an attempt to prove their false doctrines.

In summary, I believe the 70 weeks or Seventy Sevens is not to be understood chronologically as pertaining to a literal 490 years ... that the 70 weeks prophecy is a revelation of the rebuilding of the Jewish commonwealth following the Babylonian captivity, until the coming of the promised Messiah who would fulfill the very purpose of the temple and holy city. The Messiah would be rejected by the Jews, hence bringing upon themselves their due punishment inflicted by God through Titus and the Roman army as they utterly destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D.. This is then a prophecy of God's FINAL decree concerning the Jewish people, their city, and temple.

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FOOTNOTES

1. LEUPOLD, Commentary on Daniel, p. 403
2. BARNES NOTES, Daniel Vol. II, p. 138
3. BULLER, Commentary on Daniel, College Press, pp. 342-343
4. TURNER, Premillennialism - True or False?, p. 298
5. SMITH, Old Testament History, p. 707
6. TURNER, *ibid*, p. 299
7. MCGUIGGAN, The Book of Daniel, p. 141
8. MCGUIGGAN, *ibid*, p. 141

9. WAYNE JACKSON, Daniel's Seventy Weeks, manuscript, p. 1
10. BARNES, *ibid*, p. 140
11. BARNES, *ibid*, p. 140
12. ADAM CLARKE, Commentary on the Holy Bible, p. 701
13. WINKLER, Difficult Texts of the Old Testament, p. 393
14. BUTLER, *ibid*, p. 343
15. TURNER, *ibid*, p. 300
16. MCGUIGGAN, *ibid*, p. 147
17. MCGUIGGAN, *ibid*, p. 147
18. BARNES, *ibid*, p. 141
19. BUTLER, *ibid*, p. 343
20. BARNES, *ibid*, p. 143
21. TURNER, *ibid*, p. 300
22. ADAM CLARKE, *ibid*, p. 701
23. BUTLER, *ibid*, p. 347
24. MCGUIGGAN, *ibid*, p. 152
25. HAROLD HOEHNER, A Chronological Table of the Apostolic Age
26. BARNES, *ibid*, p. 186
27. JOSEPHUS, Jewish Wars, b. VI, ch. VI, section 1
28. BARNES, *ibid*, p. 188

OFFENSES

by Wayne L. fussell

INTRODUCTION

We are dealing with a very sensitive subject. We will discuss the "weak" and the "strong." The "weak" involves one who is motivated by uninformed personal convictions. We all want to be classed among the "strong." Our practices and prohibitions are matters of faith - not matters of opinion!

When I started out to preach, many preachers opposed having a television in the home. We were accused by some of being "opinionated" - preaching our opinions. We bristled at such accusations. Now, most of us either have a television, or watch it. Were we "strong" or "weak" then? What are we now?

What is meant by "Give none offense" (I Cor 10:32) and "It is good neither to eat flesh, or to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." (Rom. 14:21)? Does it mean to hurt someone's feelings by these practices? Insult them? Do what they do not like? This is the usual, ordinary meaning attached to the terms "offend" or "offense."

Some practices of individuals and congregations are opposed on the grounds: "That offends me; therefore, you cannot do it." They mean, I do not approve of this practice, or I do not like this thing you are doing, and so, scripturally, you must refrain from it. Are we to abstain from practices that are matters of liberty simply because someone is opposed to it, or does not like it? To answer that question is the thrust of my subject.

In this lesson I will:

- (1) Define "offenses" scripturally.
- (2) Show examples of "offenses" in the Word of God.
- (3) Dwell on the matter of offending our brother, as taught in Romans 14; I Cor. 8; and I Cor. 10:23-33.
- (4) Draw some conclusions.
- (5) Make some practical applications to our time.

1. DEFINITION OF THE TERM

Someone has said that a subject is half argued when it is clearly stated, or defined. This is definitely true with this subject.

A. RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY

1. Offense: 1. Violation of law 4. Something that offends or displeases 5. The act of offending or displeasing 6. The feeling or resentful displeasure caused: to give offense 9. Injury, harm or hurt
2. Offend: 1. To irritate or vex the mind or feelings of, cause resentful displeasure in: "Even the mildest criticism offends her." 2. To affect (the sense, taste, etc.) disagreeably 3. Violate law 4. Hurt or cause pain 5. (In Biblical use) to cause to fall into sinful ways: Syn. provoke, annoy, chafe, nettle, affront, insult

B. We have learned that Webster and modern dictionaries do not always give the Bible definition of its terms. However, β under "offend" defines the Bible term correctly. Let us now examine the Greek words translated "offend" or "offense." But there are only two in the context of Romans 14 and I Cor. 8 and 10, that we wish to define at this time.

C. PROSKUMMA

1. Vine: an obstacle against which one may dash his foot (akin to prokopto, to stumble or cause to stumble) p. 129
2. Thayer: a stumbling-block, i.e. an obstacle in the way which if one strike his foot against he necessarily stumbles or falls; trop. that over which the soul stumbles, i.e. by which it is impelled to sin: I Cor. 8:9 ... to put a stumbling-block in one's way, i.e. trop. to furnish one an occasion for sinning, Rom. 14:13.
 - a. PROSKOPTO: to strike against ... to stumble (pp. 547, 548)

D. SKANDALON

1. Vine: originally was "the name of the part of a trap to which the bait is attached, hence, the trap or snare itself, as in Rom. 11:9, R.V., 'stumbling block' quoted from Psa. 69:22, and in Rev. 2:14, for Balæam's device was rather a trap for Israel than a stumbling block to them, and in Matt. 16:23, for in Peter's words the Lord perceived a snare laid for Him by Satan." "In N.T. skandalon is always used metaphorically, and ordinarily of anything that arouses prejudice, or becomes a hindrance to others, or causes them to fall by the way. Sometimes the hindrance is in itself good, and those stumbled by it are the wicked." (Hogg & Vine) p. 129
2. Thayer: a. prop. the movable stick or trigger ('trigger') of a trap, trap-stick; a trap, snare; any impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble or fall, [a stumbling-block, occasion of stumbling]: Lev. 19:14 ... b. Metaph. any person or thing by which one is ('entrapped') drawn into error or sin.

SKANDALIZO: prop. to put a stumbling block or impediment in the way, upon which another may trip and fall; to be a stumbling-block; in the N.T. always

metaph. [R.V. to cause or make to stumble, A.V. to offend (cause to offend)] a. to entice to sin ... (pp. 576, 577).

3. Robinson: SKANDALIZO: To make stumble; pass. to stumble ... to cause to fall, to bring to ruin ... 2. Causat. to cause to offend, to lead astray, to lead into sin.

4. Theological Dictionary Of The New Testament (Kittel):

SKANDALON: "To spring forward and back" "to slam to" "The stick in a trap" "the trap itself" "to catch in a snare" (Vol. 7, pp. 339, 340).

E. **Proskomma** and **skandalon** are very similar in meaning. Lenski attaches more strength to **skandalon**, calling it "deathtrap." Sometimes they are used almost interchangeably. **Proskomma** speaks of causing the stumble, while **skandalon** speaks of entrapping. In either, there is an enticing to sin. So, offend means to sin, or to cause to sin.

II. THE OFFENSE OF CHRIST

A. Did you know that Jesus offended people? Are you aware that He was an "offense" to many? Remember Vine's comment: "Sometimes the hindrance is in itself good, and those stumbled by it are the wicked." (p. 129).

B. Jesus is called a "Rock of Offense": Rom. 9:33, "As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." (cf. Isa. 28:16; 8:14)

1. Here is the use of both of our words. They stumbled over Jesus and were entrapped because of Him.

2. Peter explains what is meant in I Peter 2:8; "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which **stumble at the word, being disobedient ...**"

a. John 6:60-66: Here we find Jesus' disciples murmuring because of a "hard saying." Jesus asked, "Does this offend (skandalize) you?" That is, does this cause you to stumble or turn away from me? Verse 66 sums it up, "from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." The offense of Christ involved more than just hurt feelings - it meant disbelief, desertion and disobedience.

C. In Matt. 13:57 and Mark 6:3, the people asked "From whence hath this man these things ... wisdom ... mighty works ... Is not this the carpenter's son? ... and they were offended in/at him."

1. Kittel: "This cannot simply mean that they took offense at the irreconcilable contradiction between His origin and His work, which also carried with it an unmistakable claim. It means rather that on this account they refused to believe in him." (Vol. 7, p. 350).

2. Vincent: "They could not explain Him, so they rejected Him." (Vol. 1, p. 121).

3. Robertson: "were made to stumble in him, trapped like game by the skandalon because they could not explain him, having been so recently one of them." (Vol. 1, p. 306).
 4. Weymouth: "They turned against him"
 5. Moffatt: "They were repelled by him."
- D. Matt. 15:12, "Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?" Kittel: "more than just 'feeling hurt'" (p. 350). "Offense at His message also becomes offense at Jesus Himself and turning from Him in unbelief." (p. 351).
- E. Matt. 26:31, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night..." v. 33 - Peter - "never be offended" (caused to stumble). How was Peter "offended?" He denied the Lord. More than feelings, likes and dislikes are involved in the "offense of Christ."

III. PREACHING OF THE CROSS - AN OFFENSE

- A. I Cor. 1:23, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." Robertson: "Papyri examples mean trap or snare which here tripped the Jews who wanted a conquering Messiah with a world empire, not a condemned and crucified one (Matt. 27:42; Luke 24:21)." (Vol. 4, p. 79, "Word Pictures")
- B. Gal. 5:11, "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the **offense of the cross** ceased." The preaching of the cross involved, among other things, the abolition of the law of Moses. The Jews wanted to hang onto that law. If Paul preached circumcision, he upheld the law, and the cross would no longer be a snare for them.
- C. The preaching of the cross had to continue - offense or not. Again, the term "offense" carries the idea of one stumbling or sinning.

IV. SIN CALLED "OFFENSE"

- A. Word for **sin** (hamartia) translated "offense" (II Cor. 11:7)
- B. Word for **trespass** (pareptoma - a falling aside or away) is also translated "offense" (Rom. 4:25; 5:15,16,17,18,20).
- C. James 2:10, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." "Offend" is from "ptaio," which means "to stumble, stagger, fall; to make a false step; met. to err, offend, transgress." (Anal. Greek Lexicon Revised Edition, p. 355).
- D. Proscopto: Acts 24:16, "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of **offense toward God**, and toward man." Paul did not want to sin against man or God.
- E. Skandala: Rom. 16:17, "Now I beseech you, brethren mark them which cause divisions

and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." The "offenses" here were traps of false teaching. Some put it "occasions of falling."

1. Matt. 13:41, "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire ..." The offenders are sinners.

2. Matt. 5:29, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from ..." That is, if your eye causes.. you to sin.

F. I hope that we have established the fact that in the scriptures to offend is to sin or cause others to sin.

V. OFFENDING MY BROTHER

A. Luke 17:1,2: "Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offenses will come: but woe unto him through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." (Mark 9:42 adds "that believe in me") (See also Matt. 18:6). To cause a young Christian to stumble is the worst type sin. Kittel: "the only thing more terrible than being drowned with a millstone about one's neck is damnation at the last judgment. The punishment fits the offense, skandalizein means 'to cause loss of faith,' i.e., 'to rob of eternal salvation.'" (p. 351).

B. Romans 14 (With references to I Cor. 8 and 10:23-33)

1. The problems at Corinth and Rome were somewhat different, but the solution offered by Paul in both cases is the same.

a. I Cor. 8 and 10: The problem or question is clearly stated. It had to do with "meat sacrificed to idols." Meat used in idol worship was sold in the "shambles" or market place. Some Christians could buy and eat this meat with no compunction of conscience, for they knew that the "idol is nothing." Others could not eat it without consciousness of the idol, and their "weak consciences" condemned them.

b. Romans 14:

(1) The problem here also had to do with meat. Probably it was meat that was considered by the Jews as "unclean," according to Old Testament law. It could also include meat sacrificed to idols. The observance of certain days which the Jews had practiced in former times was also mentioned. The drinking of wine is added in verse 21 as one of the things Paul would abstain from if it caused his brother to offend.

(2) The "strong" could eat the meat with clear conscience. They knew the days were not bound in the Christian age. But those "weak in the faith" were so afraid the meat would be wrong that they had become vegetarians. They felt that if the days should have been observed before they became Christians, then they should be observed now.

2. In both cases, something from the past could not be overcome. Their experiences in Judaism and Paganism were affecting their Christian experience. A collision of views between the "meat eaters" and the "non-meat eaters" was causing offense to the weak and problems in the church. Paul takes the position of the "strong," but also sides with the "weak." Now, let us study Romans 14, using I Cor. 8 and 10 as added references.

VI. ROMANS 14

A. VERSE 1:

1. "Weak in the faith"

- a. Lenski: "Here 'the faith' might mean 'his faith,' but we attain a more adequate sense when we understand it is a reference to the objective Christian faith. It is in the apprehension of what Christian doctrine involves in regard to food, observance of days, etc., that the weakness here referred to consists and not in the small degree of strength of confidence in the heart." (Commentary on Romans, pp. 813, 814).
 - b. Faith in the context of Romans 14 speaks of personal faith, convictions, or opinions.
 - c. Wuest: Refusal to eat meat "in the estimation of Paul were scruples, the product of an inadequate understanding of God's word and an oversensitized conscience which was of course relatively unenlightened." (Romans, p. 231).
 - d. "Weak in the faith" is equivalent to: "not in every man that knowledge" (I Cor. 8:7), "for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled." Those "weak in the faith" had personal convictions which were not supported by the Word of God.
2. "Receive ye": "Ye" who? The strong (Romans 15:1) who were able to eat the meat, etc., with clear conscience. The fellowship should not be broken over matters of indifference or opinion.
 3. "But not to doubtful disputations": Coffman: "The weak brother should be received, but in such a way as not to make his petty scruples the rule of the congregation, and not for the purpose of disputing with him concerning those scruples." (Romans, p. 451).

B. VERSES 2 & 3:

1. Paul describes the strong as one that believes he can eat all things. The weak is so afraid he will eat the wrong meat that he eats only herbs.
2. Advice to the strong: "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not." To despise is "to treat as nothing and so with contempt" (Wuest, p. 231). This is

the tendency of the strong to treat with contempt the opinionated objections and practices of the weak. We must be careful about our treatment of our weak brother.

3. Advice to the weak: "not to judge." The weak must not judge, criticize or condemn his brother who exercises his liberties.

a. Vincent: "Judgment is assigned to the weak brother, contempt to the stronger. Censoriousness is the peculiar error of the ascetic, contemptuousness, of the liberal. A distinguished minister once remarked, 'The weak brother is the biggest bully in the universe.' Both extremes are allied to spiritual pride." (Vol. 3, p. 167).

b. Sometimes churches are run by the whims of the weak. "If I don't like it, you cannot do it."

C. VERSE 4:

1. A sharp rebuke is given to the weak.

2. Wuest (Quotes Denney): "The sharpness of this rebuke shows that Paul, with all his love and consideration for the weak, was alive to the possibility of a tyranny of the weak, and repressed it in its beginnings. It is easy to lapse from scrupulousness about one's own conduct into Phariseeism about that of others." (Romans, p. 232). We must keep before our minds that there is a responsibility placed on the brother who objects to certain practices because of personal opinions.

3. The point made is that the Lord is our Master. To Him we owe allegiance. We are amenable only to Him as Master. Paul is appealing to the weak brother to not set in judgment on the Lord's servant.

D. VERSES 5 & 6:

1. Some Jews who had observed certain holy days under Judaism still observed those days, and thought others should do likewise. The Gentile Christians and other enlightened Jews considered one day the same as another. Those days belonged to the Old Testament law.

2. Paul held it as a matter of indifference. As long as they did not bind the observance of those days upon others (Gal. 4:10,11), they could observe or not observe them. He said the same in I Cor. 8:8, "But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse." So, it was neutral to Paul - neither right or wrong in the sight of God.

E. VERSES 7 - 12:

These verses teach that since Jesus is our Lord and some day will be our Judge, the one with certain convictions about some things should not set in judgment and condemn those who act otherwise, and that the strong brother should not "set at naught," or

despise, his brother who holds these unsupported beliefs.

F. VERSE 13:

1. Up to this point, Paul has labored to "head off" the weak brother with his objections to the liberties of the strong. Now he calls upon the strong to act wisely and with love toward the weak, even if it means giving up some liberty.
2. "Stumbling block or occasion of falling"
 - a. Proskomma and skandalon - The strong must not use his liberty in such a way as to cause his weaker brother to sin or be lost.
 - b. I Cor. 8:9, "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak."

G. VERSE 14:

1. "I Know": Paul knew by inspiration that no meat of itself was unclean (ceremonially, as under the law). Again, he takes the position of the strong. In I Cor. 8:4, he said, "we know" (absolute, complete knowledge) "that an idol is nothing." Paul had no scruples about meats, drinks, and days.
2. "But to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean." He now turns his attention to the weak brother. To him it would be wrong to eat the unclean meat, although the sin is only in his mind.

H. VERSE 15:

1. "Grieved"
 - a. Does he mean if someone is just unhappy with your practice? Or does not like it? "Grieved" is much stronger than that in this context.
 - b. Whiteside says it well:

The connection shows clearly that the warning against doing anything whereby a brother is grieved means more than simply a warning against anything to hurt his feelings; for the next sentence says, "Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died," that is, do not destroy him as a Christian. You do not destroy a Christian by violating his prejudices or notions. "Is grieved" - is brought to grief. No one should, by eating meat, bring his brother to grief, that is, destroy him as a brother ... A man's freedom in Christ should not therefore be so used as to lead a brother into sin, and thereby destroy one for whom Christ died. (Romans, pp. 272, 273).

- c. I Cor. 8:11,12: "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ." To grieve means to destroy our brother, cause him to perish, and wound his conscience. More than

feelings are involved.

I. VERSES 16 - 19:

In these verses, the strong brother or sister, is admonished to watch their influence, to dwell upon the weightier matters of the kingdom and pursue the course which will make for peace in the church.

J. VERSE 20:

1. "Work of God": A Christian is a work of God. The Church is a work of God. Do nothing that would destroy a Christian or tear down the Church.

2. "Eat with offense"

a. Thayer: "so as to be an offense."

b. Whiteside: "To eat with offense was to eat certain meat under circumstances that would lead a weaker person to eat against his convictions. A Christian stumbles, or sins, when he violates his convictions; and it is evil for any one to lead a person to go against his convictions, no matter how innocent the act within itself may be." (Romans, p. 275).

K. VERSE 21:

1. The whole subject is summed up in this one sentence. Paul says, "It is good" or "It is right" (Berry), not to do anything that will cause my brother to sin, or be lost, or become weak in other areas of their Christian life.

2. Lard: "The question is not, what is the nature of the act in itself, but does it injure another. If so, we must abstain from it." (Romans, p. 428).

3. Lenski: "With regard to these, our liberty does not consist in this (as so many think), that each of us is free to do just as he personally pleases. No, being entirely free to do or not to do, to use or not to use, each, of course, makes a choice, but in doing so looks to his brethren, to what will benefit them most, say in promoting peace and harmony and especially in aiding to building up each other. Liberty is precious, but it carries its responsibilities. Like all good and precious things it must be used with good sense and good purpose; these two constitute love or agape." (Romans, p. 846).

4. Notice I Cor. 8:13, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

a. Take note of Paul's conditions: "If" meat makes his brother to offend - or to sin. He did not say, if it displeases my brother. Or, if my brother does not like it. But, if it causes him to sin or be lost, I will abstain as long as necessary.

b. Lenski: "Did Paul eat only vegetables, never drink wine, and extend this to

all other possible adiaphora? ... Paul kept his balance ... The orists are to be understood exactly: eating at **one time**, in a given case, where offense would be caused; permanent abstinence is not discussed." (p. 849). Paul abstained for the good of his brethren when the circumstances demanded it.

- c. Lenski, again: "When I abstain, the weak brother must know that I do so only because I am prompted by love, only for his sake, only because his weakness is weakness and not strength, only because I would give him time and help to grow strong." (ibid, p. 850). This is not a hypocritical action, but one that is open and known to our brother.

L. VERSE 22:

"Have it (faith) to thyself": He is not speaking of the faith of the Gospel, but an enlightened personal faith or conviction. The faith of the Gospel we must share with all. Our personal convictions concerning certain liberties can be kept to oneself and God. Our fullest freedom must be balanced with the fullest sense of responsibility. Paul is saying to exercise your liberty only in those situations which will not injure your brother.

M. VERSE 23:

- 1. "Doubteth - damned if he eat": Thinking a thing is right does not make it right, but thinking a thing wrong might make it wrong. If you engage in a practice about which you have doubts, you condemn yourself. It is "not of faith," that is, you are not fully convinced that it is right to do so.
- 2. **"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin":**
 - a. Again, this is personal faith, not the faith of the Gospel. It is a matter of opinion. But even so, if you violate that conviction, you also violate God's law - it is sin.
 - b. Whiteside's Definition of Opinion: "Opinion, in common parlance, is an idea or notion arrived at by a deduction from facts or evidence not sufficient to produce a decided conviction or judgment. More evidence might upset the opinion, or it might develop it into faith." (Doctrinal Discourses, p. 99). Many times that which we call faith is really only opinion. The matters under consideration in this chapter are matters of opinion.

VII. SOME CONCLUSIONS

- A. To offend mean, therefore, to sin or to cause someone else to sin. Some of the equivalent words and phrases used by Paul are: Cause to stumble, grieve, make weak, wound weak conscience, cause to perish, destroy, become a stumbling block, make my brother to offend, and destroy the work of God. The word is never used to indicate a simple displeasure or disliking of a practice. It goes much deeper.
- B. The weak brother is one who is uninformed scripturally about certain practices, about

which he has personal convictions that are not backed by conclusive scriptural proof. He is motivated by opinion and not faith. He has not "this knowledge."

- C. The strong brother is one motivated by faith founded on a full knowledge of the word of God. He exercises his liberties in good conscience.
- D. Responsibility of the weak to the strong: In matters of liberty, he must not judge, criticize, condemn his stronger brother. Consider this: If the strong brother is required to have his personal convictions to himself when they might cause his brother to sin, why would it not also be the duty of the weaker brother to keep his opinions to himself?
- E. Responsibility of the strong toward the weak: He must not set him at naught, despise, hold him in contempt, because of his unfounded opinions. Rather, he must "receive" him, scruples and all, but not to argue over his opinions. If the situation should demand it, he must forego his liberty, lest he cause his brother to sin or be lost. His abstinence, of course, is conditional - "If" it makes his brother to offend or sin. And, it is not necessarily permanent. The circumstances determine the action.

VIII. MODERN DAY DISAGREEMENTS

- A. I shall now apply the principles we have learned to issues of our own time. I am going to give a list of things over which we disagree in the Church today. Some of these you might consider matters of faith, while someone else deems the same things matters of opinion. I am not here to argue any one of these issues. In fact, I will not in this forum. They are presented to show the multiplicity of differences among us which might be regulated by Paul's instructions on "offenses."

- B. In The Realm Of Recreation:

One brother: "Anything for pleasure is wrong" (He was sincere and consistent.)

Ball Games

Bowling

Skating

Participation in school sports

Listening to secular music

Television - Radio

Movies

- C. Personal Practices:

Women's hair must hang down from the head (Not be balled up).

Beards on men

Women wearing pants

Length of woman's dress (to be modest)

Wearing of jewelry

Wearing of gold

Women wearing make-up

Smoking, chewing, dipping

Drinking coffee and tea

Men wearing chains about the neck

Kids going to college
Attending restaurants which serve alcohol
Men with hair over the ears
Fishing and other recreation, on Sunday at times other than the hour of worship
Playing an instrument with gospel songs in the home
Christmas
Easter
Halloween
Marrying out of the Church
Preachers performing wedding for one marrying out of the Church
Preachers performing weddings for sinners
Preachers performing wedding for one who has the exception
Having a piano in the home
Presence of playing cards or dice in the home
Preachers driving fine cars
Women carrying on a private study with other women
Home studies in general
Attendance on Sunday and Wednesday evening (Whether bound or not)
Differences in grey areas of the marriage question
Women working out of the home

D. Church Related Activities

Eating in Church building
Buying Church buildings, songbooks, etc., with Church money
Invitation song
Taking the collection during worship service (Some believe unscriptural)
Passing basket for contribution
Changing the traditional order of items in worship
Set order of worship
Debates
Youth meetings
Announcing activities (such as dinners, showers, etc.) in the assembly
Attendance board
Having a theme for a gospel meeting
Planning sermons for a gospel meeting in advance
Closing a singing with a prayer
Using unbaptized youth in such a singing
Closing the Sunday morning worship with a song
Questions and discussion in the assembly
Saying that the bread and fruit of the vine "represent" the body and blood
Use of filmstrips and overhead projectors in teaching the assembly
Using outlines or literature in teaching the assembly
Quoting translations other than the King James Version
Organizing for Church work
Kitchens in the Church building for dinners, etc.
Preachers working with a congregation over an extended period
Women "signing" for the deaf in the assembly
Attending services of other churches different from ours
Must pray on the knees in the assembly
"Calling" a preacher for a gospel meeting

- E. You could probably add many to this list. These are issues that have been raised during my career as a preacher.

IX. HOW DEAL WITH SUCH ISSUES

- A. If you are the strong brother or sister:

1. First, be motivated by love (Rom. 14:15, "walk ... charitably"). Coffman: "The master strategy for dealing with weak brethren is that of containing the situation in love and forbearance, wherever possible." (Romans, p. 454). The love of Christ should always constrain us in our dealings with anyone.
2. Ask: "Will this injure my brother?" "Will it cause him to stumble, perish or sin?" Sound judgment and wisdom from above must characterize this process of reasoning. We must not just be motivated by what pleases us.
3. Then, either proceed or abstain.
4. If you abstain from enjoying your liberty, let your brother know that you are doing it for him and because you love him. Do not treat him with contempt.

- B. If you are the weak brother (or, if you have convictions about certain things for which you have no real concrete evidence from the Word.)

1. Refrain from judging, criticizing, censuring or condemning one who can do some things you cannot conscientiously do.
2. Give space to your brother or sister. Exercise tolerance and mercy.
3. Hold your conviction as something purely personal. Tell your more liberal brother, "I cannot do it, but I will not condemn you for doing so."

- C. Some Examples:

1. We had a brother in the Church in Shreveport many years ago who believed that it is wrong to use the Church money to build Church buildings, buy songbooks, or do anything besides helping the poor and supporting preachers. He would express his convictions on these matters in business meetings where such things were discussed, and then tell the brethren, "If you go ahead and do it, it will be on your conscience, not mine." Then he would allow us to proceed without further objection. I am thankful for that attitude. It allowed us to proceed in areas where we might have been stymied.
2. Here and there we have brethren who hold certain views on the marriage question. Their convictions will not allow them to personally call on some brethren whom they call in question. But they will allow others whose consciences permit to use those brethren. Some call this "compromise." I call it wisdom and "sweet reasonableness." Such a attitude has made it possible for leaders with differences on this and others issues to work together in peace. And they do so without disavowing their own convictions.

CONCLUSION

We must not run roughshod over the consciences of our brethren who hold personal convictions which are very real and dear to them. Much love and godly wisdom must be exercised in the treatment of those who differ over non-essential matters - matters of opinion.

But we must not allow the weak brother to run the Church and force his opinions on everyone. He has instructions from the Lord, as well as the strong. He must not set in judgment and condemn others.

Ron Courter wrote: "Discussions in the area of offense seem to so often take upon them a circular course of argument. One states such and such offends me - therefore, you all must stop such - now when carried to a logical end in this context of reasoning, the weakest member of the Lord's body soon becomes the strongest in decision making ... Indeed weak members have a greater role to play in the growth of the body than many realize, but it is not fulfilled by simply deciding what shall be done by a mere cry of offense without the Bible concept of offense being totally balanced." (From a personal letter.)

There is a problem. The weak does not think he is weak. Sometimes he is the oldest member of the Church. In this case, much care must be taken in dealing with such a brother.

I see two dangers: (1) Those who do not care what others think; and (2) Those who want to control the conduct of others because of what they think.

What is the ultimate concern? The ultimate concern of all this discussion is the salvation of souls and the edification of the Church.

THE CHILDREN'S CHURCH ITS IMPLICATIONS

by Smith Bibens

INTRODUCTION

Within the last 100 years a new innovation has appeared on the American religious landscape. Within the last 30 years we have seen the explosive growth of this innovation both in the denominations and among liberal churches of Christ. This innovation is known mostly as "Children's Church," although it goes by a number of appellations. It is the purpose of this study to examine this innovation and analyze some of the implications of this phenomenon. We do this in obedience to the command, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good" (I Thess. 5:21).

I believe that when the facts are weighed, and the innovation is tested by the "law and the testimony," the "Children's Church" will be proven to be an objectionable innovation. It is objectionable because it is unscriptural in its constitution, and it is objectionable because it is adverse in its affects. It is the fruit of an evil tree, and it has the capacity to bear more evil fruit; as indeed it already has. Now it is one thing to condemn a practice; and quite another to bring out proof, in this case **scriptural proof**, to support one's condemnation. I am confident that we shall obtain such proof.

We now move to a statement of the aims of this study - an outline or preview of what we wish to present.

1. To chronicle the history of this innovation (so far as it is discernible), and some of the opposition it has engendered.
2. Notice the rationale of the proponents of this innovation.
3. Consider the implications of this innovation, with particular reference to the liberal churches of Christ. In doing so we shall answer the rationale of the proponents of Children's Church. Under this heading we shall consider the scriptural evidence against this innovation.
4. We will conclude with some admonitions for our benefit.

It is not the sole aim of this study to expose the errors associated with this innovation. This study is intended to be more than an indictment of an unscriptural innovation. The reason is simple: Children's Church is an attempt, albeit as unscriptural and unsound one, to meet a common need; a need we share in our brotherhood. It is the need to rear our children in the

nurture and admonition of the Lord; to inculcate in them the spiritual attitudes that will help them as they mature, to choose life in Christ, and to worship God acceptably within the framework of the blood-bought body of Christ: the Church. Of all the responsibilities God has vouchsafed us; of all the blessings God has entrusted to our stewardship, surely the souls of our children are among the greatest. "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward" (Psalm 127:3). So, lest anyone get the idea that this study is just for the purpose of lashing the denominations and our errant brethren, I must say that we shall conclude this study with some pertinent observations and admonitions.

THE HISTORY OF THE CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Today, among many denominational churches, Disciples of Christ congregations, and liberal churches of Christ, you will find a worship service especially for youth and children, which is conducted simultaneous with the adult assembly for worship. Different churches call this worship service by different names: Children's Church; Youth Worship; Junior Church, etc. Some churches have what they call **Graded Worship Service**, meaning that they have several worship services, all simultaneous, and departmentalized according to age. Most churches with any sizeable number of children, including many liberal churches of Christ, have gone this route. Among the liberal, digressive churches of Christ the moniker **Children's Bible Hour** is preferred. Just as they have "baptized" Sunday School by calling it "Bible Classes," so have they done with Children's Church.

Unlike the Sunday School innovation, the founding of which is usually attributed to Robert Raikes in 1780 (**World Book Encyclopedia**, Vol. 17, p. 790), the actual beginning of Children's Church is harder to pinpoint. No one person is credited with the start of this innovation. In the 1800's many denominational churches had a special service for children and youth on Sunday afternoon or evening. This service often preceded the regular Sunday evening service, or was conducted at the same time. In some other churches the Sunday morning service included a "children's sermon," after which the children were dismissed to Sunday School. These practices are still current in some quarters.

It is doubtful that Children's Church is more than 100 years old. Among the sources consulted for this study, several have confessed ignorance of the origins of this innovation, and **none** have indicated an existence longer than that just stated. In fact, virtually all of the sources present Children's Church as an idea of recent vintage. The body of literature on Children's Church is not nearly as extensive or as comprehensive as that for Sunday School. This is due to its recent invention, and also to the fact that Children's Church **has not been widely practiced** until the last thirty years. (The reason for this shall be made clear as we proceed).

The earliest work I found on this innovation is a book entitled **The Junior Church**, by Homer J. Councilor (New York: The Century Co., 1928). Mr. Councilor was a Baptist, and the head of the Christian Education department in a large Baptist church in Washington, D.C. The book is essentially a promotion of the Children's Church innovation and a "how-to" guide for those who wanted to start one of their own. In the preface (p. viii) the author says, ". . . constantly increasing numbers of delegations from all denominations . . . are visiting our Junior Church for investigation, inspection, and conference." The author took credit for the installation of the innovation in his church, and seemed to take great pride in his innovation.

Interestingly enough, the Disciples of Christ denomination (Christian Church) was an early pioneer in the development of this invention. In the **Christian Standard**, July 11, 1914, page 5, there appears a short article entitled "The Junior Congregation." Mr. Z. E. Bates reports: "In our state convention in Bowling Green, Ohio, the statement was made that we have, among other departments of church work, a 'Junior congregation.'" He goes on to state, "This is not an experiment with us, but a tried-out work which we commend to others as 'efficiency work.'" (Note: the term "efficiency work" indicates that these folks believed the Children's Church was an expedient). He goes on in the article to describe what the Junior congregation was and some of the "advantages" of such a congregation. Apparently, the suggestion of a Junior congregation gained wide acceptance among the Disciples' congregations. On the front page of the September 17, 1932 issue of the **Christian Standard** there appears an article entitled "A Little Folks 'New Testament Church.'" The article by R. R. Yelderman reports on a Children's Church in the first Christian Church of Ada, Oklahoma. The subtitle reads: "They have their 'elders' and 'deacons' and their own minister! They observe the Lord's Supper? They make their gifts! Best of all they do genuine personal work!" With effusive praise, Mr. Yelderman paints the picture in the most glowing terms possible. He was quite an enthusiast for this innovation. He further informs that the minister's wife was the minister of the Junior congregation! He says, "Mrs. Smyth, being an ordained Christian minister, volunteered her services. The first service was carefully planned, so that it would function exactly as an adult church. Mrs. Smyth preached the sermon, extended the invitation, and a score or more of boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 12 presented themselves as believers in Christ, and ready to obey the Lord in baptism." The article continues: "This was done for several Sundays. Having now a nucleus with which to begin, a regular 'church board' was organized. Certain ones of the older and more spiritual boys were chosen as elders. Others were selected as deacons. This 'official board' issued Sister Smyth a 'call' to become the minister of their church." The last portion of the article consists of a tribute by the writer to Mrs. Smyth. "Sister Smyth, in Christ's name we bless you. You are indeed a preacher of righteousness." To the credit of some, there was a hail of protest when this article appeared. That was then followed by a counter-attack by some more progressive spirits. More on this later.

It was not until the 1950's that Children's Church's became a common sight upon the denominational landscape, although many of the larger, inner-city and suburban congregations had maintained them long before. In the early 1970's liberal churches of Christ began to adopt this innovation. The new-found popularity of Children's Church, among both denominational and liberal churches of Christ congregations, was directly attributable to the inception of another innovation that came in vogue and grew up during the same period. That innovation was the **Bus Ministry**. The impetus of the Bus Ministry, of course, was the desire to increase Sunday School attendance, and make contacts in the community through the "unchurched" children that would come. Employing a system of "reward motivation" the Bus Ministry was highly successful - so much so that it created a problem. Violet C. Carlson, writing about Children's Church in **The Christian Educator's File**, page 51, says: "It aids in taking care of the discipline problem where many children stay for morning worship waiting for the bus." The Bus Ministry brought hordes of kids to Sunday School who were from homes where the parents did not attend and/or were not interested in religion or the services of the church. These kids had **no training** in behaving in church worship services. Another proponent of Children's Church says: "The children have a tendency to run around during services, especially if their parents do not attend; first, they go to the bathroom, then go get a drink, and make a couple more trips with a friend. Also, the Children's Church gives the children who do not have parents that attend the worship services a sense of belonging." (Joyce Bennett, **Children's Church**, unpublished thesis, Baptist Bible College, 5/65).

Following the footsteps of the denominations, those liberal churches of Christ which adopted the Bus Ministry, soon found they had a similar problem on their hands. This is exactly what happened at the Garnett Road Church of Christ in Tulsa, Ok. In the early 1970's they began a program of busing kids to the building for Bible Classes. Jerry D. Cox, the Youth Minister at the time, wrote an article in **Christian Bible Teacher** (December 1975) describing the problem and their solution. In the article, entitled "Worship Is For Children," he says: "As is so often the case, the crisis situation will bring the leadership to grips with an ever present problem. The problem accentuated for us was that of children not benefiting to the utmost from the worship service. Our crisis was a growing number of children, brought in by our buses, who had no parental supervision during worship. The solution for the Garnett Road Church of Christ was a worship solely for the youngsters of the congregation. We were able in that way to give the supervision needed to all the children and to provide a meaningful worship experience for everyone." Later in the article he says: "We are now busing in nearly 600 children each Sunday. Without the separate worship services for children, we would have a chaotic, if not impossible situation . . . We began in May of 1974, and have learned much by doing, overcoming mistakes by trying again." As described in the article, this particular Children's Church relies heavily on Sesame Street puppets, films, and other entertaining activities in the children's worship service.

Since the 1970's, "Children's Bible Hour" has gained wide acceptance among liberal churches of Christ. This is not to say that the practice is universal. There are those in the ranks of the liberal churches who have opposed this innovation. However, they argue against this innovation from a position of weakness. They have already accepted individual cups, Bible Classes, institutionalism, and other innovations that are in violation of Biblical authority. Their more progressive opponents know this, and it is used as ammunition against them in argument on this issue.

OPPOSITION TO THE CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Like virtually every other innovation that has arisen to disturb the peace in religion, this invention has engendered its share of strife. This is not limited to the churches of Christ. Many among the denominations have opposed it, and continue to do so. At one time there was vociferous opposition to Children's Church in the Disciples of Christ.

From my study I found that Baptist, Evangelical, Fundamentalist and Pentecostal elements of the American religious scene are most enthusiastic for this innovation. It was these groups of course that really advanced the use of the Bus Ministry as an evangelistic tool. The strongest opposition to Children's Church is centered in the Presbyterian Church and in the Reformed Church. These denominations are Calvinistic in their theology, therefore they have a tradition of teaching that children belong in "the covenant community."

In **Moody Monthly** (February 1976) there appeared two articles, one "pro" and one "con" on this issue. A Baptist wrote the "pro" article ("In Children's Church," Robert Clark). The article against this innovation was written by Jerome De Jong, a minister in the Reformed Church. Mr. De Jong stated his position clearly:

Adherents claim Children's Church helps children worship at their own level of understanding. They feel that children don't comprehend what goes on in senior church. I disagree . . . Whenever God called the people to a solemn assembly in the Old Testament, He includes the children and infants (Joel 2:16). ("In The Sanctuary,"

In my research I came upon other material by denominationalists that was against Children's Church. However, their opposition to this innovation is primarily on the grounds they feel it is untraditional, not because they believe that it is unscriptural.

The Disciples of Christ experienced some opposition to this innovation as well. About three months after the appearance of the article on the "Little Folks' Church," there appeared a number of letters to the editor of the **Christian Standard** under the title "These Brethren Object to the 'Little Folks' New Testament Church" (**Christian Standard**, December 10, 1932). One writer, Henry G. Davis of Macon, Ohio reminded the editors and readers of the teaching in the New Testament concerning the church, and made the point that the "Little Folks' Church" was a violation of that teaching. Another writer simply opened his letter with a question: "Is there no longer a New Testament in the **Standard** office?" (Letter of E. L. Davison, Pratt, Kansas).

Turning our attention to the liberal element of the digressive churches of Christ, a number of brethren have stood opposed to the innovation in preaching and in print, including some of the "giants" among them. In the **Gospel Advocate** "Questions and Answers" column of February 15, 1979, a question on Children's Church appeared. The question was: "Is it scriptural to conduct 'Children's Church' at the same time as the regular worship hour?" Bro. Guy N. Woods answered the letter:

If by Children's Church is meant an arrangement set up permanently to segregate the younger from the older and to duplicate the services, the answer is no. Such a procedure is without divine sanction; for there is neither precept nor example in the scriptures. It is a long step toward the situation prevailing in some Christian churches where the 'Junior Church' has junior elders and deacons and where the Lord's Supper is observed. It violates the divine edict of the church together in 'one place,' and the motivation is convenience.

Bro. Gus Nichols made his feelings clear on the matter in the 1975 **Freed-Hardeman Lectures**:

Don't tolerate the idea of having two churches, one for the youth and one for the aged people (I Cor. 1:10).

Various writers in **Firm Foundation** and **Contending for the Faith** have written against this innovation, although the **Firm Foundation** paper has printed several articles by proponents of Children's Church, and seems to ally itself with the latter.

THE RATIONALE OF THE PROPONENTS OF CHILDREN'S CHURCH

As pointed out earlier, the main impetus for the growth of this innovation over the last 30 years has been the Bus Ministry. The resulting problems of overcrowding and undisciplined behavior commended the Children's Church concept to some leaders' minds as a solution. In their defense of this innovation, most proponents attempt to appeal to "higher" motives as well.

In August of 1979 the North Geraldine church of Christ in Oklahoma City began a "Children's Bible Hour." In a bulletin from that congregation, the **Geraldine Voice** (quoted in **Truth Magazine**, 9/27/79), there appeared an article explaining the "Children's Bible Hour" and

why the elders decided to adopt it. Four main reasons were set forth:

- A. The noise from the bus riders in the auditorium is distracting to members and visitors.
- B. It is becoming increasingly difficult for bus workers and other adults sitting with large groups of bus children to worship.
- C. Some children have their parents pick them up after Bible Class. When they say, "I don't like to come to church on Sunday because we have to sit so long in the auditorium," does that cause their parents to develop a negative attitude toward the church? (Note: If their parents are not bringing them to church, I would say they already had a bad attitude about church-SHB).
- D. We want our bus riders to learn as much as they can about Jesus. Imagine yourself in an oversized pew and all you can see is the back of the pew in front of you. A man stands up and starts preaching in a foreign language. How much would you learn? Our bus kids learn so much more in Children's Bible Hour.

Another church of Christ writer, Charles Sattenfield in **Fire Foundation** (April 26, 1977) approaches the defense of the innovation by affirming the necessity of teaching children. In his article, "Why Have A Children's Bible Hour?" He provides ". . . some reasons why the Children's Bible Hour has proved so profitable in teaching children." His reasons are as follows:

1. Children need to learn to worship God at a level they can understand.
2. Children do not think like adults.
3. Children's attention span is low.
4. Many unchurched children don't know how to behave.

He concludes his article with the statement: "It (Children's Bible Hour-SHB) is so valuable that every church should consider having one whether they have a bus ministry or not."

It is plain to see that there are really two sets of rationale for the Children's Church. First, there is the **real reason**; the cause, if you please. Children's Church was fostered by a desire to return the worship of the congregations to a proper level of reverence and decorum; which had been destroyed by mobs of bus riders. Secondly, there is the **justification** or **rationalization** for Children's Church. When you wade through all the polemics, the list of reasons for Children's Church, as offered by its proponents, looks something like this:

1. Children's Church is an expedient to educate children for worship. Children cannot get anything out of an adult worship service.
2. It aids the spiritual worship of the adults by removing distracting behavior from the adult assembly.
3. Jesus taught that we are to be concerned about children.

4. The Bible teaches that we are to train and instruct our children. This includes "the worship." The Children's Church or Children's Bible Hour simply aids parental instruction.

There are a couple of other very revealing "defenses" of Children's Church employed by the liberal church of Christ. We shall presently notice these as we turn to a consideration of the implication of the Children's Church innovation.

IMPLICATION OF CHILDREN'S CHURCH

What is the meaning of Children's Church? What does the rise of this innovation tell us about the denominations? About the Christian Church denomination? About the liberal churches of Christ? What is its significance on today's religious landscape? What does the adoption of this innovation by the liberal churches of Christ portend for their future? The implications of Children's Church may be variously stated, but I have chosen to consider four:

1. The practice of Children's Church implies (indicates) a loss of respect for Biblical Authority that is ongoing and increasing.
2. Children's Church implies (portends or signifies) an ongoing contribution to the breakdown of parental responsibility. It usurps the responsibility of the parents - and often with their complicity. Many have surrendered or abdicated their responsibility to the church.
3. Children's Church implies a fundamental misconception about worship. It also fosters wrong attitudes in children about worship. As practiced, Children's Church is in fact a debasement of worship.
4. As regards the churches of Christ that have adopted it, Children's Church is evidence of their ongoing drift into denominationalism.

A Loss Of Respect For Biblical Authority

The arguments employed to defend Children's Church betray the fact that the liberal churches of Christ have surrendered the principle - "We speak where the Bible speaks, and we are silent where the Bible is silent." Those within their own ranks who oppose Children's Church acknowledge this. Jerry G. Hurt in an article entitled: "My Answer to Richard Pectol's Youth Worship" (**Contending For The Faith**), says "I notice that the argument employed by those brethren who advocate youth worship is the same argument that is used by the Christian Church denomination in defense of instrumental music in worship. In fact, it is the 'ends justifies the means' philosophy that caused their departure from the truth in the 1800's."

When the storm of protest broke over the article in the **Christian Standard** on the "Little Folks' New Testament Church," a couple of letters in support of the Children's Church were published by the editors. (The editors had already indicated their support for the Children's Church in an editorial comment - **Christian Standard**, Dec. 10, 1932.) These supportive letters really exemplified the type of reasoning that was at work. One letter, from a woman Sunday School supervisor said: "I . . . heartily recommend anyone, or any new method, that will make the real church of Christ plain to the young" (Jan. 21, 1933). The writer of this letter, Mrs

R. S. Waring, concluded her letter by saying, "Is there any authority for us to have the Bible School for children on the Lord's Day?" Her point was, since there is no scripture for our practice of Sunday School, why demand any for Children's Church?

In another letter, Mr. M. B. Miller, the First District Evangelist for Tennessee, rushed to the defense of this innovation. "It is a well known fact that in former times, before the advent of the Junior Church plea, most of the children, and even young people, have been leaving after Sunday School. The Junior Church service has remedied this evil in large measure, wherever it has been tried . . . **Its just as scriptural as Bible Schools . . .**" (Emphasis-SHB) (Ja 14, 1933, p. 18).

This same type of reasoning is employed by defenders of the innovation among the liberal churches of Christ. In an article entitled "What About Children's Bible Hour?" by Ray Hawk (**Words Of Truth**, April 25, 1980), the author appeals to the **precedent of existing practice** to try to make room for Children's Church in the church of Christ. This is simply the old "one thing is as scriptural as another" argument, which has absolutely no foundation in the Bible. In Hawk's article, five situations, tolerated in most liberal congregations, were pointed out. Then he drew the conclusion that if these were agreed upon as all-right, why could not Children's Church be accepted? One of these "parallel situations" was Sunday night communion, or "second offering" of the Lord's Supper. Consider his argument.

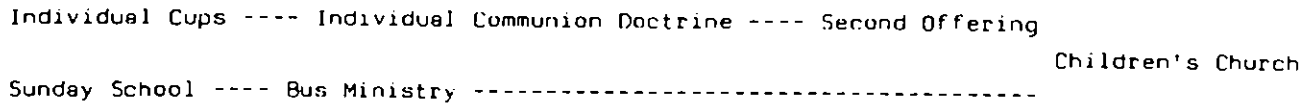
"In some churches on Sunday evening, those who missed services that morning are dismissed to Room Five to partake, give, and have closing prayer while **the assembly** (emphasis his-SHB) continues its closing song, comments and prayer. This is a simultaneous situation. Those who practice it argue that they do not dismiss children into another assembly. What difference does it make whether the dismissed are children or adults?" After presenting four other "parallel situations" he continues. "Why do those who dogmatically condemn Children's Bible Hour never say anything about these parallel situations? Why do those who condemn Children's Bible Hour practice one or more of Cases 1-5 without question and even say that they are doing right while Children's Bible Hour is wrong?"

In the concluding part of his article, he further expands on the direction he has taken, urging upon others: "There are many practices now being engaged in by churches of Christ which cannot be found specifically named in the New Testament . . . I am sure that a number of readers will not agree with what I have written. If you do not, please study the Sunday evening communion question in relationship to the Children's Bible Hour. Every point you make against the Children's Bible Hour, see if it will not equally prove Sunday evening communion wrong . . . It seems to me that if we can practice Sunday evening communion without its being specified in scripture and yet know that its right, we could be charitable toward those who practice a parallel practice called Children's Bible Hour."

The problem with this entire line of reasoning is that if we attempt to establish a practice by comparing it to another practice, we will simply wind up pyramiding error on top of error. The only corrective to this is to insist that those who affirm a practice is right, prove it from the Bible! Those who defend a practice, must defend it from the scriptures! But, where is the command, example, or necessary inference that established Children's Church? There are none, so these brethren must fall back on weak, worthless arguments like those just noted. But, remember, you cannot prove a practice by affirming that it is "as scriptural" as something else!

It is plain that Children's Church is the result of the ongoing evolution of digression

among those who have slipped their moorings. How did these brethren get in this situation? Remember that we said earlier that Children's Church was the fruit of an evil tree? Consider the following diagram:



To support the practice of individual cups, the concept of congregational communion, a scriptural principle (I Cor. 10:6) was thrown overboard. The false doctrine of individual communion between the communicant and God **alone**, without any reference to other members of the body, was promulgated. Once this idea had taken root, it was just another step to accept multiple offerings of the Lord's Supper on the Lord's Day. Some large, liberal urban churches of Christ have multiple worship service with the Lord's Supper on Lord's Day morning. Many of these brethren practice the second offering of the Lord's Supper on Sunday evening. And what follows this but the Children's Church. One wrong step always leads to another and the progress of error is always downhill. Those brethren who have accepted the first three innovations, yet are opposed to Children's Church, are forced to choke on their own arguments by the proponents of Children's Church. This is exactly what Ray Hawk was doing in his article. The connections between Sunday School, the Bus Ministry, and Children's Church have been amply covered.

Some of the liberal brethren have even tried to argue for Children's Church by appealing to the silence of the scriptures. The November 5, 1974 issue of **Firm Foundation** carried an article entitled "Youth Worship - A Right Way To Evangelize." Two of the arguments used were: "We have no command or even inference that youth worship is wrong . . . The Bible is simply silent on the matter."

This argument is the old "if the Bible does not condemn it, its OK." Let it be noted that the early restorers of the New Testament Church did not affect the restoration by appealing to this kind of argument! Some of those in times past who have called men back to the "Old Paths" would cry for shame to hear their descendents use that type of reasoning.

Having noticed the weak arguments for the Children's Church, we now turn our attention to the **scriptural case against Children's Church**. The scriptural case against the innovation can be stated under two headings:

1. Children's Church creates a divided assembly.
2. The proponents of Children's Church simply ignore the silence of the scriptures.

As far as the innovation under consideration is concerned, there are three passages of scripture that bear upon it. They are I Cor. 11:18-20; I Cor. 14:23; and Heb. 10:25. We will notice the first two together.

"For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you . . . When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper." (I Cor. 11:18-20)

"If therefore the whole church be come together into one place . . ."

The words "come together" found in these verses comes from the Greek word "sunerchomai." Thayer defines this word on page 604: "to come together, i.e., a. to assemble."

The phrase "in the church" is from "en te ekklesia." The definition of "ekklesia," according to Thayer, page 195 is "prop. a gathering of citizens called out from their homes **into some public place** (emphasis, SHB); an assembly . . . 4. In the Christian sense, a. an assembly of Christians gathered for worship . . . sunerchesthai en ekklesia, I Cor. 11:18 . . ."

The phrase "into one place" is from "epi to auto." Under the article on "sunerchomai", Thayer says on page 604, "epi to auto [see epi, C.I.I.d.], I Cor. 11:20; 14:23 . . ."

The reference in brackets, "see epi," is important. Thayer intends the reader to consult the article on the preposition "epi" for some important information concerning the meaning of the phrase "epi to auto," translated by "into one place" in the King James Version. The article on "epi" is rather lengthy, beginning on page 231. There are several sections and subsections. That is what "C.I.I.d." refers to: Section C, subsection I, subsection 1, and subsection d. This is found in column 2 on page 234. Thayer defines "epi" on page 231 as "a preposition . . . its primary signification is upon . . ."

Under the subsection noted on page 234, "sunelthein epi to auto, have convened, come together, **to the same place**, I Cor. 14:23" (Emphasis, SHB).

What all this adds up to is this: When the Bible says that the Church came together "into one place" that is exactly what God meant to say. There is no better translation of the Greek here than that found in the King James Version. The Church came together **into one place**. That is our example. That is our authority. We must come together, in the assembly, **into one place**. The Children's Church is in direct violation of this teaching of scripture. Children's Church is objectionable because its constitution is unscriptural. It is a divided assembly. The adults that run the Children's Church, as well as any youngsters who are members of the church, yet assembling in the Children's Church (and this is common practice) make it so.

We might add to what has just been said, some observations on Hebrews 10:25. "Not forsaking the **assembling** of ourselves **together** as the manner of some is . . ." Berry renders this, "Not forsaking the **assembling together** of ourselves," for the term "assembling together" is from the Greek word "episunagogen." (See **Literal Translation Of The Greek New Testament With KJV Interlinear**, George Ricker Berry). Thayer defines this word on page 244: "a. a gathering together **in one place** . . . II Thess. 2:1 . . . b. (the religious) assembly (of Christians): Heb. 10:25."

Dale Royal, in an article entitled "Reflections on Current Youth Worship," (**Contending For The Faith**, May 78), had some excellent comments on this passage. "Assembling together, or the assembly in the New Testament, comes from two very different Greek words: ekklesia (generally translated 'church') and sunagoge (generally translated 'synagogue,' cf. James 2:2). Trench, in his **Synonyms Of The New Testament** points out that the first (church) has reference to the people . . . while the latter (synagogue) has reference **to the place**. The Hebrew writer uses episunagoge, emphasizing **the place** of assembly." (Emphasis - SHB)

All this proves that Children's Church is in direct violation to the plain teaching of God's word. But the scriptural case against this innovation can be carried a step further as Children's Church is a **plain violation of the silence of God**.

The scriptural examples that abound to prove the importance of respecting the silence of God are many and familiar. There is the example of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-5); the example of Moses (Num. 20:7-11); the example of David trying to move the Ark of the Covenant on a cart (I Chron. 13, 15:1-13). In each case, the violator did something **other** than what was specified by God. God did not have to specify that what they did was wrong, He just had to specify what He wanted done, and that would logically exclude everything else. This principle is too clear in God's word for men to escape or ignore. The writer of the book of Hebrews took it for granted that his readers understood this fundamental tenet of Biblical authority (cf. Heb. 7:11-14; 8:4, 5). In the context the author is proving that there must have been a change of covenant (law) since Jesus was now High Priest. Jesus was from the tribe of Judah, "of which tribe Moses **spoke nothing** concerning priesthood." (Heb. 7:14) The Law of Moses **specified** that priests were to come from the tribe of Levi, the house of Aaron. That law did not delineate all the people who could not be priest. It did not need to. Respecting the silence of the Law would preclude anyone else being priest, until the change of the covenant. The writer of Hebrews understood this, as did his readers. Unfortunately, many of our liberal brethren do not.

Alexander Campbell wrote, "We choose to speak of Bible things with Bible words, because we are always suspicious that if the word is not in the Bible, the idea it represents is not there." (**The Christian System**, p. 103; Gospel Advocate, 1980 ed.) The principle just stated is an ancient and venerable one, pre-dating even Alexander Campbell. It is a faithful saying. But when liberal preachers of the church of Christ claim to speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent, they are not stating the truth.

Children's Church violates the express teaching of scripture and the silence of the scriptures. It cannot be either expedient or a scriptural aid. It is an objectionable innovation.

Usurpation of Parental Responsibility

Many supporters of Children's Church do not believe that the home is adequate to the task of training children for God. Homer Councilor, in **The Junior Church**, says of Children's Church, "it is the only method" by which such training can be effectively accomplished (p. 12). Another proponent wrote: "A great number of people still observe 'family pew' tradition. In its era it was fine, but today the child lives in the Atomic Age, and we must be able to reach him" (Bessie Steffler, "Junior Church"; unpublished thesis, Baptist Bible College, March 1969, p. 5). This is surely specious reasoning of the highest order!

Roy Lanier, writing in the **Firm Foundation**, said: "As our national government is becoming involved in and taking over the affairs of states and individuals, so the church is taking over and becoming involved in too many of the affairs of the homes represented in the churches." ("Church Programs," March 22, 1977, p. 9).

The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, very clearly teaches two things pertaining to the issue at hand. First, the **home** is the institution God has ordained for the religious training and instruction of children. Next, a part of this training **includes** worship **with** parents.

First, notice the fact that **children were included in worship**, both under the Mosaic economy and under the Christian dispensation. Children were included in the attendance upon the tabernacle (temple) and in the solemn assembly (Deut. 31:9-13; Joel 2:16). Jesus, being born and living under the Old Testament economy, is a perfect example of the rearing of a child in

Israel. He attended the temple with His parents (Luke 2:42-52). It was His custom to attend the synagogue (Luke 4:16). In other words, it was a regular feature of His life; a habit with Him. Was not this so because His parents took Him with them when they attended? In the New Testament it is necessarily inferred that children were, and must be, included in worship with everyone else, and not in a segregated "Children's Church."

In Colossians 3:20 the Apostle Paul writes, "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." Later in the same epistle (4:16) Paul writes, "And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea." Paul intended that his epistles be read in the public assembly of the church: IN THE CHURCH. Included in this epistle, along with many general admonitions, there are specific admonitions and commands to several classes of people, i.e., wives, husbands, children, servants, and masters (cf. 3:18-4:1). All of these were expected by Paul to be "in the church" when it came together, and so would hear and receive the particular teaching he wished to convey to them.

Some proponents of Children's Church believe that it is impossible for children to get much, if anything, out of the regular worship service. It is **assumed** that children cannot be properly taught in the adult worship assembly. There are two mistakes in evidence here. The first mistake the proponents of Children's Church make is in assuming children get **nothing**, or little of real value at least, from the regular assembly. Hear the word of God in Deut. 31:12,13: "Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that **they** may hear, and that **they** may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that **their children, which have not known anything, may hear, and learn** to fear the Lord your God . . ." In the book of Isaiah, the prophet compares the word of God to rain that comes down and waters the earth and its foliage (cf. Isa. 55:10,11). The same rain waters both the mighty Sequoia and the grass of the meadow; the spreading oak and the flowers of the field. Each plant gathers of the moisture that distills from heaven what it can; **what it needs**. So it is with God's word. Some men have large capacity to understand and digest the "meat" of the word; others feed on the "milk," including those who are children. Is it not true that there are different capacities to understand, different intellectual abilities, even among the adults in a congregation? I know of congregations that have in their ranks college graduates and illiterate manual laborers, and everything in between. Are we going to have a bunch of "assemblies" for every level of understanding? The idea is recognized as ludicrous; yet that is the logical outcome of the assumption that we must provide a "worship experience" that is tailored to one's educational and intellectual level!

The second mistake the proponents of Children's Church make is failing to recognize that the home is the place that God has ordained for children to receive training in spiritual things. It is not a responsibility of the church to be concerned with the religious education of the children represented by the families in a particular congregation. That is the parents' responsibility. It was the parents' responsibility under the Mosaic economy. While children were included in the solemn assembly, the primary responsibility for their religious training lay with their parents (Deut. 6:6-9). The Lord taught the people to recognize and channel the natural curiosity of their children to good advantage (Deut. 6:20-25; Ex. 12:26, 27). It was the parents' responsibility to interpret and explain the significance of their religious practices to their children. To this day, Jews who are truly devout take great care to instill their religious principles in their children. It has been this way for centuries. This is one reason why they have continued to exist as a nation and retain their distinctiveness, even while living in the midst of other nations. In Alfred Edersheim's, **Sketches of Jewish Social**

Life in the Time of Christ, there is an excellent chapter on "The Upbringing of Jewish Children" (chapter seven). In this excellent chapter Edersheim says:

The Old Testament, Apocrypha, and the New Testament . . . indicates the same carefulness in the upbringing of children. One of the earliest narratives of Scripture records how God said [of] Abraham, 'I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Jehovah, to do justice and judgement (Gen. 18:19)' . . . How thoroughly the spirit of this Divine utterance was carried out under the law, appears from a comparison of such passages as Ex. 12:26; 13:8,14; Deut. 4:9,10; 6:7,20; 11:19; 31:13; Ps. 78:5,6.

Those of us who are parents today, in the church, would do well to look at the example of godly parents in the Old Testament (Rom. 15:4). We too are charged with the responsibility of rearing our children "in the Lord." In Eph. 6:4, Paul says: "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." The word "nurture" is translated from PAIDEIA. The word "admonition" is from NOUTHESIA. R. C. Trench, in his excellent work, **Synonyms of the New Testament**, says this about the two words: "Nouthesia . . . is more successfully rendered 'admonition'; . . . It is training by word--by the word of encouragement, when this is sufficient, but also by that of remonstrance, of reproof, of blame, where they may be required; as set over against the training by act and by discipline, which is paideia . . ." (Emphasis-SHB).

We teach our children by word **and** act then. We inform and instruct in matters pertaining to spiritual things, **and** we lead them in doing those things. We instruct them and we allow them to see our example. We teach the importance of worship and we lead them in it. One of the great failures of Children's Church is that it lacks the positive example of parents to reinforce verbal teaching, and the necessary discipline to back up the teaching by word and example.

The segregation of children from their parents in worship is recognized by those who have specialized in such studies as being positively harmful. Stan Stewart, a specialist in "children's ministries" reports: "The common denominator is sick and dying churches (is) that children are consistently segregated (during worship) and set off to another place" (**United Methodist Reporter**, August 17, 1979).

It is likely that as Children's Church continues to find a place among certain churches of Christ that have digressed from the truth, they will reap a bitter harvest for their innovation.

Wrong Attitudes Toward Worship

Along with a denial of Biblical authority, and a denial of God's method for the training of children in religion, I believe Children's Church manifests a wrong attitude about worship; as well as a fundamental misconception about the nature of worship. In an article entitled "Theology of the Bus Ministry" (**Firm Foundation**, Oct. 1, 1974), the author says: "We structure worship to please ourselves. Now this is not necessarily wrong. We structure worship to meet our needs. Oh, we worship as God authorized us to--the five acts of worship--but we sing songs that please us (and don't sing songs that fail to please us); the preacher preaches sermons that please us (or he moves on); etc. The 'youth-church' idea is to conduct a special service to meet their needs."

Many have the idea that worship is simply to provide an "experience" for the worshipper. The "entertainment factor" often determines, in some peoples' minds, whether worship is "acceptable." However, as we look at the definition of PROSKUNE0, the Greek word for "worship" (John 4:24), we note that it signifies "to kiss the hand toward," as to a ruler. (See Thayer, page 548). The important factors to consider are: (1) the sole intent of PROSKUNE0 was to please the sovereign (in the case of Christian worship, that is God); and (2) any reward was forthcoming from the object of PROSKUNE0, not from the PROSKUNE0 itself. The purpose of worship is to please God. If we please God, we will have joy--because we love God and pleasing Him gives us joy.

This brings us to consider John 4:23,24, and the admonition to PROSKUNE0 in "spirit and in truth." These two things comprise man's total being as a worshiper. **Truth** deals with man's actions; **spirit** with man's motives or attitudes. In worship, we must do the right thing, and we must do it for the right reasons. (Of course, we are talking about public, corporate worship here. The question of the Samaritan woman in John 4:19,20 concerned public, corporate worship; and Jesus' answer must be considered in that light. A man may do things in the "private devotions" of his home, and with his children, that would not be permissible in the public worship. However, since the whole "Children's Church" question falls in the realm of public, corporate worship; the admonition concerning "in spirit and in truth" most certainly applies). The question then is this: are those children in Children's Church, especially the Primaries (ages 3, 4, 5), able to worship in spirit and truth? What about the adults who are present, and the older children who may be members of the church? Are they worshipping in spirit and in truth? As the later question, it has already been shown that the simultaneous assembly of Children's Church is a violation of Scripture (I Cor. 11:18-20; 14:23; Heb. 10:25) and a failure to respect the silence of God's word. You cannot worship acceptably where the "assembly" is unscriptural! As to the children, consider: We are to observe the Lord's Supper "in spirit and in truth" upon the first day of the week in the assembly (I Cor. 11:23 ff; Acts 20:7). May a child partake in this item or worship? Even our Liberal brethren answer no. They do not serve the Lord's Supper to children who are not members of the church. In an article entitled "What is Right With Children's Worship?" (**Firm Foundation**, Jan. 15, 1974), Noel Wilson wrote:

None of our activities are make-believe--not our songs, prayers, sermon or communion. They are all done 'in spirit and in truth' to the Lord. Communion is served only to the adult and teen helpers who are Christians, allowing the children to observe; this also provides an excellent teaching opportunity.

Let us take a careful look at this. The proponents of Children's Church say that the worship is "no make-believe"-- it is real worship. The songs are real, the prayer is real, the teaching, etc. Cannot the children, sitting in the regular, undivided assembly also hear and sing real spiritual songs with their parents; hear **real** prayers and teaching? Cannot they also **observe** their parents and other members partake of the Lord's Supper and contribute of their means upon the first day of the week? Is there no "excellent teaching opportunity" simply because the children are sitting with their parents in the congregational assembly? Contrariwise! If parents did indeed follow the example of Israel, as commanded by God' and use the worship, and their children's curiosity about the worship, to teach them; it **would** be an excellent teaching opportunity! (See Deut. 6:20-25; Exodus 12:26,27). What then does Children's Church offer that the congregational assembly of adults does not? In the way of advantages, NOTHING! There is not one advantage of Children's Church that may not be fully provided for in the regular worship. What then does Children's Church offer that the regular assembly does not? The answer is **entertainment**.

Remember, the prime impetus for Children's Church was the mobs of "unchurched" children that created such disruptions in the worship service. Children's Church was basically started in the liberal churches of Christ, despite claims of nobler motives, to remove this distraction by keeping the children occupied with entertainment in their own special service. But, in removing the children who did not have parents attending church, **the children of the regular, faithful members were removed as well!** In Jerry D. Cox's article "Worship is of Children" (*Christian Bible Teacher*, 12/75), he says: "No distinction is made between the children brought in by buses and those whose parents bring them. Parents are encouraged to leave their children in the special worship for them..." While parents were allowed to bring their own children into the regular assembly, the practice was **discouraged**.

In his article, Bro. Cox goes on to explain about the children's services. Recreation and refreshments were planned for the younger children. He particularly speaks of the three types of services conducted for pre-schoolers, intermediates (1st through 3rd grades) and pre-teens (4th through 8th). He writes: "The preschool worship has Bible stories told in a dramatic manner, reinforced with flannel graphs, charts and films. Puppets are used in this worship . . . The characters used in the puppet work for this age group are mostly Sesame Street characters . . . Hand puppets have been used extensively in the Intermediate worship and moderately in the Preschool worship. In the Intermediate worship, as much as 10 to 15 minutes of the hour was taken up with the use of puppets."

The Pre-teen worship more closely resembled the "traditional" worship. "Fewer songs are used than in the intermediate group, and there is less use of Bible drills, puppet plays and skits."

Permit me some observations and a prediction or two. The liberal churches of Christ who have adopted Children's Church, and it seems the majority of those brethren have; are now raising a generation of children infused with the concept that worship must be entertaining. It must please them and appeal to them on the sensory, carnal level. What happens when these children become adults? What happens if they do become members of the Church? Are these children, weaned on the idea that worship had to entertain and occupy them, going to stand for the "traditional" worship for long? What of the day when this generation of "Children's Church" children are themselves leading their congregations as preachers, elders, etc.? Having grown up with worship that is not really worship, will they hold on to those things that remain in the way of New Testament worship in their congregations? I really believe, and only time will prove me right or wrong, that it is only a matter of time before many "churches of Christ" are adopting instrumental music, choirs, etc. And it will not stop there.

Children's Church is truly a debasement of the concept of worship, not to mention there is not an inkling of scripturalness about it. And there is more evil fruit to come.

Increasing and Ongoing Denominationalism of Churches of Christ

The adoption of Children's Church is irrefutable evidence that the Liberal churches of Christ are trying their best to keep up with the denominations, and so they will become one themselves. In all fairness though, things have been trending this way for some time. The individual cups and Bible Classes started it out. And now, they are not so far from the Christian Church, which adopted the missionary society and instrumental music to begin with, among many other things since.

A few of the brethren have raised the cry; but will they be heard? Roy Lanier, in the **Firm Foundation** ("Church Programs" (I), March 22, 1977), wrote: "I have a letter from an Oklahoma reader, a young man of 23 years, who is concerned about the many programs of activity carried on by churches of Christ over the nation. He says, 'Many congregations have the idea that the work of the church is to provide programs such as: day care centers; socials, parties, day nurseries, to sponsor Boy Scouts, clinics for adaptive parents, and other things of like nature.' He also deplores the fact that churches are spending half a million to one million dollars on 'all-purpose buildings' with fully equipped gymnasiums, and employing recreational directors (ministers of recreation) to plan and oversee the recreational activities of the church. And he wonder why this money is not spent to preach the gospel in this country, or in foreign nations. I remember hearing a good old preacher say that if the churches of Christ stay 25 years behind the denominations they think they are scriptural. (Emphasis - SHB). And this young man says we ought to apologize to the denominations for criticizing them in the past for engaging in such activities."

Glen Wallace, in another article from **Firm Foundation** ("The Junior Youth Play Church" Nov. 20, 1973), said: "The whole 'junior church' bit has been borrowed from our religious neighbors and most of them have very little, if any, respect for a 'thus saith the Lord' . . . Let us take this program of religious sham back where we got it."

A similar sentiment was aired by J. I. Marlin in the **Gospel Advocate** ("Children Belong In Worship" Nov. 6, 1980). "In recent years there is evidence that our program has been hindered by gimmicks, gadgets and gook. The possibility of apostasy is very real. A watered down religion is a step backward and not forward. The future of the Church in our time depends upon our faithfulness and loyalty to the Word. Preachers must preach the word. **We need to take all sectarian practices back where we borrowed them.**" (Emphasis - SHB)

From what has been said before, it is abundantly clear that the Children's Church is an innovation of the denominational world, that many in the liberal camp have taken up.

Concluding Observations and Admonitions

We have considered four implications of the Children's Church innovation. There might be others, but I believe that these four have clearly exposed the fallacy of this, and some other innovations. In conclusion, there are two basic admonitions I wish to present.

First, let us never be enamored of the devices and innovations that are constantly appearing on the religious landscape. It may be harder to obey this than to state it. God's people have always had an attraction for the practices of the "nations" around them. When the children of Israel entered Canaan, they were repeatedly warned by Moses, and then Joshua, not to imitate the lives and practices of the peoples they found in the land. Generation after generation of judges and prophets had to be sent to pull Israel back from the brink of destruction, because they did not often heed these admonitions. The nations repeatedly fell into idolatry, in imitation of the nations around them. One of the most instructive illustrations of this principle is to be found in the reign of King Ahaz of Judah.

While on a trip to the city of Damascus, Ahaz saw there an altar that the Assyrian kings offered their idolatrous sacrifices on. Apparently Ahaz thought it was a very nice altar. It was probably much more ornate and beautiful to behold than the old brazen altar back in Jerusalem. So "King Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, on the pattern of

it, according to all the workmanship thereof." (II Kings 16:10 ff for the whole story). Perhaps Ahaz reasoned like some liberal innovators in religion today. "An altar is an altar--what difference does it make which one you use?" "It will add so much to the worship," or "It will improve our worship." One thing king Ahaz forgot--when God had given directions on the worship the Israelites were to offer to Him, He was very specific in those directions. When Moses was furnished the plan for the place of worship, the tabernacle (temple), God said concerning its furnishings, "And look that thou make them **after their pattern**, which was showed thee in the mount." (Ex. 25:40). The pattern for the altar that Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest **was not** the pattern delivered by God! Ahaz changed the worship of the temple, without any authority from God whatsoever. This new altar of Ahaz was called the "great altar." (cf. v. 15). Upon this new altar all the sacrifices were offered, and the "old" altar was shunted off to one side (vs. 14,15). Of course there were other things that Ahaz did wrong in his life, but his changing of the Lord's worship was one reason why the Scriptures say he "did not that which is right in the sight of the Lord." God has given us a pattern in the New Testament of what spiritual and truthful worship should consist of. Let us not depart from the pattern!

Secondly, let us be attentive to our responsibilities to our children and the youth our lives touch. Those who oppose Children's Church (or the bus ministry or Sunday School) are often accused of not caring about the spiritual welfare of little children. This appeal to emotionalism, rather than the Word of God, has been effective in quelling many protests to the above named innovations. This is unfortunate. The charge of course is absolutely untrue. I am all for reaching all the **lost souls** (not innocent children) we can with the gospel. However, innovations that violate God's word are not the answer. Concerning all the "unchurch" little children in the world, consider: We find no indication in the book of Acts, or in any of the apostolic writing, that the early church tried to evangelize little children or provide them with their own worship service. We **do** find early gospel heralds preaching in synagogues, homes and other places where children were present **along with adults** (Acts 17:1,2; 17:17; 20:20). There is **no** indication that the early church encouraged little children who **were not subject to the gospel**, to affiliate themselves with the Church without their parents. It just was not done. Does this mean that Peter, Paul and other early gospel preachers and leaders in the Church did not care about the spiritual welfare of little children? They certainly **did** care! That is why they were so diligent to preach the gospel at every opportunity, so the people of that day, including all parents, could hear, understand and obey God's will! Of course, any young man or damsel who was subject to the gospel call would be appealed to as any other sinner who needed salvation. If they obeyed, they would be included in the worshipping community of the saints along with every other convert, and not in some "youth church" or "junior church." That is the pattern, and that is the practice of my brethren.

Some have felt that parents were not disciplining their children, or teaching and training them properly, when it came to the worship services. Naturally, we are opposed to parents handling their responsibilities in a slipshod or negligent manner. Again, the failure of some is no argument for introducing unscriptural innovations into the Church. The answer to this problem is to rebuke and admonish the parents concerning their responsibilities. In actuality, the Children's Church has become just another "crutch" that makes it easier for careless parents to evade or ignore their duty.

Stephen Clark Goad, in an article entitled "The Bible School Church" (**Firm Foundation**, 9/14/82), made some observations that would apply with equal force to Children's Church: "No, I am not an anti-class Christian. Never have been. But those brethren have a point that must be considered. They understand, perhaps better than the rest of us, that we cannot expect others to do for our children what God expects of parents. One of the great cripples of public and

private school systems in America is that too many of us parents expect the teachers of schools to become the primary instructors of our children. Until parents begin to see themselves as the most important teachers in the lives of their children, we will continue to have major educational problems." Later in the article he continues, "The New Testament Church apparently didn't have Sunday School. Our anti-class brethren do not have Sunday School . . . The anti-class brethren may have one up on the rest of us. They know if their little ones receive instruction separate from the worship assemblies that it must be done on the home front."

Personally, I wish the reputation was more deserved. Unfortunately, it has been my observation that many of our parents are not discharging their responsibility to rear their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Those of us who oppose the class system, and rightly so, have gained nothing in God's sight if we are not diligent to do those things God has set before us, viz. personal Bible Study, personal work, teaching and edifying one another in our homes, etc. Let us make sure we practice what we preach!

If we do not teach our children, and this includes teaching them to be worshipful, then we have failed in one of the greatest responsibilities in life. Let us recognize something that the Children's Church advocates have failed to grasp: children learn by association and observation. The only way for our children to learn to be worshippers of God in spirit and in truth, is to observe and associate with us, as we worship God in spirit and truth. This means that we parents must be careful about our attitudes toward worship. **The single most important thing affecting a child's training in worship is the attitude of his parents.** A child whose parents do not attend church and worship God has very little chance of being impressed with worship's importance, even if the child is picked up by some bus ministry and included in a Children's Church. At the same time, parents who do attend worship can convey negative connotation by a negative attitude. Children who observe parents listlessly yawn through a service, hear them complain about the service, or in other ways exhibit a lack of zeal for worship; these children will also probably never have a good attitude toward worship. However, if a child senses his parents' eagerness to assemble with fellow believers in worship and praise to God; if that child can observe in his parents an attitude of happy anticipation and genuine reverence; if that child can see that worship is important to his parents; that child will have a good attitude about worship, most generally.

Let us take a cue from the Israelites of old. Remember, that they used their children's natural curiosity to instruct them concerning those things they saw their parents doing in worship. Parents, do not underestimate the curiosity of your little ones. Children are curious about the world about them, even if they do not always give voice to their curiosity. Recognize the fact, and look for opportunities to teach your children. When you teach your children you are doing more than imparting information. Your child will recognize in your desire to communicate the truth of God's word to him, and evident token of your genuine love for God and for him. You may not be a very knowledgeable teacher, but mixed with love, your instruction will bear fruit.

Finally, let us remember that we are not perfect, and neither should we hold our selves before our children as "perfect" parents. They will soon come to know better. Our children will know our faults better even than we do. But, if they also see a genuine repentance, and a willingness to admit "I was wrong," and a dependence upon the Lord, then that combination will work wonders.

THE TEACHER
by Leslie Pinckney Hill

Lord, who am I to teach the way
 To little children day by day,
So prone myself to go astray?

I teach them knowledge, but I know
 How faint they flicker and how low
The candles of my knowledge glow.

I teach them power to will and do
 But only now to learn anew
My own great weakness through and through.
I teach them love for all mankind
 And all God's creatures, but I find
My love comes lagging far behind.

Lord, if their guide I still must be,
 Oh, let the little children see
The teacher leaning hard on thee.