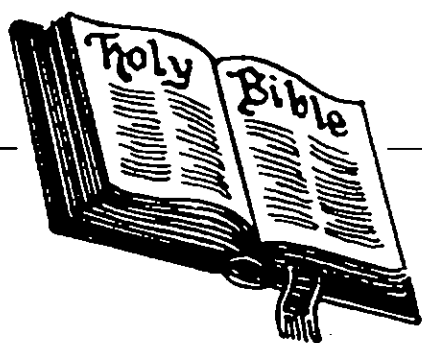


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1990 Preachers' Study Notes

1990 Preachers' Study

Introduction

The annual Preachers' Study was hosted by the Twenty-First Street congregation in Oklahoma City, December 24-27, 1990. Wayne McKamie and Carl Johnson were chosen by the congregation to select the participants, arrange the topics, and act as moderators for each session.

The majority of the topics that were included in the Study were selected by Wayne and Carl. The others were recommended by the Twenty-First Street brethren, or were the requests of the respective participating preachers. This cooperation resulted in a variety of topics being included in the Study, that addressed a number of pertinent issues, and made for an informative and most enjoyable Study.

It was obvious that each preacher that participated had thoroughly researched his material. The information that each presentation contained, and the scholarship with which it was prepared and presented was impressive, and certainly worthy of commendation.

A thirty-minute discussion period, in which the floor fielded questions from the audience, followed each presentation.

The Twenty-First Street congregation is to be commended for the excellent job it did in hosting the Study. The brethren graciously opened their homes to visitors, and provided daily meals for those in attendance.

Also, the **Christian's Expositor** is to be commended for its determined effort to make this valuable material available to the general public. It is our prayer that this material will edify the readers, and will challenge and stimulate them to a more intensive study of the Word of God.

Carl Johnson

J. Wayne McKamie

From the Editors

We are pleased to be able to compile, edit and publish the **1990 Preachers' Study Notes**. We offer our thanks to the sixteen individuals who submitted articles for publication in this year's book. Many hours of research, thought and work have been invested by each participant.

Two preachers who participated in the Preachers' Study in 1990 were not able to submit manuscripts. Brother Paul Nichols spoke on, "My Fifty Years of Preaching." By Winter 1991, Lord willing, he plans to publish a book containing a biography of his life and several sermons. The material he presented at the Preachers' Study will be included in this publication. Brother Taylor Joyce spoke on, "The Natural and Spiritual Man." Due to time constraints and situations beyond his control and the control of the editors, we were unable to publish his article. For this we apologize. Lord willing, his presentation will appear in December 1991 issue of the **Christian's Expositor**. Look for it at that time.

This is the third volume of the **Preachers' Study Notes** that we have published. Our goal, as always, is to put quality, useful material into the hands of those who will use it to the glory of God. We are pleased with the quality of the articles that are enclosed within these pages. And we believe that you, as a reader, will derive benefit from reading each one. May the Lord bless you in your study of His Word.

Sincerely

Editors of the **1990 Preachers' Study Notes**

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Prove All Things

Prove All Things

by Don McCord

"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good"—what a divine, inspired imperative! What a motto for life's challenges, responsibilities, expectations! This is all-inclusive as to things—"all things," nothing left out. This is all-inclusive as to persons—no one left out. It is indeed possible to "prove all things," or Paul would not have so plainly enjoined: we are not dealing here with things impossible, rivers uncrossable, an exercise in futility. Indeed, we are concerned with a very practical and fruitful undertaking, though it may appear, and in reality is, an awesome one. I am reminded of Paul's admonition to the Philippians, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good" this down-to-earth, soul-satisfying, strengthening admonition is never out-dated, never obsolete. I do not know of a better, nobler way of spending life's little day down here; what better, more enduring eulogy would be given a person than "he/she spent his/her days down here proving all things, holding fast to that which is good." How much more pleasing to God would the church be if all the members did just that; so pursued and applied the kingdom of God could and would defeat the kingdoms of men.

Those choosing a title for a study such as this can do no better than lift it right out of the Scripture text itself. Our title of this study and this lesson is just that. The Amplified phrases it, "But test and prove all things until you can recognize what is good; to that hold fast." The New American Standard has it this way: "But examine everything carefully, hold fast to that which is good." The New International Version renders it, "Test everything . . . Hold on to the good." Marvin Vincent in his **Word Studies of the New Testament** says of our title, "a general exhortation not confined to prophesying." The interlinear says, "All things prove, the right hold fast." Dr. William Barclay in his translation has it this way: "Test everything, hold fast to the true thing."

The context of any text is so necessary if we are to understand and implement it properly. With this in mind I implore your patience while I read verses 12-28, with a brief exposition; listen, please—what a compendium, brief though exhaustive, of what it is all about down here:

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you [beseech, that is, I beg you, please; he is, as it were, on his knees]; and to esteem them very highly in love for

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their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded [discouraged], support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man: but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us. Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. [If you want to read the finest commentary on the "holy kiss" that I have read, you need Brother Irvin Barnes' booklet on the subject—scriptural, logical, easy to apply.] I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

It is my sincere conviction before God the Father, Christ the Son, the Holy Spirit and the angels, and you, that the Word of God provides for us guidelines, criteria whereby we may "prove all things." Surely, this is the case in view of the command itself. We are not left to wander in a maze of doubt and confusion as to this great undertaking; there is a way of doing what we are told to do. Here we tread cautiously, prayerfully, carefully. These scriptural criteria are as follows:

- Is the thing tested lawful?
- Is the thing tested lawfully expedient?
- Is the thing tested a matter of liberty, indifference?
- Is it a violation of the witness the Spirit bears with our spirit?
- Is the thing tested a violation of conscience?
- Is the thing tested a violation or disruption of unity?
- Is the thing tested a violation or disruption of fellowship?
- Is the thing tested a violation of the law of consistency?
- Is the thing tested a substitution for the divine pattern?
- Is the thing tested a violation of types and shadows?

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Is the Thing Tested Lawful?

There is indeed a law to govern us as we "prove all things." James assures us in James 1:25, the New International Version, "But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does." This must be the law of Christ. In Psalm 119, David speaks repeatedly, in this the longest psalm of them all, and the longest chapter in the whole Book, of "the law of the Lord," "his testimonies," "his ways," "precepts," "statutes," "commandments," and "judgments," and how binding they are. When a thing tested is contrary to the law of Christ, it cannot be right. Example: Baptism—immersion, sprinkling, pouring? Tested by the law, we determine that baptism is immersion, and not sprinkling or pouring: we "hold fast that which is good," therefore. A divine pattern sanctioned by law cannot be set aside, ignored; commandments, as part of law, are to be kept; binding examples, as part and parcel of law, are to be followed. Any practice when tested by law that comes up short is not right. There is a reason why we list being lawful as the first criterion for testing things in religion; a thing, a practice, has to be lawful of necessity. This will be amplified as we proceed.

Is the Thing Tested Lawfully Expedient?

There are indeed expedient things, but they can never impinge upon law; in our testing, we must ever bear this in mind. **Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language**, College Edition says of "expedient:" "Useful for effecting a desired result; advantageous, convenient." W. E. Vine in **An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words** says: "Intransitively, to be an advantage, profitable, not merely convenient." Example: At the Lord's Table, age-old arguments have been made, some are good, and some are not. The plate for the loaf is an expedient matter. No law is impinged upon; there is no interference with the divine pattern—and there is a pattern. Some who apparently do not understand lawful and expedient things, get confused—it is argued by them that both the plate and the cup are expedient. Not so, simply because the cup comes under law, commandment, binding example, and cannot therefore be expedient. The plate for convenience, an expedient, is used; the cup, as a matter of law, is used—to do otherwise is to violate law. This meeting house is a matter of expediency; the church must have a meeting place, be it a building like this, a private home, an "upper room," a rented facility—no law is hereby infringed upon.

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Is the Thing Tested a Matter of Liberty or Indifference?

Matters of liberty cannot, must not, go counter to law; in practice, matters of liberty must not violate a divine pattern. Let us observe the chart:

The Divine Pattern Vs. Liberty in Four Particulars

Pattern	Liberty
<i>Baptism</i> (immersion) (burial) Mk. 16:16; Rom. 6:4	baptistry, river, outside, inside, lake, river, ocean
<i>Music</i> —singing; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16	books, notes, directing, number of songs
<i>Communion</i> —cup, loaf, fruit of the vine; Mt. 26, Mk. 14; Lk. 22; 1 Cor. 11	material, size, time, plate, cloths
<i>Teaching</i> —one assembly, one man at a time, women silent; 1 Cor. 14	blackboard, notes, pulpit, meeting house, pews

Is the Thing Tested a Violation of the Witness the Spirit Bears With Our Spirit?

Paul says in Romans 8:16, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God"; this is the King James Version. The Amplified says: "The Spirit himself thus testifies together with our spirit, assuring us that we are the children of God." The New International Version says, "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." Paul says in Ephesians 6:17, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Surely, His Spirit witnesses with our spirit through the Word. In 1 Corinthians 2:11, Paul observes, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Now the chart:

Bearing Witness: Romans 8:16; Ephesians 6:17; 1 Corinthians 2:11

Is the Thing Tested a Violation of Conscience?

The word "conscience" appears in something like thirty-one New Testament verses; it does not appear in the Old Testament. Conscience is defined

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as that faculty by which we apprehend the will of God; that process of thought which distinguishes what it considers morally good or morally bad, commending the good, condemning the evil. Paul speaks of a "good conscience" (Acts 23:1); a "pure conscience" to Timothy, and "a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24:26). He warns, when we wound a brother's weak conscience, we sin against Christ. Surely when a thing tested is found to violate the conscience, it cannot be the "good."

Is the Thing Tested a Violation or Disruption of Unity?

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," the Psalmist said (Ps. 133:1). "He that soweth discord among brethren" is to the Lord abominable (Prov. 6:19). Surely, the thing tested that would cause division, disunity in the Lord's church cannot be good. There is surely a ground of unity upon which all can unite.

Is the Thing Tested a Violation or Disruption of Fellowship?

If so, the thing tested cannot be right.

Is the Thing Tested a Violation of the Law of Consistency?

Again, if so, the thing tested cannot be right. Example: The use of the instrument to accompany singing in the assembly has been tested, and found time and time again to be wrong. The law of consistency demands that if the instrument is wrong in the church, such innovations as the Sunday School, individual cups are also wrong; they all stand or fall together. Tested, they fall; the use of all three is not good. One cannot be wrong and the others right. God's plan is always consistent.

Is the Thing Tested a Substitution for the Divine Pattern?

Note again the chart, "The Divine Pattern vs. Liberty in four particulars."

Is the Thing Tested a Violation of Types and Shadows?

Paul writes in Heb. 9:24, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true . . ." This is the King James Version. The New International Version says, "only a copy of the true one;" the Amplified says, "only a copy, and pattern and type of the true one." The church must be under consideration; the old tabernacle must have been a type of it, a mere shadow. Example: In the tabernacle there was the table of shewbread, a type of the Lord's table. On the table of

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shewbread were twelve loaves of unleavened bread. There was a sane, sensible reason for twelve—there were twelve families or tribes of the Lord's chosen; so, on the Lord's Table one loaf of unleavened bread. There is a same, sensible reason for one, not twelve or two, but one—there was one lamb to a house, a type of the loaf, one loaf to a house of worship. The blood of the one lamb to the one house was caught in one basin. Interestingly, the Hebrew word from which we get "basin" can be translated "cup." No wonder on the Lord's Table in one congregation of believers there is one loaf of bread, and one cup of the fruit of the vine. The thing tested must not violate types and shadows, when they are evident.

Conclusion

Matthew Henry, in commenting on "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," has this to say:

This is a needful caution, to prove all things: for, though we must put a value on preaching, we must not take things upon trust from the preacher, but try them by the law and the testimony. We must search the scriptures, whether what they say be true or not. We must not believe every spirit, but must try the spirits. But we must not always be trying, always unsettled: no, at length we must be settled, and hold fast to that which is good. When we are satisfied that any thing is right, and true, and good, we must hold it fast, and not let it go, whatever opposition or whatever persecution we meet with for the sake thereof.

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Journey Out of Time

by Terry Baze

A few thousand years ago, Job asked the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). No doubt every human in every age has pondered such thoughts in his heart. Death is a grim reality to all (Heb. 9:27; 2:15), and it seems that in nearly every time and place, man has held to the hope that there is life after death. But what kind of existence will it be? What will we be like? Even in the first century, Paul realized that some would ask, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" (1 Cor. 15:35). There are many questions that have been asked concerning these things, and even more answers given as men have tried desperately through the centuries to solve these mysteries. The only thing for the Christian to do, is to consult the holy Word of God for the answers to his questions. God has revealed to man as much as He has determined to be necessary, and it is up to each individual to learn it and therewith be content. It is quite futile to attempt to find what is not revealed. There is a wealth of information in the Bible dealing with the last things, and it is therefore impossible to consider it all in such a limited study as this.

The Nature of Man

The fact that man ponders such questions reveals something about the nature of man whom God created. Man was created in God's image (Gen. 1:27). This is not true of any other creature. God created purely spirit beings called angels (Heb. 1:7; Ps. 148:2-5; Job 4:18-19). He also created matter, some of which is purely inanimate, and some that is animated (Col 1:16). Man is unique in that he is neither purely spirit nor material. Man consists of body, soul and spirit (1 Thess. 5:23).

It is often difficult to determine the exact difference between the soul and the spirit. Sometimes the word soul is used in Scripture to refer to life in an animated body (Gen. 2:7; 9:4-5). At other times the word refers to persons (Ex. 1:15; 12:4; Lev. 4:2) and sometimes to the emotions (Gen. 34:3; Ps. 42:2, 5; 131:1-2). The words soul and spirit are often used synonymously and interchangeably (Mt. 27:50; Acts 2:24-31; Lk. 1:46-47), and yet at other times they are distinguished from one another (1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12).

The Scriptures teach that God gave man a body to house his spirit (2 Cor. 5:1-4). Because God has made man with a soul and spirit, he is an intelligent being with conscience, emotion and will. Man's body is the

vehicle through which his soul finds expression. The brain is the part of the body that the mind uses to direct the entire body. If the brain is damaged, or dead, the body fails to function in harmony with the spirit. If the spirit is separated from the body, the body is dead (Jas. 2:26). Neither a dead body nor a singular spirit constitute a man as God created him.

Immortality of the Soul

It is traditionally accepted that the soul of man is immortal and that the body is mortal. The soul will live forever, but the body will die. The Bible teaches that God alone is immortal (1 Tim. 6:16), and that immortality came to light through Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 1:10). God is the only one without beginning or end and therefore the only truly immortal being. It is true that God can create beings that will not die and therefore in a sense they are immortal. However, the One who created these beings (Acts 17:25) also sustains them (Acts 17:28) and can destroy them (Mt. 10:28).

The Bible does not specifically use the phrase "immortal soul." Not even angels are said to be immortal, even though they have endless existence. When the word immortal is applied to man, it is always used in reference to his body. This is not to say that his soul ceases to exist, for it does not. There are many verses which imply continued existence for the soul after the body is dead (Lk. 16:22; 20:38; 23:43; Acts 7:59). It is best, however, to stay with what the Scriptures say to get a better understanding of the subject at hand.

The Fall of Man

God created man for His glory and fellowship (Is. 43:7; Rom. 1:25), and not with the intention that he sin and die. God provided that man could eat of the tree of life and not be subjected to death. It was only when sin entered in, that man was put out of the garden of Eden, away from the tree of life, thus making his body mortal. The terms "mortal" and "immortal" have to do with whether or not the body is subject to death and not necessarily with material constitution. When Adam and Eve sinned, they died. They immediately died spiritually and began to die physically (Rom. 6:23; 5:12-19).

Life is existence with God. Death is separation from Him. It is sin that robs man of life and causes death. Had it not been for sin, death would not have entered the picture. Sin is the reason why all men die both physically and spiritually. Man's body is subject to decay, disease and death. Man's spirit is separated from God and therefore dead. Even though a man may have a body still animated with a soul, he can be dead in his spirit (1 Tim.

5:6). This does not mean the spirit ceases to exist, merely that it is devoid of fellowship with God.

The Scheme of Redemption

God is holy and just, therefore He must punish sin. His problem was that all men sin and are doomed to everlasting separation from Him. This was not God's purpose in creating man. He solved His dilemma with the scheme of redemption, through His Son Jesus. Upon one's obedience to the gospel, he passes from spiritual death to life (Jn. 5:24). He is resurrected from the dead as it were (Rom. 6:4-6). He has been born again spiritually and now enjoys life in his spirit with God. Fellowship is restored. He still lives in a fleshly body in the world of sin (Jn. 17:14-16), yet he now keeps his body in subjection (1 Cor. 9:27) and uses it to serve God (Rom. 6:18). His new life is one dominated by the Holy Spirit. This life that he now enjoys is called eternal life. Eternal life is life with God which endures beyond the present age on this earth and is of far greater substance and quality than ordinary physical life on earth.

Contrary to what some may think, God's plan for redemption is not yet complete. Remember that the Christian is still in a mortal body, one subject to death (Rom. 7:15-25; Gal. 5:17) and decay, showing the consequences of sin are still apparent. The Scriptures affirm that one day all of the saved, whether dead to this life or still living on earth, will receive a glorified, incorruptible, immortal body to house his redeemed spirit in the age to come (1 Cor. 15; 2 Cor. 5:1-10). A redeemed body for his redeemed spirit. Until this transformation occurs, God's plan of redemption is as yet unfinished.

The Scriptures teach that the redemption of the body will take place on a day He has appointed in which all the dead will rise from their graves (Jn. 5:28-29). The redemptive work of Jesus completely covers all that is needed to overthrow the shackles of sin. Through His death on the cross and subsequent resurrection from the dead, man can be completely redeemed in body and spirit.

We might summarize to this point by noting the following diagram:

at his birth	in his soul	endless existence
at the new birth	in his spirit	eternal life
at the resurrection	in his body	immortality

The State of the Dead

What happens to the spirit from the time of death until it is joined with the resurrection body? It is admittedly a difficult subject and in such matters it is probably best not to be too dogmatic. There are some things that are revealed, and others which are not. Then there are some seeming discrepancies and interesting possibilities to consider. There are quite a variety of interpretations of the passages of Scripture which deal with the state of the dead and the resurrection body.

Is there an intermediate state between death and the resurrection or not? If so, what can be determined about it? If not, what happens when man dies?

Perhaps the most popular view is the contention that the Scriptures teach that when a man dies his body returns to the dust from which it came and the spirit goes back to God from whom it came (Eccl. 12:7). God then places these disembodied spirits in a place called Hades. Hades is the common receptacle for all disembodied spirits (Lk. 16:14-31). It is divided into two compartments. The upper region is called Paradise (or Abraham's bosom), where the souls of the righteous rest and are comforted. The lower region is called Tartarus, where the wicked souls are tormented. There is a great gulf between the two regions which no one can cross. These souls are conscious, they retain their memories, their personalities and can communicate with one another. There is no concrete evidence that they can communicate with the living. These souls remain here until the resurrection of all that are in the graves and when they are united with their bodies, they face the final judgment. The righteous will receive their glorified bodies and be rewarded according to their works, realizing an abundant entrance into heaven. The wicked will not receive a glorified immortal body, but will be cast into hell to be punished forever.

A similar view that finds support in Scripture varies slightly from the previous one. There is an intermediate state but the difference is that the righteous souls at death immediately go to be with the Lord in heaven and there await the resurrection day when they will receive their glorified bodies (Lk. 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Phil. 1:23; Rev. 6:9). Hades is not so much a place that is divided between the righteous and wicked, as it is a state of disembodiment. While the righteous are with the Lord, the wicked are held under punishment awaiting judgment (Lk. 16:14-31; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). Hades is spoken of as both the general state of the dead, or in the local sense, the abode of the wicked. The righteous are not said to abide in Hades in a local sense. Hades is contrasted with Abraham's bosom. The two places

are separate and distinct from one another. Paradise (Abraham's bosom) is a reference to heaven, not a region of Hades.

An interesting but unlikely variation of the two above theories is that before Jesus died on the cross, a two part Hadean realm existed with both righteous and wicked there. When Jesus died, he went to Hades and led the righteous souls to heaven (Eph. 4:8-9). Now, the righteous who die go to heaven, while the wicked go to Hades.

The only differences between the two propositions discussed above, is the location of the righteous souls. There seems to be more evidence that they are with the Lord, than that they are in some in-between place. It might be helpful to consider a brief study of the word Hades.

Hades

The corresponding Hebrew word used in the Old Testament was *sheol*. It denoted the abode of the dead situated in the depths of the earth (Ps. 63:9; 86:13; Ezek. 26:20; 31:14; 32:18, 24; Num. 16:30; Deut. 32:22). The expression "gathered to his people" indicates the dead were gathered in companies (Gen. 25:8; 35:29; 49:33; Num. 20:24). This shows that it meant more than just burial in a grave, for Joseph was gathered to his people, his body was embalmed and much later he was buried (Gen. 50:2ff). *Sheol* was described as a place of darkness (Job 10:21-22; Ps. 143:3), of silence (Ps. 94:17; 115:17), and of forgetfulness (Ps. 88:12; Eccl. 9:5-6, 10). It is without remembrance or praise of God (Ps. 6:5), or knowledge of what transpires on earth (Job 14:21). There is consciousness there (Is. 14:9ff; Ezek. 32:21). It is described as destruction (Job 26:6; 28:22; Prov. 15:11), as a pit (Ps. 30:9; 55:23), and sometimes as a state of rest or sleep (Job 3:17ff; 14:12-13). It is referred to as a gloomy, shadowy, feeble existence.

There is no reference to a division of two compartments. The hope of the righteous was to be delivered from that imperfect, partial existence (Ps. 37:37; Is. 57:2; Num. 23:10). Separation of soul and body, an after existence of the soul in *sheol*, belonged to the doom of sin. The true type of immortality is seen in the Old Testament in cases like Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kgs. 2:11). There are many verses in the Old Testament which bring forth the hope of the immortality of the soul, yet the Old Testament concept of death, *sheol*, and the resurrection are very vague compared with the New Testament.

The idea of a two compartment Hadean realm can be traced to the Greeks and during the inter-testamental period was adopted by the Jews in conjunc-

tion with the Old Testament concept of sheol. The word Hades is found eleven times in the New Testament. Six times it is clearly a reference to the abode of the wicked; the other five times it is a reference to the state of death. There are only two possible occurrences where a two compartment Hadean realm could be alluded to (Acts 2:27, 31; Lk. 16:14-31).

In the case of Christ in Acts 2, keep in mind that in Luke 23:43, He said He would be in paradise that day, and in verse 46, He commended His spirit into the Father's hands. The only other two places where the word paradise is found clearly refers to heaven (2 Cor. 12:3-5; Rev. 2:7). Furthermore, Jesus' words are very similar to those of Stephen in Acts 7 where the indication is that Jesus then received His spirit (v. 59). Christ's soul not being left in Hades, simply means that as His body did not see corruption, neither did His soul remain in a dead state, separated from his body.

In the case of Lazarus and the rich man, the text says that the rich man was in Hades. It does not say that Lazarus was in Hades, rather in contrast, he was in Abraham's bosom, far off from Hades.

On the other hand, there are a number of passages in the New Testament which clearly teach that upon death, the spirit of the righteous immediately go to be with the Lord (Lk. 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:6-8; Phil. 1:23; Rev. 6:9; 20:4).

Soul Sleep

A different view regarding the intermediate state of the dead is the concept of soul sleep. It is affirmed that there are many verses which indicate that at death, the souls of both wicked and righteous are unconscious until the resurrection (Mk. 5:39; Jn. 11:11; Acts 7:60; 13:26; 1 Cor. 15:6,18,20). They are unconscious of the passage of time and therefore their next conscious moment is the resurrection. Essentially then, they pass immediately from death to the resurrection in their own awareness. There seems to be too much evidence of the conscious existence of souls after death to accept such a position. The sleeping is not done by the soul, but by the body in the grave.

Immediately With the Lord

There is also the idea of some that there is no intermediate state at all. It is similar to the soul-sleep theory in that there is immediate passage from death to the resurrection. The differences being that there is no soul-sleep, or no interval whatsoever. This theory is based on the Scriptures that imply

that the soul will immediately go to be with the Lord at death, as well as the nature of both man and time.

The advocates of this theory claim that a man cannot exist as a person while the body and spirit are apart. Not only is the body without the spirit dead, but also the spirit without the body is dead. The body and spirit are entirely dependent on one another. Jesus said that the Christian will not taste death (Jn. 8:51; 11:26). Since Jesus tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9), man will not actually die. At death, man leaves the land of the dying and passes into the land of the living.

Both science and physics have proven the relativity of time. God created time and space with the universe. There was no time before the world began, only eternity. "In the beginning" things were created, not as if the beginning of time were a measure of creation, but because together with time the heavens and earth were created. Likewise, space was created with the world. For before the world was, there was no place or space. God is not, however, confined to either time or space (2 Pet.3:8; Jn. 8:58). Since God created both time and space with the universe, there is neither time nor space beyond the universe.

With this in mind, the proponents of this view believe that at death man steps out of time and into eternity. From the perspective of such an one who has died, there is no time. From the perspective of those still living, there is time. From the point of view of those on earth, Adam died over 5,000 years ago, Moses 4,000 years ago, David 3,000 and so on. Since they are in eternity, however, there has been no such passage of time. From their perspective, all have died at the same time. For each individual, death marks the second coming of Jesus, the resurrection of all the dead and judgment. There is no such thing as a temporary, intermediate, disembodied state in eternity.

Intriguing as it sounds, there seems to be too much scriptural evidence to the contrary, as has been noted. It does seem strange to this writer, however, that most of the righteous dead have spent hundreds and thousands of years in an incomplete disembodied existence. It may very well be that the passage of time is much different in that state than in this. It appears from Revelation 6:9-10 that there is some concept of time, but it is beyond man's knowledge as to whether or not the nature of time as known here is the same as what they experience there.

The Resurrection of the Body

In 1 Corinthians 15:35 Paul asked the question that he assumed would be asked by skeptics of the resurrection, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" Such an one who doubts the power of God is indeed foolish. Paul provides a series of arguments proving that there will be a resurrection from the dead. He begins by appealing to nature itself (1 Cor. 15:37-41)—the life long lesson of seed-time and harvest. He then discusses the different kinds of flesh that exist among created beings. Next he speaks of the differences among celestial and terrestrial bodies. He then notes some differences in the mortal body that is buried and the glorious immortal body that will be raised (vv. 42-49). Finally he states that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (v. 50). Therefore, all will be changed, both the dead bodies in the graves and those still living on the earth.

It can be concluded from this that the resurrection body will be very different from man's mortal body in many ways. There is evidence, however, that there will also be some continuity that will exist between the two. Paul told the Philippians that the resurrection body would be like that of Jesus (Phil. 3:21). John said that "we shall be like Him" (1 Jn. 3:2).

Some contend that a study of the body of Jesus while He appeared to His followers during the forty-day period that His resurrected body was on the earth, reveals what the body will be like. There are brief sketches in Scripture that give some idea of what Jesus' resurrected body was like (Lk. 24:37-41; 24:41-49; Jn. 21:5, 9-19). It was recognizable. It was made of flesh and bones. He even retained the scars from His crucifixion. His voice was the same. He ate food. Some contend that He could appear and disappear at will, move through locked doors, become unrecognizable and defy the law of gravity. Some of these so-called proof texts are somewhat inconclusive.

Based on the above, many believe that the resurrected body will be identical to the one man has on earth. It will still be made of flesh and blood and bones. Some go so far as to say the exact same particles that were placed in the grave will constitute the resurrected body. It will, of course, be changed into an incorruptible, immortal body that is empowered by the Holy Spirit, but it will be identical nonetheless.

The proponents of this view usually are pre-millennialists. This provides them with bodies which can pass back and forth from heaven to earth.

There are others who accept this position based on their understanding that the Scriptures teach that all of the universe was corrupted by sin and that all creation will share in the glorious redemption God has prepared. Redemption is not confined to humanity, but rather all of God's creation (Rom. 8:19-23). There will be an entire cosmic redemption, of which man is an integral part. Everything will be restored to what God originally intended when He created the universe (Eph. 1:9-10; Col. 1:19-20). The universe will undergo a change as well as the body. God will make a new heaven and new earth out of this old one (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1).

This is a very interesting viewpoint. In many ways it is sensible, and most importantly it is based on Scripture. It may very well be the truth and yet some of the pertinent Scriptures seem to have been misinterpreted. It seems certain that this present world will be destroyed and will pass away (Mt. 24:35; 2 Pet. 3:10-12; 1 Cor. 6:23; 7:31). The new heavens and earth in Scripture are most likely figures representing the abode of the righteous in heaven itself.

Jesus' Glorified Body

It seems to this writer that the resurrection body that the saved will receive will be like that of Jesus' glorious body when He comes again. There seems to be a discrepancy between the resurrected body as it appeared on earth during the forty days, and the glorious body of Jesus as given at His coronation. According to John 7:39 the Holy Spirit would not be given until Jesus was glorified. The Spirit did not come until Jesus ascended to heaven. The passages dealing with His transfigured, immortal, incorruptible, glorious body do not coincide with what was seen during the forty days. God resurrected Jesus in His physical body to prove beyond any doubt that He truly had risen from the dead. His body was transformed as He ascended into glory and He will return in that glorified body. "We shall see Him as He is" and will also be changed and receive a similar body.

The Bible says that whatever Jesus' body looks like, "we shall be like Him." John said, "it does not yet appear what we shall be" (1 Jn. 3:2). If Jesus' glorified body is identical to His resurrected body during the forty days, it seems like John would have known what the body would be like. Yet he said he did not know. Man shall be similar to the angels in some respects. He will evidently maintain his personal identity and recognize one another. The bodies of the redeemed of the ages will undergo a fabulous transformation. They will be similar to what they now are, yet much different in other ways. God will provide a body such as He chooses. If He desires

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He can resurrect every single particle of the old. He can change it into anything He wants. There are at least two illustrations from the natural world that might help here:

- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------|---|-------------|---|------------|
| 1. | caterpillar | — | chrysalis | — | butterfly |
| 2. | ice | — | water | — | vapor |
| | solid | — | liquid | — | gaseous |
| | tangible | — | visible | — | invisible |
| | firm | — | yielding | — | impalpable |
| | white | — | transparent | — | colorless |

What intelligent man would deny that God has the power to give another form to the elements which constitute man's present physical body?

Conclusion

In concluding these thoughts, remember that all of these things are written to provoke thought and study. These matters are very important, as they comprise the hope of all believers. The Christian's thoughts and actions should be the result of his hope of an eternal existence of bliss that far surpasses this life on earth. The future home and body will be much grander than this. The saints will enjoy splendor and happiness far beyond their fondest dreams. God has begun His redemptive work and Christians presently enjoy a fellowship and peace that the world cannot know. This is only the beginning, however. This is the earnest of the inheritance. Stand back and see the glory of God as He finishes His work. 16852 Timberidge, Tyler, TX 75703

The New Birth

The New Birth

(John 3:3-5)

by Joe Hisle

In the John 3:3-7, we find recorded the words of Jesus concerning the new birth. This is a very important teaching dealing with the salvation of every man's soul. As is often the case with important verses, there is much misunderstanding and confusion about the requirements of the new birth. Many today profess to be "born again" Christians, yet they have never complied with the requirements of the new birth. Others, I am afraid, do not fully appreciate what is involved in this process called the "new birth." As we begin the study of these passages, may I impress upon you the importance of this study. Jesus said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he *cannot* enter into the kingdom of God."

To lay the foundation for our study, let us note the basic facts revealed in verse five: "Jesus answered, 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." From this verse we learn:

1. There is one new birth.
2. There are two elements required:
 - a. Water
 - b. Spirit.
3. This birth of water and Spirit occurs at the same time.

It is necessary to keep these facts in mind as we study the various ideas concerning the new birth, and remember, the subject under consideration is "birth." There is no mention of the process of being begotten. The facts are: There is only one new birth required, this new birth requires the two elements of water and Spirit.

Note also, as I think this is significant, the order of these elements, Jesus said, "water and of the Spirit." The birth of water and Spirit happens simultaneously. One is not "half" born at one time and then completes the other half at a later time. With these facts in mind, let us notice various ideas about being born again.

Theory One: Baptism Is Not Taught

John Calvin was one of the first to corrupt the teaching of the new birth. Calvin tried to eliminate the need for baptism in water by saying "the water

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represents the Holy Spirit in a spiritual sense." He would read verse 5, "Except a man be born of the water which is the Spirit." Of course, this was just one of many errors that John Calvin made with the Scriptures. Mr. Calvin forgot there are two elements in the new birth, equally important and equally essential: water and Spirit.

Theory Two: Baptism of the Holy Spirit Is Taught

A second idea comes from those who believe in receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This persuasion believes that one "gets religion" at the altar. He is baptized by the Spirit, and at some later date he is baptized in water. Thus he is born of Spirit and water.

It is obvious that there are several scriptural problems with this understanding of John 3. First, this forces two births where there is only one. We are born of water and Spirit, not born of Spirit and later born of water. The Bible says "born again," not again and again; not once at the altar and once at the creek. Please notice also that the order of the command has been reversed. Jesus said, "water and of the Spirit." Jesus did not say, "Spirit and water."

Theory Three: "Born of Water" Refers to Natural Birth

There is a third theory about the new birth that seems to be the most ridiculous of all. But before you laugh, let me tell you that this is one of the most commonly held of all unscriptural theories. It says that the new birth consists of the natural birth (literally being born in a bag of water), then being born of the Spirit when one "gets religion."

Here again, there are several practices that violate the basic requirements of the new birth. This theory requires two births: born naturally and born religiously. The new birth of the Bible is one (singular) new birth. This theory also violates the Scriptures in that it does not allow for the birth of water and of the Spirit to take place at the same time. There would be years between the natural birth (in a bag of water) and the birth of Spirit (getting religion). But the real problem with those who hold this view is that they have missed the entire point of the Scriptures. Nicodemus did not inquire, "How is a child born into the world?", but "How can a *man* be born when he is old?" The subject of the new birth is already a *man*. Jesus explains that for a *man* to enter into the kingdom of God, that *man* must be born again of water and the Spirit.

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Theory Four: Begotten of the Spirit and Born of Water

Perhaps the most common way that I have heard these passages taught is, we are "begotten of the Spirit" and then "born of the water." The alien sinner is begotten of the Spirit thru the Word of God. He is then born of the water when he is baptized. I would like for you to notice that there are several Scriptural problems with this teaching.

First, the required order is reversed: begotten of the Spirit and then born of the water. This is not the arrangement given by Jesus. If the Lord had intended this arrangement, why did He not say, "A man must be begotten of the Spirit and born of the water." The conclusion is obvious. This is not what the Lord intended.

Second, some tell me that the order in this place is not important. How do we know when the order is not important? Is the order important in Acts 2:38? Mark 16:16? Matthew 26:26-27? I conclude that if the order is important in these verses (and I believe it is), the order is important in John 3:5. The theory under consideration breaks up the order of the Lord's arrangement and places the Spirit as far before water as faith precedes baptism.

Third, a more compelling problem with this way of teaching the new birth has to do with the Greek word *gennao*, here rendered "born." I understand the word could have been rendered either "born" or "begotten," but the word cannot mean both born and begotten in the same place and at the same time. A word can have only one meaning in one place. This is a rule of language. Ernesti, in his *Philosophy of Language*, gives two such rules.

1. The sense of a word can not be diverse or multiform at the same time and in the same place.
2. In no language can a word have more than one literal meaning in the same place.

Here is our dilemma: we must decide which word we want to use. Do we want to render the word "begotten?" If so, "begotten" must apply to both the water and the Spirit: "Begotten of the water and of the Spirit." If this is the case, the process is "all begetting;" there is no birth at all! The conclusion: the Greek word cannot be rendered both born and begotten. Since Nicodemus asked, "Can he enter the second time into his mother's

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womb, and be born," the subject under consideration is being born, not being begotten.

There are two elements in the new birth, they are water and the Spirit. A man must be born of both to be born again. He is not begotten of the Spirit and born of the water. He must be born of both water and of the Spirit to be born at all!

What Is the Teaching of John 3?

Let us look at the process of being begotten and then being born into the kingdom of God. The alien sinner may be begotten by the Word of God. When the gospel is preached to a sinner, the seed, which is the Word of God (Lk 8:11) has been sown. If that Word lodges in a good heart, that person has been begotten by the Word. The sinner has been begotten, but he has not been born, nor has he been "half born." The birth may be minutes or hours away, or even days or years away—or sadly, he may never be born.

Birth is actually a transition from one form of life to another. A baby is literally delivered in a bag of water. When he takes his first breath of air, he has made the transition from one form of life to another. Similarly, a spiritual transition is made by an alien sinner when he is begotten by the gospel of Christ and obeys the gospel to be born again. In the new birth, he is born of water when he is baptized in water and born of the Spirit when he is quickened (made spiritually alive) thru God's Holy Spirit. His sins are washed away in baptism, and he is brought to spiritual life thru the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:11 reads, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

John 3:6 reads, "Jesus said . . . that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." By this birth of water and of the Spirit, the sinner has made the transition from the life as a sinner to the new life as a child of God. Paul says, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

Will this explanation satisfy the basic requirement of the new birth? The answer is "yes." There is one new birth, and it involves two elements: water and the Spirit. These elements must occur in the proper order and also at the same time. Following are some parallel verses for your consideration.

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Titus 3:5 "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."

Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

John 3:5 Born of Water + of the Spirit = entrance in the Kingdom of God

Titus 3:5 Washing of Regeneration + Renewing of the Holy Ghost = Saved

Acts 2:38 Baptism + the gift of the Holy Spirit = Remission of Sin

I hope that we can fully appreciate the opportunity that we have through the grace of God to be born again; to rise above the condemnation that is to reign upon this earth as sons and daughters of our heavenly Father. If you are to have any hope of being righteous in the sight of God, "Ye must be born again!" *Rt. 4, Ada, Oklahoma 74820*

New Age Movement

The New Age Movement

by Alan Bonifay

Please note that in the following introduction to the New Age Movement, and more specifically the world view of the New Age Movement, I can claim no originality. What you are reading is largely taken from chapter one, "The One For All," of an excellent book by Douglas R. Groothuis. The book is entitled **Unmasking The New Age**. Rather than reference my lengthy quotations I here publish this disclaimer to any originality beyond a few reductions and adaptations to fit my time limitations. I highly recommend that you read the book in its entirety. It is published by InterVarsity Press; Downers Grove, Illinois.

The New Age Movement

Picture twenty-five normal first-graders peacefully lying in silence on their classroom floor. It is not a fire drill or an air raid, but part of the new curriculum. The children are being guided through a meditation in which they are instructed to imagine the sun radiantly shining toward them. They are then told to gaze into its brightness without being hurt by the light. Next, the children are asked to try to bring the sun down into their bodies and feel its warmth, power, and illumination. "Imagine that you are doing something perfect," the teacher commands, "and that you are perfect."

The children are told to see themselves as resplendent with light; they should feel at peace, for they are perfect. They "are reminded that they are intelligent, magnificent and that they contain all of the wisdom of the universe within themselves." This "exercise" actually took place in a Los Angeles public school. The designer of the meditation, the late Beverly Galyean, desired to apply her federally funded "confluent education" to the masses of students who need an "expanded view of learning." This is not prayer, since prayer is forbidden; but neither is it the three R's.

What is behind Galyean's approach? She tells us herself:

Once we begin to see that we are all God, that we all have the attributes of God, then I think the whole purpose of human life is to re-own the Godlikeness within us; the perfect love, the perfect wisdom, the perfect understanding, the perfect intelligence, and when we do that, we create back to that old, that essential oneness which is consciousness.

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Though we might like to think so, Galyean's "confluent education" is not an isolated case. Nor can she be written off as merely strange or weird. Instead, this is just one of the many manifestations of a fast growing, insurgent world view that promises to engulf the globe. Not only are school-children affected, but all of society as well. A philosophically united confederacy has begun to converge on Western culture and promises to radically transform both the consciousness and character of the modern world. Examples of this world-view shift, frequently described as "the New Age Movement," are not far from our everyday experience.

Most of you are familiar with Shirley MacLaine, the actress/writer, and the two books she has written chronicling her reluctant conversion to a "New Age" view of things: **Out on a Limb** and **Dancing in the Light**. MacLaine's central premise is that "nothing is more powerful than the collective human mind." Her message is fourfold: first, you are gods (although you might be ignorant of it); second, you have lived before and will live again; third, there is no death ("Perhaps death is the greatest unreality of all"); fourth, there are as many realities as there are people since we create our own reality.

We can see an undercurrent of expectation and excitement throughout the academic disciplines and among people in general. There is a growing consensus that the modern world is on the brink of the extraordinary and that a great transformation awaits us. Check the magazine rack of a local health-food store or browse the occult bookshelves at Waldenbooks and you will see this unifying thread of belief. Examine current magazines—"New Age," "Yoga Journal," "East-West Journal," "New Realities," "Whole Life Times," or even "Science Digest"—and you will find it. Consider the number of articles about ESP, altered states of consciousness, the new physics and Eastern religion that are appearing in establishment magazines. Ask an acquaintance who meditates or follows astrology, or even many prominent physicists, what it is all about and you will get basically the same answer. Pursue the psychology, philosophy, and science sections of any major bookstore and notice how they have many of the same titles that are in the Eastern religion and occult sections. Whether from Eastern religions, the occult, the new psychologies, the "frontier" theories of science, New Age politics or New Age versions of Christianity, various ideas with a common theme are converging on our culture, pressing their way to the philosophical and ideological center of society.

A new world view is in the offing; a revolution in consciousness beckons. All is one—both good and evil. We are all god—and our first-graders should

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know it. The mind controls all—if we only use it. These are ideas—potent ideas—that have consequences for the whole of life. They are shaping the lives of more and more Westerners. This reality, this “New Consciousness,” is hoping to bring about a “New Age” of hope and human fulfillment. New Age advocates argue that the West has been locked in a prison of the ordinary and one-dimensional, separated from the mystical vitality of a universe of harmonious dancing energy. The problems besetting the modern world—the threat of nuclear holocaust, world hunger, ecological devastation, psychological breakdowns—are blamed on a false, rapidly decaying world view; an outmoded perspective on life. Those sleeping must be awakened before the sleep turns to death. The old ways and views are impotent. They cannot rescue modern humanity.

Before outlining the world view of this New Consciousness, we need to understand the effect of any world view on culture. It is innate within man to worship, and consequently some religion or other will govern society. Humanity requires a picture of the world and of one's place in it. Without it we would be reduced to perpetual indecision and social vertigo. This “frame of orientation” or “religion” involves a world view which can be defined as “a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic make-up of the world.” Our world view bears necessarily on everything we do as individuals and as a society. Since the New Age movement purports to provide the desperately needed world view to usher in the Age of Aquarius, we must carefully investigate what it affirms and why, lest we credulously follow its dictates without giving it a thought.

What, then, is the new paradigm put forth by New Age advocates? The task of properly identifying, analyzing and critiquing something as large and varied as the New Age movement is a formidable task for several reasons. First, the New Age movement is quite eclectic; it draws from many sources. While unifying themes can be uncovered, there is also great diversity. Second, because of great diversity, statements made by representatives of the New Age may not hold for all of those associated with it. Third, the New Age world view itself emphasizes and exalts change and evolution.

Features of New Age Doctrine

Therefore, many of those involved in the New Age Movement often shift their perspectives, making their ideas sometimes hard to pin down. Nevertheless, we can identify six distinctives of New Age thinking.

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1. All Is One—Monism. The idea that "all is one" is foundational for the New Age, it permeates the movement in all its multivarious manifestations, from holistic health to the new physics; from green politics to transpersonal psychology; from Eastern religious to the occult. Another name for this concept is "monism."

Monism is the belief that all that is, is one. All is interrelated, interdependent, interpenetrating. Ultimately there is no difference between God, a person, a carrot or a rock. They are all part of one continuous reality that has no boundaries and no ultimate divisions. Any perceived differences between separate entities—between Joe and Judy or between Joe and a tree or between God and Judy—are only apparent and not real. All is one; ultimate reality is beyond good and evil.

This is the essential teaching of much of Eastern religion and occultism, and it is being advocated by a host of New Age scientists. The physicist and philosopher Fritzof Capra says in his book **The Turning Point** that the ultimate state of consciousness is one "in which all boundaries and dualisms have been transcended and all individuality dissolves into universal, undifferentiated oneness." There are not many selves but One Self, the One.

Monism, the basic premise of the New Age Movement, is radically at odds with a Christian view of reality. A Christian world view affirms that God's creation is not an undivided unity but rather a created diversity of objects, events, and persons. Genesis 1 records God creating particular things. God separated the light from the darkness, day from night, the earth from the sky and the dry ground from the seas. He then created plants and animals according to their various kinds. Finally, He created man in His image. Creation is thus not a homogeneous soup of undifferentiated unity but a created plurality. Creation is not unified in itself, but in the plan and purpose of God—in Christ "all things hold together" (Col. 1:17). Our world is, as C. S. Lewis put it, "incorrigibly plural." Even God himself, according to the Bible, is not an un-differentiated unity, but a tri-unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And everywhere in God's Word, God is incredibly transcendent about His creation. Man is not one essence with God.

2. All Is God—Pantheism. Once we admit that all is one, including God, then it is a short step to admitting "all is god." This is pantheism. All things—plants, snails, books and so on—are said to partake of our divine essence. Remember our school children who were told to imagine themselves as perfect beings? How could it be otherwise in this world view? All is one! All is god! Whatever is, is god and therefore perfect.

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Going even further, it is argued that if everything is one, and if all dualities in reality dissolve into the cosmic unity, then so does the idea of personality. A personality can only exist where it defines itself in relation to other beings or things. Even self-consciousness demands some form of a relationship. But if all is one, then there is only one being—the One. The One does not have a personality for it is beyond personality. God is more an “it” than a “He.” The idea of a personal God is abandoned in favor of an impersonal energy, force or consciousness. Ultimate reality is god, who is in all and through all; in fact, god is all.

Biblically, however, all is not god. God, the Creator, stands transcendently distinct from His creation. While God is present in His creation, He is not to be confused with the creation. Creation does not contain Him. The Apostle Paul spoke against those who “exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the creator” (Rom. 1:25). The book of Ecclesiastes tells us that “God is in heaven and you are on earth” (5:2). To identify what is not God as god is what the Bible calls idolatry. C. S. Lewis puts it well: “Pantheism is a creed not so much false as hopelessly behind the times. Once, before the Creation, it would have been true to say everything was God. But God created: He caused things to be other than Himself.” Creation is derived from its Creator, depending on Him for both its origin and continued existence; it has no independent existence. The Creator God is not an impersonal force, energy or consciousness, but a living personal Being of infinite intelligence, power and purity. God is not an amoral entity, but a moral agent who says “Thou shalt not” and calls people to repentance and faith.

3. Humanity is God. This is one of the seductive claims of the New Age: we are not only perfect; we are, in fact, gods. Philosopher and New Age precursor L. L. Whyte is forthright: “It has long been held that whoever denies [the transcendent] God asserts his own divinity. In dropping god, man recovers himself. It is time that God be put in his place, that is, in man, and no nonsense about it.” Author Paul Williams provides this cosmic quip: “Remember, but not for the grace of God, we would not be God. It’s something to think about.” We are god in disguise. Only ignorance keeps us from realizing our divine reality. Our goal, according to New Age analyst Theodore Roszak is “to awaken the god who sleeps at the root of the human being.” Swami Muktananda—a great influence on Werner Erhard, founder of *est* (Erhard Seminars Training) and Forum—pulls no pantheistic punches when he says: “Kneel to your own self. Honor and worship your own being. God dwells within you as you!” Whether it comes from Eastern religions such as Hinduism—“Atman is Brahman” (the individual self is really the

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universal Self)—or from classical occultism—"as above so below" (God and humanity are one)—or from the new self-actualizing psychologies, "all knowledge, power and truth are within and waiting to be unlocked."

The New Age raises the placard of pantheism high—you are god! Stewart Brand, writing in the introduction to the popular **The Next Whole Earth Catalogue**, says, "We are as gods and might as well get good at it." This is the "good news" the New Age has to preach. According to George Leonard, long-time New Age activist and author, each of us "is the entire universe," and "we are like a God, omnipotent and omniscient."

But the truth is that humanity is not God. Christianity affirms that though human beings are made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26), they are not, in essence, God. We reflect our Creator in that we, like Him, are personal—we think, feel and act. We have an eternal spirit. But we are not infinite, all-powerful, all-knowing or everywhere present. We are finite and personal, whereas God is infinite and personal. We are creatures; He is the Creator. Divinity must not be confused with humanity. The Bible repeatedly condemns pretenders to the divine throne (Isa. 14:13-15; Ezek. 28:1-2; Acts 12:21-23).

4. A Change in Consciousness. All is one; all is god; we are god. What could be more simple? Then why do not we know ourselves as gods? What is our problem? The answer is simple: ignorance. Western culture has shaped our consciousness, trimming our experience and taming our metaphysics. We remain content with the everyday illusions of human limitation and finitude. We need to be enlightened. We have forgotten our true identity.

But, we are told, there is hope. This metaphysical amnesia can be reversed by techniques designed to alter ordinary consciousness. These techniques open "the doors of perception," so that we can see true reality. This change in consciousness, whatever the means, leads to an awareness of oneness and spiritual power. There are many ways we can achieve this enlightenment. Michael Murphy assures us in his book **The Psychic Side of Sports**, that extreme physical achievement can induce a mystical state of consciousness much like that spoken of in Eastern religions. But such a change in consciousness is by no means limited to the playing field. According to Fritzof Capra, it can also occur in the science lab. After having an experience that altered his understanding of the universe, he describes how what had previously been scientific theories became for him a mystical reality. Capra's experience of oneness, which he called "the dance of Shiva, The Lord of dancers, worshipped by the Hindus," compelled him to attempt a reconcilia-

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tion and marriage between modern high energy physics and Eastern mysticism.

Even UFOs, a supposed extra-terrestrial contact, may result in a conversion to New Age philosophy. Shirley MacLaine, for instance, claims that her book *Out on a Limb* was indirectly inspired by an extra-terrestrial named "the Mayou." To gain this type of transformation, the three ideas that all is one, all is god, and we are god, must be more than intellectual propositions. They must be awakened at the core of our being. Such an experience may be either spontaneous and unplanned or the result of disciplined practice in meditation, yoga, or some other "consciousness-raising technique."

Another door to New Age conversion is represented by mass training sessions such as *est* (Erhard Seminars Training). But *est* is only one of numerous means of experiencing a revolution in consciousness. Scores of people are chanting, dancing or tripping their way into altered states of awareness. They use self-hypnosis, internal visualization, biofeedback and several other exotic methods. There are many names for this transforming experience: cosmic consciousness, God-realization, self-realization, enlightenment, and illumination. Buddhists call it "Nirvana," Zen masters call it "Satori," Hindus refer to it as "at-one-ment" or "satchitananda." But whatever the name, this new level of awareness is said to be vital for the resurrection of Western civilization and the world. The old consciousness of Western rationalism has stripped the world of mystic meaning. Only through a resurrection of consciousness will the world be raised out of the modern miry pit. As the popular New Age radio program "New Dimensions" says in their introduction, "It is only through a change of consciousness that the world will be changed. This is our responsibility."

And what are we to do? We are to look within. As one New Age ad put it, "The only way out is in." "All is perfect," says Werner Erhard. The trouble is we do not see it. Humans are not depraved or dependent on any outside source of deliverance or strength. The answer is not reconciliation with a God different from ourselves, but the realization that we ourselves are God. The self is the cosmic treasury of wisdom, power and delight. Once the true knowledge (or "gnosis") of reality is realized, higher powers are activated within. The limitations of a supposedly finite and imperfect being fade into the limitless potential of the truly enlightened being. The awesome expanses of parapsychology open before us: telepathy, ESP, precognition, telekinesis and others.

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Alan Vaughan, writing in *Futurist* magazine, claims that once precognition (predicting the future)

has emerged from the world of the strange into the everyday world of business, government, education, and science, the stage will be set for a new leap forward: An enlightened society will have the wisdom to foresee and fulfill its best future.

Shirley MacLaine captures this spirit:

We already know everything. The knowingness of our divinity is the highest intelligence. And to be what we already know is the free will. Free will is simply the enactment of the realization you are God, a realization that you are divine: free will is making everything accessible to you.

Everything and anything is potentially accessible. We all create our own reality. To use an older phrase, it is simply "mind over matter."

Never mind that some New Age teachings seem contradictory: that there are many realities and that all is one. The answer of some is that ordinary logic does not apply to the higher states of consciousness. In fact, it may hinder the raising of consciousness. Though some may qualify this statement, New Age thinkers agree that the One is beyond what the normal intellect can grasp. It must be experienced, not discussed.

Christianity also affirms that we need a change in consciousness, though it differs in seeing what this entails. Biblically, the dilemma of humanity is not ignorance of our true divinity, but the reality of our sin—we have rebelled against a Holy God and His moral law. The problem, not the answer, is within. Jesus said that out of our hearts proceeds all evil (Mk. 7:22-23). The fall of man, recorded in Genesis 3, gives the pattern of human rebellion against the legitimate authority of God—independence is declared from God and His law in favor of self-law. Since that time, "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). The New Age sees the answer to this dilemma in releasing human potential—the divine within. But Christianity claims that the only way out is through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, God made flesh. Salvation by obedience to the gospel is the process by which we gain a new consciousness, and it is found in Christ. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: for old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 5:17-18). Jesus taught

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that whoever believes in Him could know the forgiveness of sins and have eternal life—the life He himself foreshadowed by His own resurrection (Jn. 3:16; Acts 17:30-31). Jesus did not teach “at-one-ment” with the One (losing individuality), but “atonement” with God through His sacrificial death on the cross.

Neither does one need to dissolve logical thought to approach God. God, as a personal and rational being, reveals Himself in understandable propositions in the Bible. In Romans 12:1, Paul says that our service to God is one determined by reason. But one must approach God with humility if anything is to be discovered, for God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble (Jas. 4:6). The Bible warns us about approaching the spiritual dimension apart from Christ (Acts 19:13-20). The New Age’s appeal to psychic power opens a Pandora’s box of paranormal poisons which the Bible prohibits (Lev. 19:26, 31; Deut. 18:10-12; Gal. 5:20). The demonic spiritual realm opens wide before the unprotected psychic sojourner with numerous counterfeit charms declared “off-limits” by a loving Creator.

5. All Religions Are One. New Age gurus frequently claim that all religions are one, and at their core, teach the one for all. This is called “syncretism.” Certainly if all is one, all is god and we are god, we should expect the enlightened ones of all the great religions—Jesus, Buddha, Lao-tse, Krishna and others—would have taught and experienced the same oneness. The externals of religions may all differ, but the essence is the same. There may be many paths to the one truth, many methods to become one with the One, but all differences are superficial and external. Dogmas may come and go, but the vital experience of “the god within” is common throughout the world. This “perennial philosophy,” as Aldous Huxley called it, is said to undergird the experiences throughout history of Hindus, Buddhists, Hebrews, Taoists, Christians, and Muslims.

Consequently, the distinctiveness of Christianity must be denied. Claims of uniqueness and exclusiveness must be dissolved into the cosmic unity. Philosopher Jacob Needleman and guru Da Free John speak of a “lost Christianity,” which turns out to be little different from Eastern mysticism and occultism. This, they proclaim, is the true, but suppressed, reality of Jesus. A recent book by Elaine Pagels, **The Gnostic Gospels**, champions Gnosticism, an early Christian heresy, as the true form of faith and experience. The Jesus of the Gnostic was little different from a Hindu sage. The Gospel of Thomas reports Jesus saying, “It is I who am the light which is above them all. It is I who am the All. From me did the All come forth, and unto me did the All extend. Split a piece of wood and I am there. Lift up the

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stone, and you will find Me there." Jesus of Nazareth, then, is no longer said to be the only begotten Son of God, the God-man, the Lord and Savior. He is merely one of many appearances or manifestations of God throughout the millennia. His mission was to alert the sleeping masses to their innate divinity. Jesus is thus reverently enshrined in the pantheistic pantheon, where He echoes the chorus of the enlightened—"all is one." The Christ of the Bible is redefined and made the ventriloquist's puppet of the New Age. Christ as the mediator between God and humanity is replaced with the idea of "Christ-consciousness," which is another word for cosmic consciousness. Likewise, the biblical teaching of eternal judgment (heaven or hell) is replaced by reincarnation in much New Age thought.

But the Christ of the Bible is not merely one of many manifestations of God. In fact, Christ is the only manifestation of God in the flesh. He claimed to be "the way, the truth and the life" (Jn. 14:6). The Apostle Peter declared that "salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Christ will not join the pantheistic pantheon, but instead stands above it in judgment. His exclusivity is our liberation because He calls all to Himself.

Not only is Jesus the only way, but the Bible is the only divine revelation (Jude 3, Gal. 1:6-9). It is not the result of man's search after God, for it announces itself as a distinctively revealed religion (1 Cor. 2:1-16). In fact, it is the only revealed religion. Furthermore, the Scriptures teach that Jesus is the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:23), the body is the church (Eph. 1:22-23), and there is only one body (Eph. 4:4). All religions are not one.

6. Cosmic Evolutionary Optimism. Over twenty-five years ago, Julian Huxley, avowed secular humanist and defender of rational science as the interpreter of all of life, laid the motivational groundwork for the New Age. He said,

Man is that part of reality in which, and through which, the cosmic process has become conscious and has begun to comprehend itself. His supreme task is to increase that conscious comprehension and to apply it as fully as possible to guide the course of events.

Huxley was far from being a mystic in the New Age sense, yet his vision has sparked the New Age Movement with optimism and hope. As this philosophy gains ground and infiltrates all of life with the gospel of cosmic unity, it is predicted that humanity will be ready to take over the reins of evolution. Teilhard de Chardin, Jesuit priest, philosopher and paleontologist,

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prophesied a progressive evolutionary harmonization and unification of world consciousness, eventually reaching "the Omega point," where all consciousness is fused and all become one with the One.

Teilhard, a patron saint of the New Age, though deemed unorthodox and suppressed by the Roman Catholic Church, is just one of many seers, sages, and scientists who predict massive transformation. The evolutionary juices are flowing. William Irvin Thompson is expectant:

Whether the movement from one-world system to another will involve stumbling or total collapse may very well depend on the success or failure of the New Age Movement. Now as we stand poised at the edge of a great transformation, we are prophetically inspired and politically armored as never before.

The time is right for change. George Leonard sees the potential:

The current period is indeed unique in history and . . . represents the beginning of the most thorough-going change in the quality of human existence since the creation of an agricultural surplus brought about the birth of civilized states some five thousand years ago.

A variety of futurists—notably Barbara Marx Hubbard and Willis Harman—expect a new age to dawn, rising out of the ashes of the old Western world view. Hubbard warns that global problems are increasing exponentially; yet, at the same time, our potentials are also growing exponentially. We must move beyond the "crisis futurism" of doomsday scenarios in which we are seen as "poor lost riders mounted upon a wild horse of transformation with little hope of gaining control." Instead we must embrace a "spiritual futurism" which incorporates all the strength of "evolutionary futurism" (i.e. hope for radical evolutionary change). With millions now "actively praying, listening to inner tuition, expanding their awareness toward whole-centered consciousness," we see that evolution itself is "a consciousness-raising experience." We may even expect a new superhuman species which will be "as superior to present day humanity as we are to the apes." As consciousness changes, so will the future. In her book, *The Evolutionary Journey*, Hubbard explains what she means by "spiritual futurism": "At this moment of our planetary birth each person is called upon to recognize that the Messiah is within. Christ consciousness or cosmic consciousness is awakening in millions of Christians and non-Christians." The "Messiah within" will lead all of us forward into a glorious future. We should remember that

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Hubbard's article on "spiritual futurism" did not appear in an obscure occult newsletter, but in a mainline magazine, *The Futurist*. Even "the establishment" is becoming primed for transformation.

Christians can be both more optimistic and more pessimistic about the future than are followers of the New Age Movement. The Bible views history as moving according to the sovereign will of the Creator and Governor of the universe, "who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will" (Eph. 1:11). Hope for the future does not lie in realizing the potential of collective humanity but in the promises of God. God promised in the Old Testament to bless nations that obeyed him and to curse nations that disobeyed him (Deut. 8:28; Jer. 18:5-10). The culmination of history will not be a great planetary consciousness, but the return of Jesus Christ to separate the sheep from the goats for all eternity. For some the future will be much better than we could ever imagine, and for others, it will be indescribably worse.

New Age Connections

A key element of hope in the New Age agenda is the information revolution. As we move from the Industrial Age to the Information Age, the New Age hopes to cover the globe with a myriad of "networks"—interconnecting ideas, people, services, and organizations in order to implement world transformation.

Marilyn Ferguson, an exuberant instigator and reporter for the New Age, finds these networks and "networking" to be crucial for transformation. As the New Age is aligned in new ways, new patterns of organization emerge connected by "little clusters and loose networks." Yet, this is not to be underestimated; she claims there are "tens of thousands of entry points" serving to band together the likeminded. Networking is done by "conferences, phone calls, air travel, books, phantom organizations, papers, pamphleteering, photocopying, lectures, workshops, parties, grapevines, mutual friends, summit meetings, coalitions, tapes, newsletters." These interconnections help to spread the "transformative vision," as those sharing concerns about health, politics, ecology, psychology or any number of other subjects join together to be antidotes to alienation and "generate power enough to remake society." Ferguson refers to the present webs as SPINS (Segmented Polycentric Integrated Networks). Neither bureaucracy nor hierarchy, these networks have the power of a lion and the cunning of a fox.

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Just as a bureaucracy is less than the sum of its parts, a network is many times greater than the sum of its parts. This is a source of power never before tapped in history: multiple self-sufficient social movements linked for a whole array of goals whose accomplishment would transform every aspect of contemporary life (M. Ferguson, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*).

Judging from the listings in books such as *The New Age Source Book* and *New Age Dictionary*, thousands of groups are in some sense connected with the New Age agenda. These networks, Barbara Marx Hubbard believes, will form a matrix for radical transformation. At sometime, she thinks the networks will network, and the new linkages will lead to a "sudden shift" and "the apparently rapid appearance of a new order."

Is the New Age Movement a Conspiracy?

Networks link together a host of New Age groups and help solidify the movement. A sampling of groups identifying with New Age ideas would include the following:

1. Most holistic health associations, including: American Holistic Health Medical Association, The East-West Academy of healing Arts, The Mandala Society, The Association of Holistic Health
2. Many political action groups, including: World Goodwill, Planetary Citizens, Unity in Diversity Council, Greenpeace
3. Consciousness-raising groups, such as: Lifespring, *est*, Transcendental Meditation, Silva Mind Control
4. Think Tanks, such as: Esaleri Institute, Narapa Institute, SRI (which does some work totally unconnected with the New Age), Lorain Association, Findhow, Lindisfane Association
5. Religious groups: Eckankar, Ananda, Marga Yoga Society, Scientology, Church Universal and Triumphant, Theosophy, Followers of the gurus Da Free John, Rajneesh and Sri Chinmoy.

In addition, there are a host of grassroots organizations sprinkled throughout the country and the world. But is it a conspiracy?

Much Christian interest in the New Age has centered around various conspiracy theories. Because of the pervasiveness and insidious influence of New Age ideas, it would not be unnatural to assume that some level of

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conspiracy was afoot. But we must keep in mind that conspiracy theories of all shapes, sizes, and styles have been crisscrossing the planet throughout history. Any group that has transnational allegiances (such as Freemasons, Jews, Roman Catholics, and international bankers) has been targeted as the elite conspirators plotting world takeover. New Age conspiracy charges simply transfer this thinking into a more modern context.

Levels of conspiracy are natural to likeminded people and groups. The New Age makes much of networking—linking ideas and people together for greater influence and creativity. This is nothing new. Christians work together to advance the kingdom of God. Communists work together to expand their regime. Those linked by ideology want to implement a common agenda. But conspiratorial speculations should be tempered by several cautions.

First, every New Age group is not consciously working with all the others to take over the world. New Age individuals and groups share common goals, but they do not always have common strategies for achieving them.

Second, what conspiracy theories have in sophistication they usually lack in concrete evidence. Showing connection between people and groups is one thing; demonstrating conspiracy is another. New Age influence in our culture is undeniable, but its power as a comprehensive conspiracy is less certain. God Himself warned the prophet Isaiah to “not call conspiracy everything that these people call conspiracy; do not fear what they fear, and do not dread it” (Isa. 8:12).

Third, even if there exists a vast and conscious conspiracy (which is doubtful), endless conspiratorial speculation misses the point. An understanding of the New Age’s influence on our culture should lead Christians to expose the error and erect Christian alternatives, rather than fill in the conspiratorial map with more and more connections. That is simply a waste of time. A doctor who spends all his time diagnosing an illness without ever treating it is irresponsible. After the x-ray should come the treatment, not more x-rays.

Fourth, an exaggerated emphasis on conspiracy tends to isolate one group of people as responsible for all the world’s evil. Blame is shifted from all to the few—from oneself to the evil conspirators. Sin is localized in the offending group, not in everyone. New Agers may be used as scapegoats for all societal ills. Thus we are freed from our responsibility for the world’s plight and immobilized at the same time—since we are not a part of the

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world-controlling elite, we can do nothing. Scenarios of doom replace visions of hope.

However, the Bible does speak of a general conspiracy of evil against God, His rule, and the church (Eph. 6:12) and of Satan's influence on unbelievers (2 Cor. 4:4). Nevertheless, the Word does not indicate that Satan or his demons are in control. To the contrary, Christ Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and earth (Mt. 28:18-20). The earth belongs to the Lord (Ps. 24:1-2) and Christ has destroyed the works of the Devil (1 Jn. 3:8) and stripped from him his miraculous power, making a show of him in open triumph (Col. 2:15). Satan's imps have been led captive in the triumphal train of Jesus (Eph. 4:8). It is true that Satan has influence in our world (1 Tim. 4:1ff), but not miraculous power. While Christians are to be aware of Satan's devices (1 Cor. 2:11), it is God alone whom they are to fear (Pro. 1:7). Eric Pement comments:

Conspiracy theories are a dime a dozen, and none of them should cause us to put down the sickle and take up the spyglass. If we must have a conspiracy then let us be part of it—an invading fifth column, working toward the final overthrow of darkness. Our words and actions should therefore spring not from the paranoia of the times, but from the forthright love and boldness of God.

While levels of cooperation and organization exist between various groups and individuals, the New Age Movement is better viewed as a world view shift (a "new paradigm" as they would say), than as a unified global conspiracy. This is not to minimize its influence, but to recognize it as an intellectual, spiritual, and cultural force to be reckoned with in all sobriety.

The New Age Movement has no uniforms, membership cards, dues or official leaders, yet its influence is widespread and growing. It has many spokesmen from a wide variety of disciplines. Marilyn Ferguson is an author, Fritzof Capra is a physicist and author, Shirley MacLaine is an actress and author, Theodore Roszak is an historian, David Spangler is an author and mystic, Ken Wilbure is a psychological theorist, and William Irvin Thompson is also an historian. These, along with a chorus of lesser-known voices, shape New Age thought today. These might not all even describe their ideas as a "New Age," and they might differ on several points, yet they all resonate with the notion of releasing man's unlimited human potential by realizing the oneness of all things. They see themselves on the vanguard of planetary transformation—part of a new emerging culture. Whether you are leafing through *New Age Journal* at a local health food store,

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seeing a psychologist who prescribes Eastern meditation, have a child being taught to meditate in public schools, have seen the movie "The Dark Crystal," or know someone who is dying to have you read *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, you have been touched by the New Age.

The Western world is faced with a new order, a new world view, a New Age. A grand vision of planetary transformation is sparking the hearts and minds of many. The once fashionable pessimism of modern society is being jolted by an insurgent optimism, a magnetic world view. We are excitedly told we are more than we imagined and that the world is about to take a leap into the light of expanded consciousness.

As Christians, we need to be aware of, and carefully examine, this new force acting on our society, or we may face the possibility of succumbing to a non-Christian, anti-Christian philosophy. The danger of the New Age Movement to the Lord's church is probably not found so much in hard core New Age philosophy. Not many from our ranks are likely to begin practicing occultic rites. Not many are likely to become practitioners of Transcendental Meditation. Not many are likely to become members of some esoteric New Age fringe cult. But the danger is found in the insidious and pervasive influence of New Age teachings. Mainstream New Age concepts are very cleverly packaged in culturally attractive wrappings. It enlists the respectability of science, psychology, medicine, and established culture to further its appeal. The exaltation and deification of the Self—of one's own will—is the tempting danger which is most likely to affect our own people. "Man is fundamentally good." "He is only answerable to himself." "There is no objective standard of right and wrong." "The only standard is the subjective—how one feels about it." These are the areas of gravest concern. Ignorance of sound doctrine leaves the church ill-equipped to resist such deception. Unfortunately, some have compromised Christianity by assimilating New Age ideas and practices. This is particularly true in some areas of Christian teaching.

We must particularly beware of an imbalanced emphasis upon subjective introspectism. The Christian faith must not be mixed with psychological theories and practices which the Word of God will not support. Because of our tendency to sin, the "journey within" to examine the recesses of our mind must be courted with caution, and in many cases simply avoided. Unlike Christianity, New Age philosophy teaches that salvation comes from within ourselves. The Bible teaches that corruption comes from within, and salvation comes from without, through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Many popular self-help books are rife with New Age concepts that are fundamen-

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tally unsound and opposed to God's Word. The subconscious should not be viewed as a pure channel of revelation. Rather, God's Word must direct our thoughts and life.

Also, we must avoid an unhealthy emphasis on "positive thinking" (or "positive confession" or "possibility thinking" as some call it), because the root idea of those philosophies is that whatever we believe or verbally affirm will become a reality. Although it is a mark of vibrant faith to maintain a biblical optimism in the face of obstacles, an overemphasis on positive thinking may come perilously close to the New Age idea that thought controls reality and that we are master of the world. This view overlooks the mystery of God's providence, His final control of all. Yes, God answers prayer, but we do not have God on a string. We cannot expect reality to dance to our tune. Faith is not magic. We should not affirm "mind over matter," but God's sovereignty over His creation.

Conclusion

Hopefully, I have made you aware of the world view of New Age thinkers and have introduced the subject to you. Perhaps your interest has been piqued to investigate this very broad subject, which reaches into many areas we have hardly mentioned.

I would commend to you, with only minimal reservations, four books:

Unmasking the New Age, Douglas R. Groothuis (InterVarsity Press)

Revealing the New Age Jesus, Douglas R. Groothuis (InterVarsity Press)

Psychological Seduction, William Kirk Kilpatrick (Thomas Nelson)

The New Age Cult, Walter Martin (Bethany House).

I was less impressed by three other books:

Straight Answers on the New Age, Bob Larson (Thomas Nelson)

A Crash Course on the New Age Movement, Elliot Miller (Baker)

(Each of these books have some merit and are worth reading, but they both ascribe miraculous power to Satan and contain other errors in theology.)

The Seduction of Christianity, Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon

(This book contains gross doctrinal errors on the Kingdom. It is very heavy-handed and calls many names. However

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it is of some merit, as the writers know New Age thought and tell who is teaching it without hesitation.)

An excellent work on a specific area of New Age concern is **Playing With Fire** by John Weldon and James Bjornstad (Moody Press), on fantasy role playing games such as "Dungeons and Dragons."

In short, the Christian response to the New Age involves three things: watching, evaluating and acting.

1. Watching. Christians should become culture watchers to discern the presence and influence of New Age ideas, so that we might not be caught unawares. Areas of special concern are education and psychology, both of which are shielded by elitist insulation and popular apathy.

2. Evaluating. Chronicling error is not sufficient. False philosophies must be refuted, not just exposed. We must have a reason for our faith (1 Pet. 3:16) and reasons against the New Age (2 Cor. 10:3-5; Col. 2:18-23).

3. Acting. Christianity is a full-orbed world and life view. It cannot afford to emphasize only error. It must implement the truth into all areas of life and thought.

We must carry the battle forward against the forces of evil. Let us do all we can to stem the tide of this new cosmic humanism calling itself the New Age which is really only the old false doctrine of monistic pantheism. 709 Potomac Ave., Fairmont, WV 26554

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Lord's Supper—Sanitation

Sanitation and the Lord's Supper

by S. Bruce Word

This subject is not new. But every once in a while, it rears its head and must be discussed once again. There are many things that I cannot say—would not be prudent for me to say.

I am going to go about the study in a little different way today than I had originally planned. I cannot possibly answer all of your questions, but I do hope to impart some information to you that may be helpful in dealing with the subject.

The focus of our study is going to be on sanitation in communion "in light of recent developments." That, of course, primarily has reference to a disease called AIDS. Before we can understand the issue, we must be able to understand what it is we are dealing with. Fear exists even among Christians! This fear is not so much a fear of the disease itself, but the stigma attached to it!

"AIDS" stands for the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, a disease which is a sever breakdown of the body's immune system. This disorder leaves the body vulnerable to a variety of unusual, life threatening illnesses. It is these diseases, not the AIDS virus itself, which can result in death. The common cold becomes a killer to the person with the AIDS virus. The most common illnesses found in people with the HIV virus are: PCP, a type of pneumonia, and KS a form of cancer; both, killers!

AIDS cases have been documented as early as 1977, although now we know that a similar disease was documented in 1951. And as far back as 1827, similar diseases have been known to exist (although people did not know what to call them.) Since 1977, the illness has been diagnosed around the world with increasing frequency. Scientists expect the AIDS epidemic to continue to spread. There is no known cure or vaccine for the disease (although one lady did say that Nature's Sunshine herbs was a sure cure). Understanding how the virus is contracted, how it is spread, and how to prevent its transmission; are the only ways to slow the epidemic at this time.

I want to preface all my future statements with this one thing. The disease is the result of sin, and I refuse to use the word "gay" in this study. There is nothing "gay" about the sin of homosexuality, and the Bible specifically condemns this sin. I will not softsell the sin, and I refuse to call it an

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alternative lifestyle! It is not. It is an abomination unto the Lord (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Deut. 23:17)!

What Causes AIDS?

The disease is caused by a virus known as Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV) and it attacks a particular type of cell. The immune system becomes defective, resulting in serious infections and cancers. The HAV virus has been known for a long time as Herpes.

Who Gets AIDS?

Those who are susceptible to this disease are classified in the following way:

Homosexuals, 64%

I.V. (intra-venous) drug users, 18%

Heterosexuals, 4% rising to 9% in 1991

Hemophiliacs 3%;

(and it is known that 93% of all aids victims are men).

Aids was initially identified as an epidemic in 1981 and was first seen in homosexual and bisexual men. Shortly thereafter, I.V. drug users began accounting for a high percentage of all AIDS cases in the U.S. Others who are at risk for developing AIDS are children born to parents who are infected with the virus, and people who have other blood disorders who must receive blood. (Just as a side note, of the cases that I am personally familiar with, the people have the HIV virus as a result of blood transfusions.)

How Is the AIDS Virus Spread?

HIV is spread from person to another in several ways: (1) through intimate sexual contact; (2) through shared needles and syringes, a problem especially prevalent among I.V. drug users; (3) through receiving blood or blood products that have been contaminated with the virus (but this risk has been greatly reduced by testing all blood donors for antibodies to the virus); (4) through infected mothers passing the virus to their infants through the blood stream before and, or, at the time of birth.

Can the AIDS Virus be Casually Transmitted?

The biggest question on our minds is, "Can this disease be transmitted by or through casual contact with a person who has it?" There are no

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reported cases of AIDS or HIV infection as the result of casual contact. Ordinary household and work-place contact with people infected with HIV is safe. (This is very important to our sanitation issue.) You cannot become infected with HIV by sharing eating and drinking utensils or bathrooms. Just for your information, I was concerned about the cleanliness of public restrooms, elevators, busses and other public facilities long before I knew anything about AIDS.

Mosquitoes do not transmit the disease, and the common communion cup does not offer a suitable atmosphere for the HIV virus to live. Some tests have demonstrated that the active life of the HIV virus outside the carrier to be up to 15 hours, but these tests were conducted under laboratory conditions, and the virus was virtually kept alive by placing it in the right conditions for it to live.

Now some questions before we move on. "First, How do we respond to those among us who have the HIV virus, or full blown AIDS?" That is a legitimate question and I will at least begin the answer here and continue it in the discussion period. Above all, we must not make any assumptions as to how such individuals contracted the disease! We must then exercise our faith, for dealing with this problem is pre-eminently an exercise in faith. Titus 1:15 says, "to the pure, all things are pure." If someone here had AIDS, or we converted someone with AIDS, we must act toward them in faith without wavering.

Second, "Is this a plague sent from God to destroy the people involved in the sin?" Some say yes, and point out Sodom and Gomorrah and what happened to them (Gen. 19:1-29). I believe the answer lies in Romans 1:27. It says, "Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which is due." The penalty is due them as a natural consequence of that sin! Romans 6:23 reads, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." They get what they deserve for their sinful conduct.

I have heard some say, "sure they sin, but that disease is just too much!" No, I am afraid that is not the case; they reap what they sow! I also want to say that the effects of this disease can certainly visit the children to the third and fourth generation (Ex. 20:5-6). The third and fourth generation may be totally innocent, but still feel the effects of the sins of their forefathers. This is not a plague sent to these people for the specific reason

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of punishing them, but it is the natural result of their sin. One thing that we must all remember, we will pay the consequences for our sins!

Homosexuality is wrong. It is a sin. But AIDS is not God's direct curse on those who practice it. In God's sight, there is no difference in the eternal consequences of different kinds of sin. In the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5:21-30), Jesus equates anger with murder and sexual lust with adultery. Sinful lifestyles have certain consequences.

Third, "What about innocent children who contract AIDS from parents who have the disease?" Answer: What about them? They are suffering the consequences of sin in the world. Not God's wrath! The same holds true for those people who receive contaminated blood during transfusion.

Sanitation and Communion

Now, what about the sanitation aspect of our study with respect to the Lord's Supper? I want to just refresh your memory a little: Please open your Bibles and read with me. I read out of the New King James (Mt. 26:26-29; Mk. 14:22-26; Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 10:16; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

The first thing that I would like to make clear is that this is not a discussion of the "cup" question. What we have been discussing may be more of an issue in future debates and personal studies, but this is not a discussion of the one cup per se.

Advocates of one communion vessel for the distribution of the fruit of the vine have not really had too much of a problem with the sanitation question as far as the safety of this scriptural method is concerned. That is until now!

In the beginning of the move to individual cups, it was generally stated that the practice was for health reasons. It was just healthier, some argued, to have each person use his or her own cup. The advocates of multiple containers for the distribution of the fruit of the vine felt that for all to drink out of one container would be unsanitary, and that this practice would promote the spread of disease from one to another. However, besides the fact that we are commanded to use one container, scientific proof exists that the risk of spreading (any) disease through drinking from the same container is nil.

I would like to read a quote out of "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper" by Thomas H. Warner;

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Until near the end of the nineteenth century the chalice, or cup, was used in the distribution of the wine at the Lord's Supper. At that time more attention began to be paid to hygiene, and the use of the common cup began to be unpopular with communicants. Rev. J. G. Thomas, who was both a minister and a physician, was the originator of the idea of the individual cups. From his medical practice he learned what he believed to be the uncleanness and danger of the common cup and felt that the Lord's Supper could be made more beautiful by the use of individual cups. His first patent was granted in march of 1894. The first service using individual cups was held in a little Putnam county church in Ohio.

Thus the multi-cup idea was formed and brought into existence. However, it is an established fact that the church existed and prospered for 1900 years without individual cups, and there is no record of any of its members ever catching or dying from a disease as a result of using one cup as the Lord commanded. If the world stands that long, I am sure we will be safe in continuing to do what the Lord says for another 1900 years!

If you are truly worried today about the spread of disease through the communion cup, may I please give you some things to think about. I do not claim to be the expert, but from the standpoint of scientific studies that have been done, it is next to impossible to spread disease through the communion cup.

You may want to pick up a copy of "Sanitation in Communion" by brother Alton Bailey. It has some studies listed that you can check out for yourself. One of these is a study conducted by Doctors William Burrows (associate professor of bacteriology) and Elizabeth Hemmons (instructor in the Walter G. Zollar dental clinic). Their study shows that common communion cups do not spread disease. The only time these scientists were able to detect the transfer of any bacteria was when the first person left as much saliva as possible on the cup and the second drank immediately from the same spot. Then, they said, only .001% of the bacteria were transmitted from the first person to the second.

Notice, as much saliva as possible was left on the cup which is not the case in the communion service. And even then only .001 percent of the bacteria was passed on to the next individual. Monroe, head of the Colorado AIDS Research Project told me, "You cannot get AIDS off the Communion cup!"

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The Head of the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia, stated that to have even the slightest possibility of contracting the HIV virus from saliva, a person would literally have to drink buckets. Casual contact does not spread the disease.

The Surgeon General's Report on AIDS states that one "cannot be transmitted from trace saliva on common communion cup."

The Minnesota Department of Health, in responding to an Episcopal Bishop's question on AIDS, said, "In our opinion, the communion cup is safe."

A Group called "Living Hope" in Seattle, Washington offers studies on the common communion cup. All say transmission of disease is not going to occur during a normal communion service.

These and many more furnish scientific proof that we should not worry about the transmission of this disease. As a matter of fact, in the case of the AIDS carrier, They are in greater danger than we are. They stand a greater chance of getting a life threatening disease from us than we do of getting AIDS from them. We stand a better chance of getting sick as a result of the air we are breathing than from catching AIDS from the communion cup.

Finally, Dr. G. A. Trott, a preacher, editor, and Medical Practitioner; in an article in the *Apostolic Way* dated September 1, 1913 said,

I am willing to stake my professional reputation on the assertion that cultures made from the individual cup, made by a competent biologist, will reveal as many deadly germs as those made from the common cup. Give us the proof of the contention of the deadly danger of the common drinking cup before asking us to ignore the example set by our Lord and Apostles.

My friends, I feel just like one person who said, "I am more afraid to disobey the Lord than I am of a few germs."

I leave you with this thought. 1 Corinthians 11:27 reads, "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." This is one passage of Scripture that needs to be used and thought about a lot. Verse 28 talks about how we are to examine ourselves as we eat the bread and drink the fruit of the vine from the cup. One aspect of examining ourselves is to see to it

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that we do not partake of the loaf or the cup of blessing in an unworthy manner, or as Strong's says, irreverently!

If our minds are on the possibility of catching some disease while we are partaking of the cup of blessing, then we are not partaking in a worthy manner. As a matter of fact, I would have to examine my faith if I considered anything else but what I was doing! Remember Romans 14:23, "Whatsoever is not faith is sin"! 5875 Urban St., Arvada, CO 80004

How Defined Are the Lines of Fellowship?

by Allen Bailey

Across the religious world there are many positions on fellowship. Some are conservative and others very liberal. During this topic we are not discussing what we have done in the past, what we are presently doing, or what our plans are for the future regarding fellowship. We are here to discuss the Bible instructions and restrictions on fellowship. Specifically, how defined are the lines?

This topic will be divided into the following divisions:

1. Fellowship defined
2. Fellowship with world prohibited
3. Where does fellowship start?
4. Where does fellowship stop?
5. Differences that should not hinder fellowship
6. Can we fellowship those who worship in error?

Definition of Fellowship

The word "fellowship" comes from the Greek **koinonia** and is used twenty times in the New Testament in the following passages: Acts 2:42; Rom. 15:26; 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:16 (twice); 2 Cor. 6:14; 8:4; 9:13; 13:14; Gal. 2:9; ph. 3:9; Phil. 1:5; 2:1; 3:10; Philem. 6; Heb 13:6; 1 Jn. 1:3 (twice), 6, 7.

This same Greek word is also translated into the following English words throughout the New Testament:

Acts 2:42—**fellowship** and breaking of bread

Romans 15:26—to make a certain **contribution**

1 Corinthians 10:16—**communion** of the blood of Christ

2 Corinthians 9:13—for your liberal **distribution**

Philemon 6—**communication** of thy faith

So the Greek word **koinonia** is translated "fellowship, contribution, communion, distribution, and communication"

Thayer defines **koinonia** as follows (p. 352, #2842):

1. The share which one has in anything, participation
2. Intercourse, fellowship, intimacy
3. A benefaction jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution

Fellowship

W. E. Vine's defines fellowship as "communion, fellowship, sharing in common."

There is no hidden meaning to this word. When we speak of fellowship we simply refer to a sharing, a partner, to have communion or communication with.

No Fellowship With the World

This point used to be well understood by members of the church; however, in the present day it is not uncommon to hear people rationalize why we should fellowship those who are in the world.

Some have the mistaken idea, "If I fellowship them, I can share with them spiritual truths and influence them for good." This has been tried repeatedly and many find themselves in the world today as a result of their reasoning. But what does the Bible say? "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). Remember, the word "fellowship" means "to become a partaker together with others, or to have fellowship with a thing" (Thayer, p. 593, #4790). The only other times this word "fellowship" is used is in Philippians 4:14 and Revelation 18:4.

Why is it wrong for a Christian to fellowship the world?

- Because the world has its own god—Satan.

2 Corinthians 4:4 "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

- Because the world has its own spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:12 "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

- Because the world has its own prince.

John 14:30 "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."

- Because the world has its own ruler.

1 Corinthians 2:8 "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

- Because the world has its own wisdom.

1 Corinthians 2:6 "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:"

- Because the world has its love.

John 15:19 "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

- Because the world has its own friendship.

James 4:4 "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

- Because the world has its own course.

Ephesians 2:2 "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"

- Because the world lies in the evil one.

1 John 5:19 "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."

It is clear from these and other Scriptures that the world is headed in a total different direction than the church. Other passages that generally admonish the Christian about fellowship with the world are:

1 John 2:15 "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

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2 Corinthians 6:14-18 "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

James 4:4 "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (The word "enemy" is defined as "hostile, hating, opposing" [Thayer, p. 265, #2190]).

Christians have no fellowship, communion, part with, or agreement with the world. The world is an evil place described frequently by the Word of God as "darkness." When a person is in the world they are "walking in darkness" (1 Jn. 1:6). So let us consider the question: "How defined is the line of fellowship?" Beyond controversy, it is prohibited for Christians, citizens of the kingdom of God, to have fellowship with those who walk in the kingdom of darkness. This is a very clear and unmistakable line.

Where Does Fellowship Start?

In our effort to simplify this difficult subject, let us discuss: "Where does fellowship start?" There has to be a starting point. We have learned that there can be absolutely no fellowship with the world. Since this is the way it is, what has to take place for a person to get into fellowship with God and God's people? Consider the following:

2 Thessalonians 2:14 "Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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The gospel is to be preached across the world (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16) and those who hear the gospel will either obey the gospel or they will not obey the gospel.

Matthew 7:24-27 "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

This clearly is the line which determines fellowship—leaving the world and entering into the church. Fellowship starts with baptism! When a person obeys the gospel of Jesus Christ he ceases being a member of the kingdom of Satan and is a member of the "kingdom of God" (Mt. 16:13-19). If a person continues to refuse to obey the gospel he seals his own destruction (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

The first Pentecost after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, a wonderful, glorious event took place. The gospel was preached for the very first time, and men had an opportunity to obey it. Peter stood up with the eleven (Acts 2:14). He preached the gospel of Jesus Christ and about 3000 precious souls obeyed the gospel in baptism (Acts 2:41). The Lord then added these precious souls to the church (Acts 2:47). Those who crucified Jesus obviously were not in fellowship with Him, but when they obeyed the gospel in baptism they began a life of fellowship in the Son.

Let us consider what baptism accomplishes:

- **Baptism saves**—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:16).
- **Baptism is being born again**.—"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:3).
- **Baptism allows one to enter the Kingdom of God**.—"Jesus answered, 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" (Jn. 3:5).
- **Baptism is for the remission of sins**.—"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for

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the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

- **Baptism allows us to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**—"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

- **Baptism is being converted and having one's sins blotted out.**—"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

- **Baptism is obedience to a divine command.**—"And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days" (Acts 10:48).

- **Baptism washes away sins.**—"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

- **Baptism allows us to walk in newness of life.**—"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:4-5).

- **We are baptized into one body.**—"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13).

- **Baptism causes old things to be passed away.**—"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

- **Baptism causes all things to become new.**—"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

- **Baptism puts one into Jesus Christ.**—"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).

- **Baptism saves us.**—"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the

answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:21).

• **Baptism is the answer of a good conscience.**—"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:21).

When we obey the gospel we are added to the church by the Lord, and thereby become citizens of the kingdom of God (Mt. 16:13-19). Christians have the privilege of becoming "sons of God" (1 Jn. 3:1). We can pray "Our Father which art in heaven" (Mt. 6:9-13). We are numbered with "those of like precious faith" (2 Pet. 1:1). When we break away from the world, and refuse to touch the unclean things of the world, God will receive us. He will then be a Father unto us, and we are recognized as His "sons and daughters" (2 Cor. 6:14-18).

So, fellowship begins with one's obedience to the gospel in baptism. It is a distinct privilege to be citizens of the Kingdom of God. As Christians there is a "unity," a "oneness" that is wonderful (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:11-16; 3:6). Note John's words:

1 John 1:1-3 "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

I love this point. John emphasizes: When we are obedient to the gospel through the obedience to His Word, we are in fellowship with: (1) the apostles, (2) Jesus Christ, and (3) God the Father.

So let us again consider the answer to our question: "How defined are the lines of fellowship?" The lines are very defined according to the Scriptures. Fellowship starts with one obeying the gospel in baptism. All that baptism accomplishes for a person sets him apart from the world. The Lord adds him to the church. This, my dear friends, is the starting point of a Christian's life. This is where the line is drawn.

Where Does Fellowship Stop?

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Where does fellowship stop? What breaks fellowship? These are interesting questions that are pertinent to our study. We will now deal with them more specifically.

The Bible clearly teaches that Christians can sin and do sin after baptism. Paul said, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). When Christians do sin, there is a biblical way of obtaining forgiveness of the sins.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

James 5:10 "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Acts 8:22 "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."

Since we have all sinned, we all should have the determination to do whatever it takes to be freed from sin. All sins must be addressed, and never swept under the rug.

Many state: "Sin is sin; one is just as bad as another." There may be some validity to this, to a point; however, one very important truth is that even though "sin is sin," all sins do not carry the same consequences.

How defined are the lines of fellowship regarding sin? What breaks fellowship? If I wanted to be very general, all I would need to do is to quote one passage of Scripture: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (1 Jn. 1:6). When we walk in darkness, fellowship with God is broken. There are several unmistakable examples of this teaching in the Scriptures.

- Fellowship is broken when a Christian refuses to correct a sin against another Christian. Fellowship is severed after proper steps have been attended to.

Matthew 18:15-17 "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

- After a heretic is admonished the first and second time, and he refuses to correct his sins, fellowship is withdrawn and he is rejected. "Heretic" is defined as "schismatic, factious" (Thayer, p. 16, #141).

Titus 3:10 "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject."

- The one "walking disorderly," contextually, is one who refused to work, and consequently became a busy body in other men's matters. If this condition is not corrected, the person is to be withdrawn from, noted, and the faithful are to have no company with such for the purpose of making them ashamed.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-7 "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you."

2 Thessalonians 3:14-15 "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother"

- Those who cause division, are those from whom fellowship needs to be withdrawn. This is necessary for the sake of protecting the body of Christ.

Romans 16:17 "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

- Any baptized believer guilty of these specific sins, one or more, should be properly disciplined by the entire congregation. The restrictions are clear that such a one is not to be eaten with.

1 Corinthians 5:11 "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."

- When a person refuses to stay with the true doctrine which is according to godliness, he should be withdrawn from. If one transgresses the doctrine of Christ, we are not to bid them "God speed," lest we become partakers in their error. "Partaker" is defined as "to enter fellowship, join ones self as an associate, make ones self a sharer or partner" (cf. 1 Timothy 5:22) (Thayer, p. 351-352, #2841).

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1 Timothy 6:3-5 "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."

2 John 9-11 "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds

So how defined are the lines? When the Scriptures dictate that certain sins are to be dealt with by a "withdrawal of fellowship," "note that man," "have no company," "with such a one no not to eat," then such actions must be carried out. The lines are clearly defined in such cases!

Some congregations, most in fact, have not been handling difficult situations as they should. There is no guess work about it. The lines are clearly defined. Anyone who is a member of the church committing the sins so specified in the Scriptures, and refusing to correct them, must be dealt with according to the Word of God. Fellowship continues until circumstances exist (sin in the camp) that the Scriptures indicate a prohibition of fellowship.

Differences That Should Not Hinder Fellowship

Fellowship in Christ is serious business. It is not to be extended without caution. It is not to be denied without cause.

There are frequently times when points of view may differ, and it has nothing to do with salvation, worship, or the doctrine of Christ. When a person's opinion differs with another, let us be careful to recognize they are opinions and not threaten fellowship interference.

There have been many abuses to fellowship because of people pushing things they ought not, like opinions, and making out as though they were the commandments of God.

- **Christian liberties**

Romans 14:5 "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

In matters of opinion, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." There is a substantial difference between "law and liberty" and we dare not confuse the two.

- **Traditions of men.** We are saturated in traditions, many of which rub off on the church. Tradition is not bad within itself, but the problems come in when we began to make laws where God made none. Listen to Jesus: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mk. 7:7). Let us always be careful to properly identify between truth and error, law and liberty, and between tradition and commandment.

- **Opinions.** In Acts 15:36-41, Paul and Barnabas had a disagreement concerning John Mark. In Paul's opinion it was not best to take John Mark. In Barnabas' opinion it was best to take John Mark. What was the solution?

And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God (Acts 15:39-40).

There is not the slightest indication that this difference of opinion interfered with their fellowship. They continued doing the same type of work, they simply had different co-labourers: Paul had Silas, Barnabas had Mark.

Can We Extend Fellowship to Those Who Worship in Error?

No, we cannot fellowship those who worship in error! The Bible speaks of four types of worship: (1) vain worship (Mt. 15:9); (2) will worship (Col. 2:23); (3) ignorant worship (Acts 17:23); and (4) true worship (Jn. 4:23-24).

God seeks true worshippers to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Once the door is opened for one innovation into the church, it is logically opened to them all. Once you refuse to accept an innovation into the church, it is logical you reject them all.

Congregations that use those who worship in error in their worship services are making a serious mistake. This is devastating to the body of Christ, and it gives a signal that the sin is not as bad or as wrong as it really is. You do these brethren a grave injustice because they often conclude, "I must not be that wrong after all." 905 Grauwylar Rd., Irving, Texas 75061.

Saving Our Children

Saving Our Children

by Joe Norton

When I agreed to do this study, I began with grandiose ideas about being able to find some magic answers—magic formulas—that would resolve the obvious problem that we conceive to be a twentieth century phenomenon, but that has been with the church since her foundation, no doubt. My thought was that good study and thorough research should surely reveal to us what we are doing wrong when we do not save our children. While I have learned a great deal from the reading I have done, I am here to attest to you that there are no magic formulas. There is no easy answer. In fact, there is not *an* answer to the problem of saving our children, beyond the obvious one of teaching them the gospel, which is God's power to save.

We have the gospel. Why, then, are many children of Christian parents not saved? Why do our children not know the "Faith of Our Fathers" and realize the "Joy of Our Salvation?"

Throughout my quest for answers to these questions, I have had to ask myself constantly: What is this study?

Is it *just* a study of strict scriptural interpretation?

Is it a study of parenting?

Is it a study of behavior and behavior modification?

Is it a study of discipline in the home?

Is it a study of children obeying their parents in the Lord?

What *is* the study and what is its purpose? While the study includes all of the above topics, it is really about a somewhat different matter.

It is a study about souls—human beings—who have the decided advantage of learning the truth as a child, if we are only able to communicate it to them. It is a study about salvation. The question is: How can we *save* our children?

Even in nailing down the topic, I found frustration. There is a massive amount of literature on the market; and throughout that literature, all of the related topics listed above just flow together without distinction. The material was so vast that it was difficult to manage.

So I may not answer you questions today. I may not meet your expectations or your needs as I pass along information to you.

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This is my approach to this study: I am passing along this material to gospel preachers who are parents, but also who have many searching, hurting parents needing help and needing answers.

Am I qualified to do this? Certainly not. Are you?

Who sitting in this audience this afternoon basks in the floodlight of parental success? Not very many. Do we then throw up our hands and say no one can teach me because no one is qualified? That is not very practical or even very intelligent. Today we study and we learn together. And through that process we grow. We do better tomorrow than we did yesterday. We help others—yes, we pause to try to help others benefit from what we have learned through our own mistakes and failures.

In some families, all children have been saved. In others, none have been. And, in even others, some have and some have not.

Why?

We do not have an answer to that question because what has worked in one family has not worked in another, even though both sets of parents have thought they were doing the very best in training their children in the Lord.

This one thing we do know: We cannot force our children to be saved. It will not work. We must set up conditions that hopefully will lead our children toward salvation, but we cannot force them. What can we do? First, we can turn to the Scriptures.

What Do the Scriptures Say About Saving Our Children?

Please read: Deuteronomy 6:6-7 and 11:18-21.

In Deuteronomy 6, “to teach” means “to inculcate,” meaning train intensively God’s standards into the child by the use of repetition. It is to be consistent and to be given at every opportunity.

In Deuteronomy 11, “teach” means to “teach by intensive drill.” The same word is used to describe the training of a soldier for war. “The derivative of this word is the word for goad, a sharp stick used for prodding cattle or oxen. A goad was sharp enough to go through the animal’s tough hide and get his attention” (Fugate, p. 55).

Proverbs 22:6 says, “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart . . .” The Hebrew word translated here “train”

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is translated "dedicate" in every other place it is used. To dedicate means "to renew, inaugurate, or initiate" (Fugate, p. 52).

Parents are to initiate their children in a certain path—not just a one-time initiation or dedication, but an extended training process.

The result of this training is for this new way to become the child's own way of life. When this transpires, the child will not leave the path even as he is growing older and becomes an adult (Fugate, p. 52).

The ancient root of this Hebrew word meant "to make narrow" and even "to strangle." "In other words, parents are to restrict the path their children may follow" (Fugate, p. 52). They are not to wait until the child is almost grown and then try to exert some influence but to give this direction while he is still in the child state of development—under 13. Parents exert this control while the child is very young but gradually let go so that he can direct his own path by the time he is grown. "A child who has been trained to be obedient to his parents will respect their position of authority and be prepared to accept their instructions" (Fugate, p. 52).

Training of children is necessary, both restraining them from sin and teaching them the right path to follow. Children would prefer following their own ways rather than being led in the right way to go many times, but they cannot be left to their own whims and devices. Proverbs 29:15 teaches, "a child left to himself brings his mother to shame." The **Homiletic Commentary** says that a parent should hedge in the pathway of a child.

If the parent does not set a hedge about his son's path, he is only making it certain that he will encounter thorns and snares further on in life . . . The child that is accustomed to bend its will to the will of a good father will not find it so hard to yield obedience to the will of God as he who has no such training" (Proverbs, p. 638).

The **Homiletic Commentary** does not teach that the promise of Proverbs 22:6 has universal application or guarantee; and many other commentators, such as Matthew Henry and Adam Clarke, agree. Henry calls it cruel neglect to let a child have its own way with no restraint and says this passage means, "Catechise them; initiate, keep them under discipline. Train them as soldiers, who are taught to handle their arms, keep rank and observe the word of command" (Henry, vol. 3, p. 917). These commentators believe the application is given as more of a general rule than an absolute guarantee, and they cite Solomon and the sons of Samuel as examples of their reason-

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ing. Solomon, son of David, was trained by a man who was on a personal level with God; yet he went astray, although he is supposed to have come back before death. Another of David's sons, Absalom, was reared in the same household, but he grew up to marshal an army against his father. Samuel surely gave his sons adequate training in things spiritual, yet they were evil (see 1 Sam. 8:1-5). "Yet we cannot suppose that Samuel, who had seen in Eli's family the miserable fruits of non-restraint, had neglected to train his sons" (*Homiletic Commentary*, Samuel, p. 639)

Adam Clarke says about this passage:

Initiate the child at the opening of his path . . . When he comes to the opening of the way of life, being able to walk alone, and to choose; stop at this entrance, and begin a series of instructions, how he is to conduct himself in every step he takes. Show him the duties, the dangers, and the blessings, of the path; give him directions how to perform the duties, how to escape the dangers, and how to secure the blessings, which all lie before him. Fix these on him by daily inculcation, till their impression is become indelible; then lead him to practice by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, till each indelible impression becomes a strongly radicated habit (p. 546).

And Clarke stresses the necessity of incessantly begging God for help. We cannot overemphasize the power of prayer.

Please read: Ephesians 6:1-4 and Colossians 3:21.

Vine says the word "right" means "that which is in accordance with rule." Ephesians 6:2 is a repetition of the teaching in Exodus 20:12.

The verse in this passage in Ephesians that directly relates to our topic is verse 4. "Provoke" means "to stir to anger." The word "nurture" means "chastening, denoting the training of a child, including instruction; hence discipline, correction, chastening—suggests the Christian discipline that regulates character." (Vine, p. 183)

"Admonition" means "to correct by discipline or to train by act" (Vine, p. 31).

The difference between 'admonition' and 'teach' seems to be that whereas the former has mainly in view the things that are wrong and call for warning, the latter has to do chiefly with the impartation of positive truth (Vine, p. 31).

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The young evangelist Timothy is an example of one who had been trained in the Lord (cf. 2 Tim. 1:5). 2 Timothy 3:15 reads, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Jesus Himself is another example of a child obeying his parents (cf. Luke 2). Jesus was twelve years old at the time. Older women are to teach younger women how to accomplish these goals (1 Tim. 2).

Why Are the Old Methods of Saving Our Children Not Working Anymore? What Are Our Modern Problems?

First of all, let us establish that we cannot prove that they are not working. We have no research or statistics to prove that we are saving fewer children or a fewer percentage of children, than, say, thirty years ago. If our forefathers had enjoyed the overwhelming success that we think they did, the church in America would be much, much larger than it now is.

But, what are the modern problems that cause such a spiritual dilemma for many of our children? Why do they come into some homes and say, "I don't believe those things anymore," or "You can't make me believe what you believe," or other similar statements?

1. The concepts of good and evil have been blended in our world. This problem raises its ugly head in just about every problem we deal with today: sex, drugs, alcohol, lying, stealing, etc.

It is easy for those opposed to drug abuse to advocate: "Just Say No." The problem is people today have trouble deciding where the good stops and the bad begins. "Just Say No" is disarmingly simple advice. Yet, if it were uniformly practiced today, think what it could do not only for drug use but to all human temptations. "Just Say No" could also be applied to many human problems, including hatred, prejudice, crime, greed, corruption, pornography, sexual diseases, alcoholism, eating disorders, the destruction of the environment—all of these could be handled effectively if "Just Say No" would work every time.

2. Television. Brother James Orten will discuss the impact of television on our society and our children in his presentation tonight. Let us just say that research proves conclusively that too much television or the wrong kind of programs can have negative effects on our children.

3. The music our young people listen to. Beyond a doubt, music has become an important part of life, and it was a source of unity in families

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for centuries. But, today it often divides us. In times past, families could sing together and listen to music together. But today what are we likely to hear in the home about music? "Turn that noise off."

Just as it is with television, there is no doubt that music influences us. It affects our moods and emotions, and through it we express whether we are happy or sad. Some researchers tell us that music even affects babies in the womb.

A. P. Merriam expressed in his book, **The Anthropology of Music**, that through the ages, music has always accompanied every deeply emotional human experience, from mourning to celebration. People have long used music to convey what is inexpressible in words, and all music serves the function of stimulating some kind of emotion" (*Plain Truth*, October 1989, p. 12).

Different types of songs express different emotions. Songs about nationalism stir love for a person's country. Love songs help us pour out emotional feelings for another person. Spiritual songs and hymns express our praise to God.

Dr. Joseph Stuessy, professor of music at the University of Texas at San Antonio and author of **The Heavy Metal User's Manual**, holds that music does affect behavior. "Any kind of music affects our moods, emotions, attitudes, and our resultant behavior. Music has both psychological and physiological effects on people. That's why we have choirs and organs in churches and synagogues, bands at football games, Musak in business and doctors' offices, military marches, background music for movies and television programs, Jazzercise where legions of people are motivated to move by rock music, and most important, commercial jingles" (Gore, p. 37).

In past generations, church families always used music as a source of entertainment and a source of unity. It appears that we have lost that source of spiritual unity in many or most church families. Few things in society have contributed to the development or the widening of the generation gap more than modern music. Parents are alarmed by such music as heavy metal, punk-rock, and rap music of the modern generation; and well they might be. Besides the obvious problems of the direct immoral, irreverent, sadistic, and rebellion-stimulating messages in much modern music, there is also the

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problem of subliminal messages conveyed through the process of back masking.

A real concern of all caring parents and certainly all Christian parents today is expressed in the question, "What kind of music should children listen to?" There is no easy answer to that question. We do know that:

- a. Whatever is popular they will want to listen to
- b. There should be a balance as to the type of music allowed
- c. Saying NO without discussion will cause resentment in some
- d. To some kinds of music (such as the types mentioned above), we must emphatically say, "NO."

Some singing groups promote not only sex but also violence and sadistic behavior on their album covers as well as in the words to the music. Some covers have explicit scenes blatantly pictured on them. Words to some songs are so grossly immoral and perverted that they have aroused the attention of even many parents of the world not connected with religion. Some of the activities of these parents as well as helpful information about what is really in many modern songs are given in a book called **Raising PG Kids in an X Rated Society** by Tipper Gore. Every parent should read this book, but you should know that it contains the most explicit language that you can imagine. This book contains modern song lyrics so explicit that I cannot read them before this audience. But these words are what many young people of today are listening to many hours a day.

Plato wrote that music had the power to shape society. Today, those who orchestrate the successful commercial jingle can certainly control social and commercial behavior. Advertisers would not spend billions annually if music and other messages were not persuasive. According to Dr. Stuessy, music aids retention of verbal messages; we are more likely to remember a message if it comes to us in a musical context (Gore, p. 37).

If parents of the world are concerned enough to form a national organization to try to deal with the problem, surely we as Christian parents should realize the gravity of the situation and be very much concerned about what our children are listening to because it does make a difference what they listen to.

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Music is like television. There is no doubt about the influence it has over anyone who listens—especially young minds still in the impressionable stages. It is bound to be one of the reasons some of our young are being led astray, rebelling against all that is right and good and desiring that which is evil.

4. Humanism has infiltrated our society. "It is safe to say that all public schools in America do indeed teach, to at least some degree, the philosophy" (Newsletter, p. 1).

The philosophy of humanism is credited as being a primary factor in the deterioration of Christian homes. This philosophy has crept into our public schools, television, radio, music, and other areas of our society. Children who have been taught the Bible by faithful Christian parents are coming home from school, in some instances, and announcing they do not believe the Bible any more. Why? Humanism is the answer in many cases.

... humanism has permeated, if not saturated every facet of our culture, including all but very conservative churches, and has become the working philosophy of all our professions and many of our businesses. Its scope is international, being accepted not only throughout the Western World, but also influential upon Third World nations (Waggoner, p. 6).

Humanism is a godless religion which makes man the only standard by which all things are to be judged. Modern humanism is not to be confused with what we often call humaneness or humanitarianism. It is rather a militant philosophy which believes that man is but the evolutionary product of nature. It denies the existence of God, the authority of scripture, life after death, sin, heaven, hell, etc. While not a new philosophy, it was somewhat dormant until the advent and acceptance of Darwin's theory of organic evolution in the Western World. Its beliefs are documented by the Humanist Manifesto I and II, published in 1933 and 1973, respectively. Humanism is the primary philosophy behind such modern social and political issues as the Equal Rights Amendment, the Gay Rights movement, abortion, and the right to suicide (Waggoner, p. 7).

Components of our society are now operating on humanistic rather than on Christian principles. That is not to say that most Americans are

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humanists, but many are. And it is no wonder since John Dewey introduced the ideas of humanism into our public school system many years ago. In one middle school, a teacher told her students that they should try homosexuality and heterosexuality to see which one they were meant to be. In one first grade classroom, the teacher played "Lifeboat Strategy" with her class. One student came home telling his mother there were two people in a boat: Jesus Christ and the mother. He bragged that he had thrown his mother out of the boat. These are the kinds of problems and decision-making situations used in the Quest program around the country. Underlying the concept of the Quest program is humanism.

5. Satanism. In some parts of the country, Satanism is becoming a big problem and is being promoted even by people in positions of influence. A police officer in our community warned parents to know with whom their children were running, where they were going, and what they were doing at all times because of this problem. Churches of Satan have even sprung up in some areas. Cults are spreading and have a real possibility of influencing our children.

6. Influence of Public Schools. In view of the topics we have discussed already, I think we can see that outside influences are bombarding our homes. The public schools are no exception. Just because something happens at school does not mean it is okay. We need to know what our children are doing at school and what they are being taught.

Parents must understand that it is not just hard-core rebellion against us or God that is the only problem. Some are subtly influenced and begin drifting long before they actually leave.

What Can We Do to Direct Children Toward Salvation? What Are Some Principles that Have Worked?

1. Teach them the gospel. Our children are just as subject to the Great Commission as any others in the world. It is still true for them that "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:16).

We need to restore the family altar and home Bible study if we expect our children to respond to the gospel call. What they are taught in the public assembly of the church is not enough. They need parents in the home teaching them the gospel plan of salvation, too. Family nights create memory pockets for children; and even if they stray for a while, they will remember and, hopefully, return to the beliefs that have been instilled into them in the

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home. Family nights need not be just Bible reading and study, although these should be at the center. A variety of activities can be planned that will strengthen the family unit and bring it closer together, forming a bond that will carry with children as they go into their adult lives.

In the home and in the congregation, more individual Christians should design activities that will keep young people more actively involved in spiritual development. Recreational activities planned by individuals have their place, but we have too long neglected activities that will enhance spiritual growth.

2. Instill within them a love for the truth. Parents can let their children know that they are firmly grounded in the truth and that they believe in it. Parents should communicate their own love for the truth and their own conviction that they believe in the Bible and in its authority over their lives.

By example, parents can let their children know they are enjoying their Christianity and that it is real to them.

3. Teach values. One of the best ways to teach values is to allow young people the experience of deciding between right and wrong while they are still young. In other words, avoid overprotecting them. Overprotected children many times find themselves at a loss when they are finally confronted with the realities of life. Guide a pre-teen in little things regarding study habits, visiting with a friend, or the amount of time spent watching television. And, hopefully, by age 16, the teen will be ready to make reasonable judgments about such things and others more important for themselves.

The other side of overprotection is lack of guidelines. Many young people today are growing up with few restrictions. Many parents today simply do not know what their teenagers are doing. Not wanting to overprotect a child should not be a cop-out for parents who do not really want to deal with problems. Some parents must reason within themselves that if they do not know what their children are doing, they do not have to deal with the resultant problems. Just because they do not know what they are doing does not mean there are no problems. Teenagers sometimes try to inhibit their parents by demanding their rights to privacy. Parents have a right to know what their teenagers are doing as long as they are under their supervision.

Parents must first accept the fact that teenagers are going to be tempted. They do have feelings, and these will surface as they grow older. If we have not instilled, at early impressionable ages, the difference between right and wrong and the consequences of wrong, we will have a difficult time in

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the later growing up years. And even if we have instilled these values, we still may go through some rough times.

Parents should be instilling or internalizing God's values into their children instead of imposing values upon them. "Imposing these values is a band-aid over a wound that will grow wider every year" (Lucas, p. 148). Jehoiada's family learned that sacrificing for a child is not enough. "Love is not enough. Kindness is not enough. Either the values are a part of the child, or they are nothing and will disappear when you disappear" (Lucas, p. 148).

Some are able to produce children that look good on the surface, and there appear to be no problems. The values they have imposed last their children perhaps through high school or even college, but usually they do not last a lifetime.

Like Pavlovian dogs that respond to the stimulus of the mastermind, your children can be behavior modified and assertively disciplined until their instant and mindless responses impress your friends and family and woo converts to the idea of parental despotism (Lucas, p. 148).

But the question is: Will those values disappear with you? It takes more time to internalize than to impose values. "Internalizing is a process, while imposing is simply an act" (Lucas, p. 149). One man taught his son about integrity by teaching him the Scriptures about a man of integrity. He discussed and observed the consequences of lying and the benefits of telling the truth. Then he asked him questions regularly about which kind of person he wanted to be. It was an ongoing process that took time.

4. Let home be a haven. Make home a comfort zone. Give your children pleasant and relaxed time at home. Be there to listen to a child when he needs to talk and to help him when he needs help. If a child is having frustrations at school because he is different, give all of the time he needs to work through those frustrations, all the while letting him feel your caring and your support.

5. Give unconditional love. The Bible is replete with teaching emphasizing that true love is unconditional. We are taught to love the sinner but hate the sin. Jesus dealt firmly with the Scribes and Pharisees; but all the while he prepared to die for them as well as for the rest of the world. As parents we cannot condone the sins of our children and expect to save them. But, on the other hand, we must let them know we love them and care about them and their salvation.

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6. Be consistent. This principle is one of the most important and the most difficult.

7. Communicate. Children need someone to talk with even while they are still young. As teenagers they will find someone to talk with, of that we can be assured. If we have developed lines of communication while they are young, they will be much more likely to come to us with their problems in the later growing up years.

Create special times for communication—private communication. Take time away together. Take a child out to eat, take him fishing, take her shopping, engage in some things that will give you time with that child.

8. Pray. Most of all, pray. "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17) the great Apostle Paul so wisely advised. The most important tool we have in rearing our children in the Lord is prayer. We can use all other means at our disposal and not save our children without the Lord's blessing. We need the Lord in the awesome task, and we must let Him know that we realize that need.

The power of prayer has made the difference in the saving of more children than we will ever know. The forces we are fighting are powerful, so we need God's power with us in combating those forces. Paul said, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world" (Eph. 6:12) God has promised to hear and answer our prayers, and we need that assurance as we attempt to bring children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Conclusion

There is no formula for us to communicate to church members that will work in every case. Each situation is different. Each child. Each parent. Each family. But with God's help, we can be successful in saving our children.

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The Effect of Television on Children

by James D. Orten

Consider this scenario. In the 1950's when television first hit the scene in medium-sized and small cities, most of our preachers opposed it. We would not have sets in our homes and we regularly spoke out against it. But what was the T.V. that we fought in those days really like? No nudity, no vulgarity—in fact, the word “pregnant” could not be used on the public airways. There was no overt sexuality—even fervent kisses were not allowed. All children were respectful of their parents and the good guys always won. Discussions of perversities on the air were not even entertained as possibilities.

Now there are very few preachers without sets in their homes (I know of only two) and rather little is said about it. It is fair to say that as a group we have accepted T.V. What is this medium that we have accepted? Every type of cursing is allowed, nudity is commonplace, explicit sex is frequent and 89% of the suggestive situations shown are between unmarried couples. Some of the nation's favorite programs show children defying their parents. Violence has proceeded to gruesome levels, and perversities are regularly presented in favorable lights. What can we make of the fact that we opposed T.V. when it was mild and accepted it when it became putrid?

An Outline of the Study

- A. How much T.V. is watched and who watches it?
- B. What does the research show about the effects?
- C. What are the mental mechanisms by which T.V. works?
- D. How does this affect the conscience-building process in children?
- E. What can we do about the situation?

Who Watches T.V. and How Much?

- A. The introduction comes early—the average six month-old infant spends 1.5 hours daily in front of a T.V. set in the arms of its caretakers.
- B. It is not surprising that by age three, American children have become purposeful T.V. consumers with their own favorite shows—an average of 2 hours daily.

Television

- C. Consumption grows to about age 12 and peaks at an average of 4 hours daily.
- D. Sixteen year olds average 3.5 hours daily and adults 2.5 hours.
 - 1. These are averages. Not every adolescent watches 4 hours every day. They may watch 2.5 hours through the week and 8 hours on Saturdays and Sundays.
 - 2. These same basic patterns hold for Canada, Western Europe, and Australia. Many of these countries use much U.S. programming.

Effect on the Family Unit

- A. There is not much talk about it, but it may be the most serious effect of all. Sixty percent of families acknowledge they changed their sleeping patterns after the introduction of T.V.
- B. 55% say they altered the way meals are served.
- C. 78% of families acknowledge using T.V. as an electronic babysitter.
- D. An unexpected result: Water systems in some large metropolitan areas have had to be redesigned to accommodate massive drops in pressure caused by flushing toilets during prime-time commercials.
- E. What activities do families say suffered most?
 - 1. Social activities away from home, i.e. church attendance, children's school activities, et cetera.
 - 2. Sleep. Sleep deprivation is now considered a major health problem.
 - 3. Conversation, as required to do the teaching of children described in Deuteronomy 6:6.
 - 4. Reading. As in reading the Bible or anything else.
- F. Compared to the automobile.
 - 1. Early supporters of television said similar complaints were made against the automobile.
 - 2. Studies show that folks who own automobiles spend only 6% more time traveling than those who do not.
- G. No invention in modern times has altered the structure and function of the family in ways comparable to T.V.

Studies of Violence

- A. Violence has been the principal subject of study. The reasons for this will be explained later when I discuss pornography.

- B. Because the effect of televised violence on children and youth has been studied 30 years there are now literally hundreds of studies—I estimate between 600 and 1,000—and they show clearly and undeniably the damaging effects of T.V. violence on young people.
- C. Some of the early studies purported to show no connection between how much and what kind of T.V. children watched and their behavior. By now hardly anyone would deny that the current T.V. diet of most children does have serious and damaging effects.
- D. There are probably two reasons some of the early studies purported to show “no effect”:
 - 1. Science is not set up to prove things; it is set up to disprove. Whether the study is about the effect of capital punishment on crime or caffeine on heart disease, the way science works is that it will take the proposition and try to disprove it. If after several attempts, it cannot be disproved, then researchers will gradually and reluctantly accept it. Especially, in early studies the problem is apt to be poor methods of study. For that reason, if good logic suggests something to be harmful, one should not place much confidence in one or few studies that say it isn't.
 - 2. The second reason some early studies claimed no effect is that they were commissioned by the broadcasting networks. They were simply biased, or in a few cases positive findings were deliberately suppressed. This just proves again, that it is not safe to appoint the fox the guardian of the chicken house.

Samples of Studies in Violence

There are two main types. For every example I give there are literally dozens, sometimes hundreds of others of the same type. Social science journals now will hardly take another study or publication unless it has some unique aspect.

A. Laboratory studies.

- 1. Heller and Polsky—Commissioned and paid for by ABC.
 - a. Divided school aged children in two groups and showed one group repeated versions of aggressive cartoons; the other group were shown nonaggressive materials.
 - b. Afterward, trained observers watched the children at play and rated their levels of aggression toward other children with a standardized rating scale known as the Feshbach method.

Television

- c. They found statistically significant increases in a variety of aggressive behaviors, i.e. hitting, shoving, as well as verbal aggressions and hostile attitudes.
2. Drabman and Thomas' Series of "Hardening Children" experiments.
 - a. Child Growth and Development experts have been worried for years about what is described as vanishing childhood. By this they mean that the period in a child's life when he thinks innocently and trustingly appears to be getting shorter and shorter.
 - b. Christians should be concerned about this also. This was the subject of Solomon's statement in Ecclesiastes 12:1, "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."
 - c. Drabman and Thomas showed one group of 3rd and 4th graders aggressive cowboy films while another group continued the regular school program.
 - d. After the exposure, one by one the children from both groups were taken for the experimental test. In a room with a T.V. monitor, they were told their job was to watch the two children that they could see playing on the monitor. They were also told that if the children should do anything wrong they should use the buzzer to call an adult who was working nearby. What the children were actually seeing was a video film of two child actors who play nicely at first but gradually became more and more violent. Finally they appeared to hit each other and wreck the camera.
 - e. The real object was to find out how much violence the two groups of children thought was all right.
 - f. The results were dramatic. 60% of the nonexposed children called for help as soon as the filmed children started arguing loudly and wrecking each other's toys. Only 17% of the exposed children did so.
 - g. Drabman and Thomas repeated the study twice with similar results.
3. Bryant, Carveth, and Brown—The Cultivation of Expectation of Violence.
 - a. Ninety men, over a six week period, agreed to watch no television or a great deal of specified programs. (They were told their job was to analyze content.) One group watched no T.V. One group watched twenty-eight hours per week of violent programs in which the good guy won. The other group watched 28 hours of violence in which the good guy lost. They called

- these situations: 1) No television. 2) Violence with justice. 3) Violence with injustice.
- b. Subjects were tested for baselines of anxiety and hostile attitudes before the experiment.
 - c. At the end, the three groups were tested for anxiety and for perceived likelihood of being a victim of violence.
 - d. Again, the results were dramatic and a perfect progression—no television, violence with justice, violence with injustice.
4. Some authorities reject laboratory experiments. They say the subjects are likely to know they are in an experiment and to react differently than they would in real life. These authorities say studies in natural settings are more valuable.

Field Experiments in Violence

A. The Joy, Kimball, and Zabrack Study of Three Canadian Towns.

1. A town in the Canadian mountains that had no television until 1974.
 2. Another Canadian town of similar size that had only one channel—CBS. (From having lived in Cape Town I can confirm that one channel will restrict your viewing.)
 3. A third town that received many channels including U.S. channels. They referred to these towns as Notel, Unitel, and Multitel.
4. Results:
- a. Violence among children and youth, according to several ratings, was highest in Multitel, next highest in Unitel, and lowest in Notel.
 - b. However, two years after introduction of television in Notel, childhood violence matched that of Unitel.

B. Belson's (CBS) Study.

1. In an eight-year study that cost \$300,000 Belson studied 1500 adolescents in London.
2. He first collected records of how much T.V. these adolescents consumed. Then he collected information from families, friends, and court records about the types of violence low consumers, medium consumers, and high consumers committed.
3. Belson concluded that even for serious offenses such as stealing and inflicting bodily harm, there was "very strong" evidence that heavy T.V. viewing was a real contributing factor.
4. Even though this is one of the largest studies ever done, and colleagues of Belson (usually the harshest critics) accepted it as a

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sound, major study, CBS decided the evidence was inconclusive and continued with their regular programming.

C. Huesmann's Twenty-two year follow-up.

1. In the 1960's Huesmann and his associates began collecting data on 211 boys of ages 8 and 9.
 2. They collected T.V. viewing information from mothers and aggression information from classmates (i.e. "write down the name of the kids in your class who would be most likely to hit someone," et cetera).
 3. Boys whose mothers said they watched violent programs were the ones classmates said would hit someone.
 4. At this point, students who read that study would be apt to say "What's new?"
 5. Here's what's new. Twenty-two years later Huesmann went back and found most of those subjects when they were ages 30 and 31.
 6. High watchers of violent T.V. at age 8 were five times more likely to have committed criminal acts by age 30 than low watchers.
 7. Huesmann concluded: "Aggressive habits seem to be learned early and once established are resistant to change. Early television habits are, in fact, correlated with adult criminality."
- D. The Argument: Does watching T.V. violence produce violence in young people or do violent young people watch violent T.V.? The answer seems to be both, a vicious cycle.
1. How does this type of influence to violence prepare young people to assume such Christian characteristics as the following:
 - a. 2 Timothy 2:24, "the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men."
 - b. James 3:17, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits."

The Effect of Sexually Explicit T.V.

- A. This aspect of television has not been studied as long or as much as violence. There are two reasons for this deficit:
1. Until the late 1970's there was little sexually oriented material on T.V. When T.V. first appeared, the word "pregnant" could not be spoken on the airways.
 - a. One researcher said that until 1977, T.V. seemed to assume that even married couples lived in separate bedrooms.

- b. The turning point was the introduction of the sitcom "Soap." Now, not only explicit material but all forms of perversions are openly displayed, usually in a favorable light.
2. The second reason is that many researchers did not believe that sexual material alone was harmful. (This view changed with the advent of pornography.) Under this assumption in the 1960's, the avant-garde were fond of saying "make love, not war."

Leading Studies in Televised Pornography

- A. One of the leading students of the effects of televised pornography is Edward Donnerstein. Donnerstein studied large numbers of college-aged men in three settings: (The men did not know why they were being studied.)
 1. Over a period of several days, one group watched large numbers of neutral films, i.e. no sex or violence.
 2. A second group watched explicitly erotic but nonviolent films.
 3. A third group watched films that combined sex with violence.
- B. After the films the men completed questionnaires about their attitudes toward women, rape, and toward what they might do in certain male-female situations.
 1. The sexual but nonviolent films produced a significant negative effect in the attitudes of men toward women. It increased how far they said they would push a companion to get what they want, and it significantly lessened their opinions of the seriousness of forcible rape.
 2. While these results were sobering, the results were even stronger for the group that watched the films that combined pornography with violence. Some of this group were willing to allow rapists to go free with practically no punishment.
 3. How does this fit with Paul's instruction to young men, in I Timothy 5:1, to treat young women as sisters with absolute purity? How does it prepare them to "love their wives as their own bodies"? Ephesians 5:28.
- C. Donnerstein wanted to know if the men would actually carry through with harmful behavior they projected toward women.
 1. In a different side of the experiment, he told the men that he was studying the effect of punishing wrong answers on learning.

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2. Working with actresses, he had the men, one by one, to turn the dials to give what they thought were actual electric shocks when the women gave wrong answers.
3. The results were chilling. The men from the sex only film gave high shocks. The men from the sex and violence group gave dangerously high shocks. The group that watched neutral films were significantly more gentle than either of the other groups.
- D. Donnerstein concluded: "Far from being innocuous, frequent exposure to pornography appears to cultivate extremely negative attitudes toward women." Is there really any mystery about why the incidence of forcible rape has jumped dramatically in recent years?
- E. Broadcasters have consistently argued that they do not mold public values—that they only reflect them.
 1. In a small way this is true, but in the most meaningful way it is absolutely false.
 2. Broadcasters do not usually introduce totally new ideas to the public. What they do is take the practices of a small minority and exploit their novelty. In so doing they make these practices appear to be much more widespread than they are. Thus, they significantly hasten the spread of negative values.
 3. Heavy T.V. viewers, in surveys, consistently overestimate:
 - a. How much divorce there is in society,
 - b. How much premarital sex—89% of all suggestive scenes on T.V. are between unmarried persons,
 - c. How much marital infidelity—any wonder?
 4. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable here because of their need to fit in.
 5. Do you remember when sex education in schools was justified on the basis of sexual misinformation supposedly given by parents? Researchers are now concerned about what I consider a much more serious type of misinformation done by the media.

The Effects of Advertisements on Children

- A. There is good evidence that the content of television programs is not their only source of negative effects. The commercials themselves may be about as bad.
 1. T.V. advertising to children is big business; children's commercials are scientifically researched, attractively designed, musically scored, and effective!

2. Mattel toy company launched a campaign in 1955 that multiplied their sales 2400 percent almost overnight.
- B. Whether commercials intend to do it or not, several studies have found that advertisements directed toward children promote negative attitudes toward parents and parent-child conflicts.
1. Goldberg and Gorn showed one group of children a commercial about a toy. The other group did not see it. Then they showed a picture of the toy, a child, and a father to all children. They were told that the child wanted the toy but the father would not buy it. They were then asked if the child would still want to play with his father. The majority of the commercial viewers said "no"; the majority of the nonviewers said "yes".
 2. Atkin took reports from parents and, in another study, actually observed shopping situations and found that 65% of parent refusals to buy advertised products, i.e. cereals and toys, resulted in observable parent-child conflicts.
 3. Other studies show that children say they would prefer to play with a "mean boy" with an advertised toy than a "nice boy" without it.
- C. There has been a lot of speculation about how and why commercials influence children in these ways. Two factors seem involved:
1. Young children listen very well to commercials. Studies show that older children's attention drops dramatically during commercials, but young children's attention actually increases.
 2. The second factor is that young children are not able to evaluate the intent of television commercials. In their young, innocent minds they believe the commercial is telling them something for their benefit. Thus, when parents refuse to buy advertised products, children feel parents are depriving them of something good.

The Means Through Which Television Influences Children

Children's Inability to Distinguish Fact from Fantasy

- A. Many adults dismiss the effects of T.V. as "just fantasy."
1. It is true that adults can soften the impact of visual images by how they tell themselves to interpret them, i.e. through cognitive input.
 2. There is plenty of evidence that adults cannot do this with complete effectiveness. Witness the frightening effect of horror films.
- B. But children cannot distinguish fact from fantasy at all until about five years of age. Then, for another two or three years, i.e. until about

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age eight, their ability to do so is weak or incomplete. Thus, before age five, if children see it, it is real.

1. Recall that children become purposeful T.V. watchers by age 3. Then you know that for 2 or 3 years, before they have the power to interpret them, they are exposed to fictional characters and events that they take as real.
2. You can understand how children might be made to feel by these scenes. Recall the content of programs like Miami Vice and Hill Street Blues. How would you feel if every day when you went out to work you saw four or five people shot, you had to dodge bullets, you witnessed people screaming with pain, et cetera.
3. Before children start to school they are now exposed to many more fictional characters than real ones. And the quality of many of these fictional, but to them real, characters is the worst possible.
4. 1 Corinthians 15:33, "Do not be misled; bad company corrupts good character" (NIV).
5. We would not think of allowing our children to associate with these characters on the streets. Yet, 78% of Americans admit they invite them in to babysit their children.
6. One interesting example of children's inability to understand fantasy is their inability to understand flashbacks, and remembering.

Children's Inability to Evaluate Intent

- A. As adults, if someone wants us to do something that we know will profit them we evaluate that content differently. For example, we look at an advertisement of a cereal differently than objective analysis of its content.
- B. Children are not able to make that distinction. Thus, they see programs that the producers say are just entertainment and take it as information about the way the world is. When they see hour after hour of people beating each other up, when everyone they see on television has been or is getting divorced, when practically everyone they see is involved in adultery, the view of the world they get is severely distorted.

The Greater Power of Visual Images

- A. There is evidence that material that is presented with life-like visual images simply hits with harder impact than the spoken word only.
- B. Mt. 6:22-23, "The light of the body is the eye: If therefore thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be

evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."

1. "Light" means the lamp which shows the way or, morally, the guiding principles by which one lives.
 2. The source of the guiding principles by which one lives is the eye!
- C. I recall a poem I learned as a child that illustrates this point: "I would rather see a sermon than to hear one any day. I would rather one would walk with me than merely show the way. The eye is a better pupil and more willing than the ear. Fine council is confusing, but example is always clear."
- D. Jesus said the light of the "body" is the eye. Visual images hit with greater impact on the emotions.

The Effect of Television on the Conscience-Building Process

- A. For a number of years professionals in the child-care business have been noticing a change in the types of children that are brought to our treatment units.
- B. When I first started as a therapist, about a quarter of a century ago (that long?), other than psychotic children, the main types we got were anxious, phobic, or depressed ones. That has dramatically changed. Now the principal ones (again, other than psychotic children) are personality disorders. One feature of these disorders is that something has interfered with the attachment, bonding, and conscience-building processes. Many of these youngsters grow up caring for no one, feeling for no one, i.e. without a conscience.
- C. We have long known that the basic structure for the conscience is built in the early years. Specific beliefs and principles begin to be entered into it in adolescence and continue throughout life. But if the structure is not sound, whatever is put into it (taught) may simply "leak out" as water from a bucket with holes in it. Psychologists speak of "superego lacunae" which means holes in the conscience.
- D. Paul alluded to this process in I Tim. 3:9 when he spoke of deacons as "holding the mystery of the faith in a good conscience." The image Paul constructs, according to Ellicott and other Bible scholars, is that of a precious bowl or container and a precious liquid within it. Neither can be used without the other. Again, the container is constructed in early years. A child needs those tender, unhardened years to learn to

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trust, to be attached to and to feel for other people, which are the bases for the conscience.

- E. By contrast we know that sin hardens. Paul said in Hebrews 3:13, "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you should be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."
- F. What I believe is happening is that an early and intense exposure to violence and pornography via T.V. is hardening the nation's children before their times. Consequently, a very large number will go through life without the inner restraint of a conscience, doing whatever they can get away with, whatever feels good to them.

What Can Be Done About the Problem

- A. Diagnosis of a problem is usually easier than cure and that is certainly true in this case. But there are things we can do, as a brotherhood and as individuals and families.
- B. As a brotherhood:
 - 1. Let us take care to avoid our earlier mistake of dividing into camps of "those opposed to T.V." and "those for T.V." and fighting each other.
 - 2. Instead, let us deal with the matter as a mutual and pervasive problem in which we instruct and support each other in love.
- C. As individuals and families:
 - 1. If you and your family have not developed a heavy dependence on T.V., don't! As parents, do not use T.V. to entertain children and don't worry about moderate amounts of childhood boredom. Packaged entertainment stifles creativity; boredom helps children develop internal resources for learning and amusement.
 - 2. Parents should deal first with their own T.V. habits. Those who do so serve as role models for their children and make their requests more creditable.
 - 3. As a minimum, get rid of multiple sets, i.e. individual sets in bedrooms.
 - 4. Don't just throw it out, put something more constructive in its place, i.e. wholesome family activities. Remember Jesus' lesson (Mt. 12) of the evil spirit that was cast out of his home and returning later found it still empty, he returned and the latter state was worse than the beginning. Older children especially should be included in discussions of the problem and solutions.

5. A family that depends heavily on T.V. should reassess broadly its family life. There are probably factors, such as high father absence, that have allowed the dependence to develop. These should be addressed.
6. Deal with T.V. dependence as an addiction, if it is, and it can be. See the symptoms of addictive activities below. An addicted individual:
 - a. Cannot or does not quit even though he knows the activity is harmful.
 - b. Spends an inordinate amount of time doing it or thinking about it.
 - c. Structures life around it, other helpful activities are neglected in favor of it.

A Summary of the Effects of Television

1. Television violence affects all children—no serious researcher would deny the validity of that statement.
 2. The more they watch, the more they are affected.
 3. The more vulnerable they are, the more they are affected:
 - a. younger children more than older,
 - b. emotionally disturbed more than emotionally healthy,
 - c. violent children more than nonviolent,
 - d. children from broken homes and homes that make no attempt to teach values more than children from solid, intact homes.
 4. Children who watch T.V. alone will probably be affected more than those who watch with their parents.
- B. Please be aware that we are dealing with averages. I am not saying any individual child who watches T.V. definitely will be affected in the ways described here. I am saying rather that there is a significantly increased likelihood that he will be.
- C. I am not saying either that T.V. is the only or total source of negative effects on children. But I, and most other social scientists, believe it is a major one.

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Summary of Research Material

All of the studies mentioned in this presentation are described and fully referenced in the summaries of research listed below.

F. S. Andison, "TV Violence and Viewer Aggression: A Cumulation of Study Results 1956-1976," **Public Opinion Quarterly**, 41 (1977), pp. 314-331.

E. L. Palmer and A. Dorr, **Children and the Faces of Television**. New York: Academic Press, 1980.

S. Hearold, "A Synthesis of 1043 Effects of Television on Social Behavior" in G. Comstock (Ed.) **Public Communications and Behavior: Volume I**. New York: Academic Press, 1986.

Robert M. Liebert and Joyce Sprafkin, **The Early Window: The Effects of Television on Children and Youth**. New York: Pergamon Press, 1988.

Drunkenness **(A Bible definition)**

by Ronald Courter

The drinking of ethyl alcohol is a consistent part of the present day way of life. Its dangers are hidden in slick advertising schemes and phrases. A good example would be the well known phrase, "Know when to say when." Realistically, we believe such a phrase is saying get drunk responsibly. How does one get drunk responsibly?

We are told the Bible says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:5). The implication being the same as the modern slick sayings of our day. How does one do evil moderately? What is never mentioned by many is Paul had no thought of drinking ethyl alcohol in this passage. The Word translated "moderation" in this verse is translated patient (1 Tit. 3:3) and gentle in other verses (Tit. 3:2; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 2:18). The thought of the verse is to be meek under provocation. The Bible does not teach moderation in the doing of evil, but the abstaining from evil.

- I. There is no controversy that the Bible condemns drunkenness (Lk. 21:34; Rom. 13:13; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:18).
 - A. The agreement on the subject ends at this point.
 - B. Many think that drunkenness only condemns the excessive use of ethyl alcohol.
 - C. They think that the term "drunkenness" says nothing of drinking, but simply prohibits excessive use of alcohol, which is drunkenness.
 - D. Others think that the term "drunkenness" prohibits the drinking of all ethyl alcohol for social and psychological purposes.
- II. There are probably two groups among those who believe drunkenness only prohibits excessive use of alcohol.
 - A. There are those in life that always attempt to interpret away any prohibition regarding sin and seek to license evil. They have never captured their thoughts and affections for Christ. They remind us of the words of 2 Pet. 2:19. The problem with this group is attitude and not evidence. Jesus encountered such in his day and rebuked them severely. We do not write this article for such people and we do not think that everyone who disagrees with what we are about to say is among them.

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- B. There is a very large number of very sincere Christians, who believe cognitively the term "drunkenness" does not prohibit drinking. They do not drink and they will not drink. Their reasons for abstaining are usually founded on the principles of influence and offense.
 - 1. Typically, they think ethyl alcohol was commonly drunk in the first century, so they think the term "drunkenness" is to prohibitive to include all drinking of ethyl alcohol for social and psychological purposes.
 - 2. We appreciate the attitude of those convictions, but we are very uneasy with their reasonings.
 - C. This writing desires to focus on thoughts regarding the meaning of the word "drunkenness" and related verses. Furthermore, there is a need to share thinking and information on a topic that appears to be discussed far too carelessly.
- III. Let us note some reasons why we are uneasy with the reasoning of those that simply believe drunkenness means excessive use of alcohol.
- A. The writer finds the definition unclear and possibly even circular. It is said, "Drunkenness is when he is drunk. What is the real determination of the amount of drinking that determines one is now drunk or one is still not drunk?"
 - B. The Bible stringently condemns the sin of drunkenness, but this view has no clear definition of drunkenness. You must indulge in the very thing, the very action that causes the sin. This certainly seems a problem for those defining drunkenness, as excessive drinking.
 - 1. It is well known that ethyl alcohol almost immediately affects judgment. It is a depressant. Research reveals the forebrain is influenced immediately and this area is associated with critical judgment, reasoning and social restraint. "The higher nerve functions of the forebrain, such as reasoning, judgment, and social restraint are impaired by very low concentrations of alcohol in the blood (Jeffcoat, p. 87)." The affects of ethyl alcohol upon our brain is a process in degree and not a mere all or none phenomenon.
 - 2. We are told it is alright to drink, but do not lose control.
 - 3. But we recognize that ethyl alcohol is taking control or taking away control before it is overtly manifested in motor and social behavior.
 - 4. But we are told you are alright until you lose control, because you have not drank excessively.
 - 5. The problem with drunkenness as being excessive use of alcohol is how do you make a sound judgment about control when each

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drink further distorts your judging ability? The affects of ethyl alcohol begins with the ingesting ethyl alcohol. When is the person no longer sober in judgment?

- C. The often made analogy between drinking in the first century and so-called "social drinking" in our day is not true, for they differ in far to many ways.
 - 1. Many reason the drinking of ethyl alcohol was very necessary in the first century, so the term drunkenness could only mean excessive drinking. How would this prove anything for the mis-labeled "social drinking" of our day, since it is not necessary?
 - 2. The evidence that ethyl alcohol had to be indulged in due to the conditions of that day are far from being conclusive. You do not have an everyday living populous without an adequate water supply.
 - 3. The actual contents of the wine was not always fermented. The actual potency of the fermented wine would vary tremendously from the potency of today's alcoholic drinks.
 - 4. The purpose for the drinking of ethyl alcohol then and now would have to be proven to be the same.
- V. It is taught that Romans 14:21 approves of drinking ethyl alcohol and places the drinking of fermented wine in the realm of liberty. Then the verse is immediately used to teach you will not drink ethyl alcohol due to offending your brother. Surely, something is amiss in all this jumping about.
 - A. The verse is said to teach drinking of ethyl alcohol is in the realm of liberty. Therefore, drunkenness means excessive use of ethyl alcohol.
 - B. What assures us this verse places intoxicating wine in the realm of liberty?
 - C. Paul teaches do not drink wine if it offends your brother. How do we know this is intoxicating wine? "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby they brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak." Paul's point in this verse can be made, whether the wine is fermented or not fermented. The point is I will not ingest anything (eat or drink) that offends my brother. Paul could have said, "Do not drink non-intoxicating wine in the market place, if it offends thy brother." This verse has been relied upon too heavily by those saying drunkenness is simply excessive use of alcohol.
- V. Let us carefully reflect on the difference in definition of drunkenness that is our concern. Many think drunkenness in the Bible simply means ex-

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cessive use of ethyl alcohol. This view seems to be wed to the conclusion that drunkenness is not a matter of degree, but a matter of all or none. You drink and until you cross the line of excessive use you are not drunk or under the influence of ethyl alcohol.

The writer thinks the term drunkenness refers to the state of impairment due to the ingestion of alcohol and the term drunkenness takes in the whole process. Drunkenness in this view is a matter of degree and the term drunkenness can be utilized to prohibit all drinking of any amount for social and psychological reasons.

A. We are told it is naive to say a man is one can drunk or three cans drunk. We are told a man is drunk, when he has drunk excessively. When is that? It is when a man is drunk. Does the Bible stringently condemn drunkenness and then permit us to conclude a person cannot know he has sinned, until he has sinned? We might ask who is naive in this situation?

B. Drunkenness is a state of impairment due to the ingestion of ethyl alcohol. It is a matter of degree. It is dependent on a number of variables. The primary variable is ethyl alcohol. Therefore, we believe the Bible term "drunkenness" can be applied to the ingesting of ethyl alcohol of any amount for mere social custom and psychological reasons. The main reason people drink is to change their feelings.

Drunkenness means to be drunk or to get drunk. This is exactly what is transpiring when you ingest ethyl alcohol and it is taking over or begins to influence any of your members. The yielding of the control of your faculties in any sense for social and psychological reasons to alcohol is drunkenness.

C. We can see the clear distinction regarding how we define drunkenness from the Bible and the implication in these two definitions.

D. We need to remember ethyl alcohol is a depressant. The predominant characteristic of an anesthetic is a progressive descending depression of the central nervous system.

VI. Let us turn our attention to the group of words translated drunken, drunk and drunkard in the Bible. It is evident the common observation of drunkenness reveals a process and certainly medical knowledge of drunkenness reveals a process of one yielding his faculties to the affects of ethyl alcohol. Do these words favor drunkenness means the process of ingesting ethyl alcohol or simply excessive use of ethyl alcohol?

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- A. The word drunken according to Thayer means to be drunken. Vines says, "It means to be drunk with time. The word is found in Mt. 24:49; Acts 2:15; 1 Cor. 1:21 and 1 Th. 5:7.
- B. The word drunken or drunk according to Thayer means to intoxicate, make drunk, to get drunk, become intoxicated. Vine says, "To make drunk or to grow drunk (an inceptive verb, marking the process of the state expressed in no. 1), hence to be intoxicated." The term is found in Lk. 12:45; Eph. 5:18 and 1 Thess 5:7a. (See also Jer. 51:7; Hab. 2:15; Prov. 4:17; 23:20).

Jeffcoat in his writing states that Bullinger says the term means to grow drunk (marking the beginning of *methuo*). He says R. Young and W. Haynes states the word conveys the thought of beginning to soften.

- C. Let us define the words inceptive and inchoate from Funk and Wagnall's dictionary.

Inceptive: Adj. 1. Noting the beginning or commencement of an action or occurrence; initial 2. gram. Referring to a class of verbs or to the aspect of a verb denoting the commencement of an action, inchoative, ingressive. In Latin, for example, such verbs are formed by the addition of *scere* to the present stem, *ascale* (*scere*), to grow warm, from *cale* (*re*) to be hot.-N. 1. That which tends to commence, as an inceptive word or construction 2. Gram. An inceptive word or construction.

Inchoate: Adj. existing in its elements only, begun or entered upon, but not in full existence or operation; incipient. Inchoative-Gram. Inceptive. 2. Rare inchoate, incipient-N. That which begins or expresses beginning, and inceptive especially, an inceptive verb.

- D. We have no interest in trying to be more righteous than the Bible. Whately wrote, "the same authority which forbids us to 'diminish aught' from the word of God, forbids us also to 'add thereto' (p. 167)." We ask you to consider whether the word "drunkennes" prohibits the drinking of ethyl alcohol and means more than simply excessive use of ethyl alcohol in drink?

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Let us examine some information on the affects of ethyl alcohol on boat operators. We realize "boating stress factors" enhance the effects of alcohol, but this does not contaminate the soberness of this data.

1. One drink, such as a 12 oz. beer or 4 oz. of 12% wine or 1 1/4 ox. of 86 proof liquor endangers a boat operator of 100 to 130 pounds to perform appropriately.
2. Two drinks of the above will endanger the performance of a boat operator weighing from 130 to 160 pounds.
3. Three drinks of the above will endanger the performance of a boat operator weighing from 160 to 200 pounds.

We have shied away from hypothetical scenarios due to the nature of our topic. But indeed there is something wrong with saying drunkenness only means excessive use of alcohol. It makes little sense to say to a Christian that one way to stay away from the guilt of drunkenness is to be sure to weigh more than other Christians you drink with. It make little sense to say to a Christian one way to stay away from the guilt of ethyl alcohol upon your members. There is no uniform influence on each personality. Roughly speaking, we could say the affects of ethyl alcohol work their way through th brain from top to bottom. The first area affected is the area associated with judgment, discrimination and social restraint. The next area affected relates to motor responses. Lastly, the lower area associated with the critical responses of heart and respiratory is affected. Drunkenness is a matter of degree founded on medical research, observation of common behavior and the terminology of the Bible.

- E. Sobriety does not follow a wet road. There is no such thing as a little drink. The desire of alcohol increases with indulgence (what sin doesn't). The increased ethyl alcohol presence suppresses the members of the brain one is depending upon for clear judgment and restraint. What sin in the Bible will permit us to partake of the substance involved in the sinful state, until you decide with marred judgment you now have had all you can have without sinning? Food is necessary to our well-being, but ethyl alcohol is not necessary to our well-being. Food does not mar the judgment like ethyl alcohol does from the point of ingestion.
- F. A drunkard is one drunken or intoxicated (1 Cor. 5:11; 6:10). The words drunk, drunken, and drunkenness convey the idea of to be drunk or to get drunk. When ethyl alcohol takes over any portion of our faculties, there is drunkenness. There are degrees of drunkenness (1 Sam. 25:36). The phraseology "drinking himself drunk" does not per-

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mit drinking without drunkenness, but describes the fact drunkenness is a process. We associate drunkenness with overt expressions of behavior rather than the unseen process of ethyl alcohol influencing the brain prior to the overt manifestations.

- G. We ask all to examine the common notion that drunkenness is simply excessive use of alcohol. We believe the condemnation of drunkenness prohibits more than the excessive use of alcohol. Drunkenness involves the whole process of ingesting ethyl alcohol and is not a matter of determining the amount consumed as in legal definitions. The term drunkenness strikes at the whole sphere of drinking ethyl alcohol for mere social and psychological reasons. We do not understand such is naive or violating the meaning of the Bible term. We have no desire to say more than the bible says on any subject, but we do believe many are beginning to say less than what the Bible permits us to say regarding the use of ethyl alcohol.

VII. Does the use of the words "excess of wine" in 1 Pet. 4:3 support the idea that drunkenness is simply excessive use of alcohol? The term conveys the thought of overflowing or excessive. This is really a reference to an advanced state of drunkenness. There is an extravagant indulgence in drinking to the point of long drinking bouts that could very possibly cause permanent injury to the body. Peter is here speaking of a practice that goes beyond the typical meaning of the term drunkenness, but involves long, arduous bouts of ingesting ethyl alcohol. It will not do to draft this verse to approve of drinking, but not drunkenness. It would prove far too much. Would we conclude Peter only condemns the non-moderate drunk?

VIII. The word "wine" does not always suggest a fermented drink. It seems nothing is more commonly forgotten when drunkenness is discussed. We shall not pursue the idea as far as it should be pursued, but enough to make the reader aware. We have a host of terms with a host of renderings throughout the Bible associated with the word "wine". An examination of the parallel readings of Matthew 9:17; Mk. 2:22; Lk. 5:37-39 should reveal to the reader the term wine can be used to refer to non-fermented or fermented wine.

- A. The old bottles certainly would have been adequate, if the term meant fermented.
- B. There were no bottles that would have been adequate during the fermenting process.

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- C. "If the must contained one-fifth sugar it would develop 47 times its volume of gas, and produce an enormous pressure which no bottle, new or old, could withstand (Cambridge, p. 417)."
 - D. The putting of new wine in new bottles would be fine, because both would be preserved.
 - E. Read Isaiah 16:10 and 65:8, while noting the meaning of the word wine in these verses.
 - F. "The translators of the Bible into English have repeatedly recognized the fact that the unfermented juice of the grape, as it is squeezed from the grapes and trodden from the grapes and as it flows from the press is wine (H. Leo Boles)."
 - G. It would be well for us to not put the meaning of the word "wine" today upon the first century setting of the term. Do we think for one moment the agarian society of that day was of the same commercial vent as our day? Wine was associated with ceremony, diet and medicine, but who shall say the same of our day? The potency was not comparable and often of no intoxicating quality whatsoever. There is too much evidence, too little evidence or too much conflicting evidence for the careless use we hear of Bible language upon this subject today. This is especially true when we consider the massive and chaotic effects of the ingestion of ethyl alcohol upon our society.
- IX. The first miracle of the Lord to manifest his glory would seem like a strange place to seek approval for the drinking of ethyl alcohol, but stranger things have happened. John 2:1-11 is often introduced to reason that drinking is not drunkenness.
- A. What was the miracle? It was the turning of water into wine (Jn. 4:46). The miracle is over nature, not what man can do? Possibly we are biased by an old idea, but we do not recall nature making fermented wine. The manifestation of Jesus' glory is in manifesting his power over nature, no what man can do. If we have made too much of too little on this point, you decide.
 - B. The good wine of verse 10 raises an important question. What did the ruler of the feast mean when he stated it was good wine? Did he mean more potent or did he mean better tasting? We would doubt potency was the criterion, as it is common knowledge wine was heavily diluted in that day and reduced its potency. Would Jesus have been making a wine, so the point of excess could be reached more quickly with less drinking?

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- C. What about the term "well drunk"? Does this mean the ruler was reflecting upon a state of intoxication or upon one being well-filled or satiated? We hear people assume well drunk means intoxicated, but doesn't this prove too much? The passage would then prove drunkenness and not simply drinking. It would prove excessive use of alcohol was condoned.
- D. The term means satiated or full. The term is broader than the word intoxication. McGuigan wrote, "It means to be filled, satiated, repleted and if the thing with which the individual is filled is intoxicating, they are intoxicated (1 Cor. 11:21)." The ruler in speaking of such events simply states people put out the very best first. Now, if it is necessary to supply more, you will then put out whatever is left or available. He was very surprised to find on this occasion the latter was better than the first.
- E. The usage of the term "well drunken" is like its use in 1 Cor. 11:21. The contrast is between hungry and drunken. Does this mean Paul was contrasting one hungry and one intoxicated? No. The proper contrast is between one empty and one filled. Surely, this is correct because we can not imagine Paul saying in verse 22 to go home and get intoxicated. it might be helpful to remember one can be intoxicated without being full and one can be full without being intoxicated.
- F. The typical view that wine is fermented in this passage (Jn. 2:1-11) proves far too much and so we suggest it proves nothing at all for the excessive use viewpoint. It would give evidence for more than the so-called "social drinking" of our day, but would give evidence for drunkenness. It would give support for the excessive use of alcohol. Would we expect the first miracle to manifest the glory of the lord to raise the question of his keeping the Law? We will let you answer that question.
- X. Does Ephesians 5:18 prove drunkenness is excessive drinking of ethyl alcohol? We firmly believe the answer is no. The word "excess" means riotous, debauchery, wasteful, and abandoned life or being incorrigible. The passage has nothing to do with the quantity or amount consumed.
 - A. The passage simple teaches that the drinking of ethyl alcohol is the cause and source of a wasteful life or debauchery. The result of drinking ethyl alcohol is debauchery.
 - B. It is true that everyone who ingests a drink or two may not be classified as riotous, but it is also true men become riotous by the inges-

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tion of ethyl alcohol into their systems. The point of the passage is sorely missed by those who try to make a statement from this verse about how much one can drink and not be drunk. He condemns drunkenness and is not teaching to partake non-excessively.

- XI. Luke 7:34 is frequently mentioned to prove Jesus drank some ethyl alcohol for social reasons. A number of reasons militate against this view.
- A. The character of those making the charge reveal total unreliability of character and truth seekers. The seat of the scormer was not unfamiliar to them. We would not expect charges from such to be given a detailed answer.
 - B. The word "winebibber" denotes a drunkard, tippler, given to wine, a soaker of wine. Again the term proves too much as the charge would classify Jesus as an excessive user of alcohol or a drunkard. (Read Pr. 23:20, 21; Hab. 2:15).
 - C. It is stated Jesus came drinking. We can ask by whom? We could and should ask what did he drink? The contrast between John and Jesus does not mean necessarily that Jesus drank intoxicating wine. We need to remember that John was involved in the Nazrite vow (Num. 6:1-8) and did not drink either. The contrast between John and Jesus relates to their social interaction with others.
 - D. The charge implicated against Jesus is one of sensuality by men looking to excuse themselves from the truth.
- XII. The teaching regarding the elder and the deacon in 1 Tim. 3:3 and 3:8 has probably gotten more out of the word "much" than any speculator would have ever dreamed possible. The phrase "not given to wine" (1 Tim. 3:3; Tit 1:7) means literally to not tarry at wine, not sitting at wine. The idea expressed is not to be long beside wine.
- The phrase "not given to much wine" (1 Tim. 3:8) means do not turn your attention to or to turn your mind to wine. You will not give heed to wine or bring it near to you.
- The phrase "not given to much wine" (Tit. 2:3) means to not be enslaved to wine. The idea is to reduce to bondage. The term used here is considered nearly synonymous with the word "given in 1 Tim. 3:8.
- A. It is difficult to understand how the word "much" in this setting means to drink less than excess, but more than none when the actual word drink is not even mentioned. We need to look more at the simple literal meaning of the terms, rather than seek the absolute meanings

we would prefer. Furthermore, it is contrasted with not given to wine, which again does not have the actual word drink mentioned. It is assumed it means do not drink at all, just as "much" is assumed to mean drink some. Many are assuming far too much on the word "much" and "not given" without letting the phrases stand in the normal setting and permitting other verses to aid on the subject. It reminds us of taking phrases like "with law" and "without law" and attempting to make an absolute comparison from them rather than the intended relative comparison. If this last statement does not help the reader then do not permit it to bother you.

- B. The type of reasoning utilized on "given" and "much" would be interesting to apply to 1 Tim. 3:8 and Tit. 1:7 when it speaks of "not greedy of filthy lucre" and "not given to filthy lucre". Would it be concluded the phrases permit different shades of sinful desire with a little for one and none for the other?
- C. We need to remember the content of these phrases also include terms like vigilant, sober and temperate. These terms relate to being sound-minded, under self-control and in some settings to abstaining from intoxicating beverages. It is hard to simply totally dismiss all of this and say "not given to much wine" simply means do not drink excessively. This is especially true if you think of the implications of comparing 1 Tim. 3:8 and Tit. 2:3, which are considered by most as synonymous in meaning. do we conclude only the addicted are restrained?
- D. It is well to remember the forbidding of much is not a mute approval of some (Eccl. 7:17). How would 1 Peter 4:4 fare with the interpretation style used on 1 Tim. 3:3 and 3:8? The fact that I am told not to murder someone does not permit me to afflict all kinds of physical harm upon them.

We need to be reminded that temperance in the use of harmful things is to abstain from them. Ethyl alcohol for mere social and psychological reasons is indeed harmful. The fact we are told to abstain from much wine does not imply one should partake of a little wine for pleasure. The lack of an absolute prohibition in this setting does not mean some drinking of wine was encouraged or permitted for purposes of pleasure. The fact the aged women should not be enslaved to wine was no permission slip to drink moderately. The fact the deacons should not be given to much wine is no permission slip to conclude a certain amount of drinking of ethyl alcohol is approved. the kind of reasoning often being manifested in discussions on these

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passages would result in turning a prohibition against addiction into an approval of some drinking.

- E. It might be most profitable to lay aside assumed contrasts and verbalizing and simply recognize the teaching is for elders to not be long in the presence of sine and for deacons to not give their attention to wine. The problem appears to be taking terms that do not expressly forbid in the sense we expect the expression should be done and not permitting other passages to help us make sound conclusions. It might be very important to remember an outright expression of absolute forbidding would probably not have expressed the teaching suitable to the concept of wine, the meaning of the term and the use in their day. We should be cautious of asking the Bible to express something in the way we think it should have been expressed. We would usually find that if it did so, then other problems of interpretation would arise. For example, when Paul said, "Drink no longer water . . ." do we conclude Timothy never drank water again?

XIII. It is often expressed that any negative thought regarding the use of wine is due to excessive use. We do not believe such is correct. The fact that the Bible speaks of wine in a positive fashion and in a negative fashion is more easily explained by the nature of the wine and the purpose it is used for, than excessive or not excessive use.

- A. Proverbs 23:29-32 is often explained as a warning against drunkenness being the excessive use of wine. This seems unnatural to the passage.
- B. It certainly seems that wine is being described and how would we say that intoxication bites at last?
- C. The physical cause of misery is being brought to mind. Indeed, the nature of the intoxicating is the cause of such woe. The point is not that excessive drinking brings woe, but ethyl alcohol is a physical cause of misery. Therefore, the observations of man and the counsel of revelation urge all to abstain.

Conclusion

We realize this information merely touches the cork of the bottle, but hopefully it will promote serious reflection and consideration of information not always communicated. Let us realize the serious consequences of making "off the cuff" remarks on this subject without some previous reflection. We are doubtful we are transmitting enough sound information to our present generation on this significant subject. It will be a wiser day when

men realize that alcohol abuses. Thereafter, men will be wise enough to stop speaking of the virtue of not abusing it. 7120 Banks St., Union Lake, MI 48085

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Fasting: "When," Not "If"

by Don Pruitt

All of us at times are frustrated by our spiritual impotence. Sometimes we know our prayers do not go higher than the roof. We go through periods when we cannot accomplish what we would like to accomplish. Paul experienced this same problem. He said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Rom. 7:18-19). We are all familiar with that feeling. The apostle explained that the trouble lies within ourselves. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17). We wrestle with our weaknesses. We perform our worship and spiritual duties as though we are simply going through the motions. We lack the ability to focus our lives. The problem most of us have is that we see ourselves as physical beings trying to be spiritual, rather than spiritual beings that have certain physical experiences. One of the best ways God gave us to bring the flesh under control is fasting.

To fast is to abstain from food or to abstain from certain kinds of food for a period of time. There is nothing intrinsically wrong or sinful about food. Nutrition is a physical need. Perhaps the best way to look at fasting is that it is a spiritual means to an end. The Word of God talks about fasting more than seventy-five times. Saints almost never talk about it. Many Christians believe that fasting is an Old Testament practice. Yet, this subject is mentioned in the New Testament nearly three times as often as the Lord's Supper. The brotherhood is informed about the Lord's Supper, but largely ignorant about fasting. I have been a member of the Lord's church for more than thirty years and have never heard a sermon on fasting. I was nearly forty years old before I knew that the Lord intended for me to fast.

Types of Fasts

Three different types of fasts are mentioned in God's Word: the normal fast, the absolute fast, and the partial fast. The normal fast is most often mentioned and occurs when one abstains from all food, but not fluids. "And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered" (Mt. 4:2; cf. Lk. 4:2). These passages show that when the fast was over He was hungry but not thirsty. Physicians tell us that the human body can go long periods without eating but cannot survive more than a

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few days without drinking. On the occasions in the Old Testament when people abstained from fluids for long periods, they must have had some Divine assistance (Deut. 9:9, 18; Ex. 34:28; Jon. 3:1-10).

The absolute fast is one in which the participant neither eats nor drinks. Perhaps the most familiar example was when a blinded Saul was waiting in Damascus. "And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink" (Acts 9:9). Also, on the occasion when Queen Esther went before the king to intercede for the Jews who were to be exterminated, she requested fasting since her life was in grave danger. She told Mordecai, "Go gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish" (Esth. 4:16). These passages and others show that an absolute fast is distinguished from other fasts in the Bible by the participants neither eating nor drinking.

The third type of fast mentioned is a partial fast and is found in Daniel 1:12-15. The partial fast occurs when one restricts himself to a certain type of food, such as the vegetable pulse that Daniel ate in this text.

Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants. So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

When, Not If

"Are we commanded to fast?" is a question that has troubled serious-minded Christians for many years. Even though the New Testament gives no such command, it clearly implies that Christians are to fast. Two scriptures stand out as the most critical in seeking the Lord's will in this matter.

In Matthew 6:1-18, Jesus spoke of three religious activities that spiritual people perform. In verse 2 He said, "Therefore when thou doest thine alms . . ." In verse 5 He said, "And when thou prayest . . ." In verse 16-18 He said,

Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when

thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Notice that the Lord does not say "if ye fast," but "when ye fast." He speaks of fasting in the same way He speaks of alms giving and prayer. We are to give alms, pray and fast. When we do them, we are not to be hypocritical in their performance. Why do we practice the first two activities and not the last? Why do we believe alms giving and prayer are New Testament responsibilities, but that fasting belongs in Old Testament times? In this text it is obvious that Jesus assumes that spiritual people fast, but they need instruction on how to do it properly.

Another passage that seems crucial in understanding the necessity of fasting is Matthew 9:14-15.

Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

The Pharisees fasted ritualistically. One said, "I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess" (Lk. 18:12). The followers of John the Immerser were fasting regularly, too. But on this occasion, the disciples of Jesus were not fasting. When criticized, Jesus explained that while the Bridegroom was with them it was a time for feasting, not fasting. However, He said there would come a time when His disciples would fast. When is that time? Was it during the legalistic system of Moses? No! Was it while Jesus was on the earth? No! Will His disciples fast after He has left the earth? Yes! The only sensible way to view this passage is to understand that the Lord's disciples would fast during the New Testament age—in the church! Jesus makes this clear as He continues in verses 16-18.

No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

An honest hearer cannot escape the force of the Lord's teaching in these passages. He made it very clear that He expected His disciples to fast. Even though we do not fast with the ritualistic regularity of the Pharisees in the Old Testament dispensation, New Testament saints must fast in this age! When Paul looked back over what was involved in being a servant of Christ,

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one of the many things he listed was "fastings often" (2 Cor. 11:27; 2 Cor. 6:4-5). We need to be like Anna, a widow of over one hundred years of age, who "served God with fastings and prayers night and day" (Lk. 2:37).

Benefits of Fasting

Most of us want to know, "Why should I fast? What is in it for me?" We can be assured that the Christian receives a number of benefits when he fasts properly. We learned earlier in the Sermon on the Mount that we can fast improperly and for the wrong reasons. Fasting is a great deal more than a weight-loss program. Dieting is a physical activity. Fasting is a spiritual one. In Zechariah 7:4-6, the people of God were fasting, but it was not anything spiritual and God was not pleased. He said, "When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?" Fasting must be God centered!

First of all, fasting is a discipline that will help us to grow in personal sanctity. One of the obvious reasons we have trouble being spiritually-minded is the appetites of the flesh are so strong. The body controls what we do and when we do it. We usually do not eat because we are hungry. We eat because it is time to eat. We have been taught that we must eat three good meals each day. We have taught ourselves to snack between meals and before bedtime. The world has lined the streets of our cities with fast-food places to satisfy every varied taste. One of the sins of Sodom listed in Ezekiel 16:49 was "fullness of bread." Even in the church we are driven to the table. We cannot seem to have the preacher to our house unless we feed him. If you start to invite someone over after worship, the lady of the house says, "Not tonight, I don't have anything fixed to eat." Every "get-together" of saints is built around refreshments. And then there are those all-day dinners. We used to have "dinner on the grounds and singing on Sunday." Now it is just an all-day dinner! The only time Christians come together is to eat or worship. And even while we worship, we watch the clock because if it lasts too long, lunch will burn! We must get the flesh under control and the spiritual man in charge! Paul said, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 7:5). Even our sexual appetites are to be controlled by the spiritual man. "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency" (1 Cor. 7:5).

David speaks of "when I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting" (Ps. 69:10). Psalms 35:13 says, "But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting: and my prayer returned into mine own bosom." I do not understand a great deal about the chemistry that occurs in the human body during a fast, but I do know that we are humbled. Humility is a vital part of Christianity. It is the soil in which the Christian graces grow. Brethren, since humility is a basic ingredient of true holiness, it is needful from time to time to humble our souls with fasting.

Secondly, fasting will also change your prayer life. Many of us simply do not pray as we should. And when we pray, it seems so lackadaisical, repetitious, and self-centered! We must pray fervently. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16). This word fervent means "zealous, intense, hot or boiling." That is the kind of prayer that will avail much. But does that sound like a description of our prayer life? In Jeremiah 19:13, God said, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." There is a seeking and searching for God that is to be done with commitment. How do we seek God with all our hearts? The prophet said in Joel 2:12-13, "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto your God."

Notice again the connection of fasting and humility. When we combine our prayers with fasting, it increases the urgency with which we seek God in order to be heard on high. When Ezra and the people of God were returning to Jerusalem from the captivity of Babylon, he said,

Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was entreated of us (Ezra 8:21-23).

When Saul of Tarsus was waiting in Damascus to be told what he must do to please God, he spent three days in blind darkness, fasting and praying. Over and over again we can see in the work of God the undeniable connection of humility, fasting, and prayer. There is tremendous power in the combination of these three.

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That brings us to the final benefit that I will mention in this treatise. Fasting and prayer are used in Scripture to change the mind of God. The mind of God is awesome. He lives and rules in the lives of men. This is our Father's world. He has revealed for us His unchangeable Word. We must live in obedience to His divine will. Concerning His providence and some of the everyday affairs of our lives, there are occasions in which we seek to change the mind of God. We are concerned about events in our lives and in the lives of our loved ones. We pray for the sick. We are commanded to pray for the sick. We pray believing. When someone is gravely ill and it appears God has determined their end, we pray and ask Him to spare that life and return their health to them. When King Hezekiah was sick unto death, God sent Isaiah to tell him to "set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." God had made up His mind. The king would die. But Hezekiah wept and prayed, and God changed his mind! Even before the prophet left the king's palace, God told him to return and tell the king that he would be healed, and his life increased fifteen years (2 Kgs. 20:1-7).

When David sinned with Uriah's wife, God said "the child that is born unto thee shall surely die." When the child became sick, David knew the verdict. The mind of God had been revealed. 2 Samuel 12:16 says, "David therefore besought God for the child: and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth." He laid there for seven days and fasted. When David heard the child was dead, the record says in verses 20-23,

Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

While David was trying to change God's mind he fasted and wept for seven days. But when God did not change his mind, there was no animosity. David got up and bathed, changed his clothes, and went to worship the Lord. Then he broke the fast. Also we must see that there was no anger toward David from God for trying to change his mind.

When Jonah finally got to Nineveh he cried, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Jonah 3:5-10 says,

So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that in their hands. Who can tell God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did not.

When this destruction was at hand, these people proclaimed a fast, repented, and cried unto the Lord. As a result, the Lord changed his mind! God spared the very city he had doomed.

In each of these occasions, these ancient people who faced an emergency situation called upon the Lord with fasting. These passages demonstrate there is tremendous power at the Christian's disposal. The combination of humility, fasting, and prayer can be a great force in a Christian's life. It can even change the mind of God. We need to utilize that power. Before we can change the world by the power of the Gospel, many of us must change ourselves and grow in these Christian disciplines.

We can see from this study that the Lord intended for His people in this age to practice the discipline of fasting. He taught us to fast. He taught us how to fast. And he taught us the benefits of fasting. It is this writers hope that Christians everywhere will seriously consider this Bible subject.

Practical Suggestions

If you have never fasted, may I offer some practical suggestions.

1. If you have serious health problems such as diabetes or heart disease or are advanced in age, please check with a physician. I do not wish to discount what I have taught from the Word of God, but I do remind

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you the people of the Bible had fasted all their lives. Their bodies were used to what would be a real adjustment for your body.

2. Do not begin with a long fast. Try a fast that lasts for twenty-four hours. Then perhaps the next week or so you might fast thirty-six hours. Build up to a forty-eight hour fast. You may get uncomfortable, or dizzy, or feel weak. When this occurs, at the beginning you might drink a small amount of unsweetened fruit juice. Grape juice is my favorite. But as you continue to fast and gain more experience, you should leave off the juice and drink only water. You will probably have headaches when you begin to fast. These are largely caused by not having coffee or tea in your diet. Do not be concerned about them. They will soon pass.
3. After you have fasted for forty-eight hours on several occasions, you might wish to fast four to seven days or even longer. You will discover after the first few days the hunger will pass and you will experience a sense of euphoria. Your energy level will increase. Your mind will become clearer and more focused. Be very attentive to what your body tells you. Depending on your body make-up, somewhere between 21 to 40 days your body will run out of its reserves and begin to feed on important body tissue. When this happens, you will become hungry again, and that is the time to break the fast.
4. Let me remind you again that it is physically dangerous if one goes more than two or three days without the intake of fluids.
5. Do not eat large meals before or after a fast. An extended fast should be broken with fruits or juices. The digestive system has been inactive for a long period. Be careful not to overeat.
6. Read some books about fasting. Look at this subject from both the spiritual and physical standpoints.
7. Be in charge of yourself!

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Old Testament Quotations

by George Battey

John 5:39 reads, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." Here Jesus challenged men to examine the Old Testament carefully and, if they were fair and honest with those Scriptures, they would believe in Him. Again He said: "had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me" (Jn. 5:46).

If a person cannot see Jesus in those Old Testament Scriptures, something is wrong with that man's reasoning! And so it was that the sermons of Jesus and His apostles were filled with quotations from the Old Testament! Sermons filled with Scripture quotations—how shabby many of our sermons are when judged by that standard!

The Number of Old Testament Quotes

The importance of Old Testament Scripture to the apostles is seen in the number of times they quoted the Old Testament in their preaching and in their writings. H. M. Shires finds:

- 239 formal quotes from 185 different Old Testament passages
- 198 unacknowledged quotes from 147 Old Testament passages
- 1167 cases of rewording and paraphrasing from 944 Old Testament passages
- Producing a total of: 1604 New Testament citations from 1276 Old Testament passages!

(Finding the OT in the New, via, Kaiser, pp. 2-3)

If we were to assemble all of these quotations together and divide them into chapters containing thirty verses apiece, there would be over fifty-three entire chapters of Old Testament quotations! That would produce a book that rivals the Book of Jeremiah in size!

Classifying Quotes

The uses which the apostles made of these quotations are varied, but we may place each quote into one of five classifications:

1. Apologetic, or argumentative uses (e.g. Acts 2:25-28)
2. Prophetic uses (e.g. Mt. 1:23)
3. Typological uses (to show types and antitypes) (e.g. Heb. 9:9)

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4. Doctrinal uses (e.g. Gal. 3:11)

5. Practical uses (e.g. 1 Pet. 3:10)

Frederic Gardiner also suggests a possible sixth category: "simply as sacred and familiar words expressing, without regard to their original use, that which the writers wished to say" (Gardiner, 312).

While this may be a valid classification, I am slow to recommend this category because it tends to simply be an easy way out of explaining some difficult passages.

Problems to Consider

Identifying and categorizing Old Testament quotes is just the beginning of the problems we encounter with this subject! Let me tell you just a few of those problems:

1. Sometimes New Testament writers would seemingly attribute a quotation to the wrong Old Testament prophet! (Mt. 27:9-10).
2. Sometimes the New Testament writers would seem to quote from Old Testament passages which did not exist! (Mt. 2:23).
3. At least once the New Testament seems to quote from an Apocryphal Book! (Jude 1:14).
4. There are various problems with the wording of the quotations!
 - a. Some quotes have some **ADDED MATERIAL** which the Old Testament passage did not have.
 - b. Some quotes have **SUBTRACTED** portions.
 - c. Some quotes have **REWORDED** the Old Testament passages entirely.
 - d. Some quotes have **REARRANGED** the order of the words.
 - e. Some quotes agree with the **HEBREW TEXT**.
 - f. Some quotes agree with the **SEPTUAGINT**.
 - g. Some agree with **NEITHER**.
5. Sometimes the New Testament writers would seemingly rip a passage from its context and make it say something different than the Old Testament writer intended (Mt. 2:15).

The Significance of These Problems

Now, as we contemplate all of these problems with the Old Testament quotations, there are some significant questions that come to mind:

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1. Why should these problems bother us?
2. What difference does it make that the New Testament writers were seemingly lax in how they quoted and used Old Testament quotations?

Well, it should bother us a great deal because the New Testament writers claimed to be inspired men! They claimed that they were inerrant because the Holy Spirit was guiding them in what they said and wrote, and yet:

1. It seems they are unable to even quote Old Testament passages accurately, and
2. When they do quote a passage, they make it say something the Old Testament prophet never meant.

Have we not, through the years, warned our religious neighbors against doing this very thing? If a man is allowed to (1) misquote a passage and (2) to ignore the context of a passage, there is no telling what he would be able to prove with the Bible!

For example, a man once vowed to his dying mother that he would do whatever he read in the Bible. He picked up the Bible, randomly flipped thru the pages and haphazardly stuck his finger on the passage that said, "Judas went and hanged himself." Well, he thought he better try that again, so he randomly flipped thru and pointed to a new verse which read, "Go and do thou likewise." Terribly upset he thought he would give it one more try, so at random he thumbed thru the Scriptures and found the passage that read, "Whatsoever thou doest, do quickly."

This illustrates that practically anything could be proved if men were allowed to ignore the context of passages.

Losing Credibility

How many times do we ourselves destroy our credibility by citing a passage completely out of context to prove a point? When people see us do this, they may point either to: (1) our ignorance or (2) our dishonesty. But in either case we lose our credibility and hurt the cause we pretend to help. The examples of passages our brethren often misuse in preaching and personal work are almost endless:

- Amos 6:1-5 is often used to prove instrumental music in worship was sinful under the Old Testament.

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- Matthew 18:19 is used to prove that only two or three are needed for worship services to be acceptable to God.
- John 6:53 is used to prove that unless one eats the Lord's supper each week he has no life abiding in himself.
- 1 Cor. 2:9 is used to teach that no eye or ear of man can comprehend the beauties of heaven.
- 1 Cor. 7:16 is used to teach that a Christian spouse should at all cost prevent the unbeliever from departing, because, who knows, he might eventually convert that unbeliever!
- 1 Cor. 14:15 is used to teach that when we sing or pray we should put all our heart into it.
- Colossians 2:21-23 is used to prove that we should not touch, taste, nor handle human innovations!

None of those passages mean any of those things, and when we use these passages like this we destroy our credibility!

Maintaining Credibility

In order to prove our cause and retain our credibility we must: (1) quote a passage accurately and (2) apply the passage according to its original context.

In the same way, Jesus and His apostles must: (1) quote a passage accurately and (2) apply the passage according to its original context, in order to retain their credibility and integrity! Because Jesus and the apostles seemingly misquoted Old Testament passages and because they seemingly abused the context of some passages, their inspiration has been called into question by modern-day critics. Thus, it behooves us to address this important subject.

Since we cannot exhaust this subject in a single session, we must set some limits as to what aspect of this topic we shall touch upon. The thrust of this study is: To focus upon those times when the New Testament writers seemingly abused the context of Old Testament quotations.

The Problem Stated

Many times the New Testament writers would quote an Old Testament passage and draw a conclusion from that passage which seems to be unwarranted. In other words, you would never have reached the conclusion

they reached by reading the Old Testament passage alone. How may we explain this difficulty?

Some argue that the Old Testament prophets were writing things which they did not understand and the apostles, guided by the Holy Spirit, were giving an inspired explanation.

However, if that be so, how could we truly call the prophets' writings a "revelation"? (A "revelation" is suppose to reveal truth, not hide it.) How could the apostles expect to convince skeptical Jews with passages the Old Testament prophets themselves could not understand? Furthermore, how could the apostles expect to convince anyone if they were abusing the context of Old Testament Scriptures?

Did Prophets Understand?

Now, before we say the apostles misapplied Old Testament quotes, we must first ask a basic question: Did the Old Testament prophets always understand what they wrote, or did they sometimes write more than they really knew? After all, if they did not really understand how to apply their own writings, how can we find fault with the apostles for how they applied them? Many feel the prophets did not always know what they wrote and they quote Peter as proof:

¹⁰Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: ¹¹Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow (1 Pet. 1:10-11).

According to Peter, the Old Testament prophets were puzzled and searching for some answers. But what was it that puzzled them? There are two interrogative pronouns being used in verse 11: *tis*, meaning "what," and *poios*, meaning "what kind of."

Both pronouns modify the word "time." Arndt & Gingrich say that verse 11, when properly translated, should be rendered: "what time or what kind of time" (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 691). In other words, the prophets knew what they were writing about and they knew how to apply their writings, but they struggled with the time of fulfillment. Continually the question was: "When shall these things be?"

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A Footnote

Let me add here an important footnote. In saying that the prophets understood their writings, we are not saying they understood all the details of the subject under consideration. Each new prophet would reveal new truth about the Messiah and the picture became clearer and clearer. For example, just because Isaiah had a clearer picture of what the Messiah would be like does not mean Moses was a total ignoramus on the subject.

1 Corinthians 13:9 reads, "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." To "know in part" does not mean to "know nothing." Thus, the Old Testament prophets "knew in part." They knew and understood the portion of God's revelation which they wrote!

Summary

Let us summarize what we have said thus far. To say that the prophet did not understand their own writings is to say they REVEALED nothing, but rather CONCEALED things! No, the prophets revealed things and were well aware of what they wrote.

The apostles, then, did not have to give some "inspired interpretation" to a prophet's writings in order for men to understand what the prophet meant. Both Jesus and His apostles expected men to be able to read those Old Testament prophecies, understand them and draw the same conclusions which they drew from those writings!

²⁵Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. ²⁶Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? ²⁷And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself (Lk. 24:25-27).

Jesus was amazed that His disciples did not understand the plain message of the prophets! Those prophecies were so plain and understandable that they should have been able to read them, understand them and believe Jesus was the promised Messiah! Therefore, when quoting an Old Testament passage to prove an argument, it was necessary that the apostles quote accurately and according to the passage's original context.

1. Whatever the apostles said a passage meant, that is what it must have meant to the prophet who wrote it.

2. Conversely, whatever the prophet meant when he wrote, that is how the apostles must apply the passage.

Now, when an apostle quotes a passage and appears to say something different, or more than the Old Testament passage in its original context, it should send a signal to us!

1. Either we do not understand what the Old Testament prophet said,
2. Or we do not understand what the apostle is trying to say,
3. Or both.

Applying These Principles

With these preliminary remarks in mind, we wish now to illustrate these principles. We want to take some specific quotations in the New Testament and examine how they are being used by the inspired writers.

Remember, there are about 1604 Old Testament quotes in the New Testament and it is impossible to be versed and knowledgeable about each quote! For the present purposes then, let us take Matthew's Gospel and examine his use of Old Testament quotations.

The Book of Matthew

The Book of Matthew is the most logical place to begin, because he wrote specifically for the benefit of the Jews! Since he is writing to convince skeptical Jews of the Gospel, he (more than anyone) ought to be using Old Testament passages according to their original meaning and context. Yet, Matthew seems to be the most notorious for abusing Old Testament quotations! Because of this, his Gospel lends itself most naturally to our discussion.

In the first two chapters of Matthew there are five formal Old Testament quotes. Of these, four present problems:

- Matthew 1:23—concerning the virgin birth
- Matthew 2:15—concerning the flight of Jesus into Egypt
- Matthew 2:18—concerning the slaughter of babies by Herod
- Matthew 2:23—concerning Jesus being called a "Nazarene"

Let us begin, then, with the first case.

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The Virgin Birth

²²Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, ²³Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us (Mt. 1:22-23).

Matthew is quoting from Isaiah 7:14, and this passage has caused untold difficulty for people in and out of the church. In Isaiah 7 the prophet Isaiah is speaking with King Ahaz.

1. The countries of Israel and Syria had formed an alliance and were threatening to invade Judah.
2. Ahaz decided he needed some help, but instead of turning to God for help, he turned to the king of Assyria.
3. God was upset with this decision and He sent Isaiah to reason with the king and hopefully change his mind!
4. To convince Ahaz to rely upon God rather than Assyria, God gave Ahaz a command:

¹¹Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. ¹²But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD. ¹³And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. ¹⁵Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings (Is. 7:11-16).

Double Meaning?

Here is the problem. Many believe:

1. Since God is giving a sign to Ahaz to prove the armies of Israel and Syria will not win the war, the sign must take place in the days of Ahaz.

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2. Therefore, there must have been a virgin in the days of Ahaz that had a son and called his name Immanuel; and before this child became old enough to choose between good and evil, the two nations that threaten Ahaz crumbled.

Some of our own people believe this! They believe that Isaiah 7:14 is not a straight-line prophecy concerning Christ, and they believe there were two virgins and two virgin-born sons: one virgin-born son in the days of Ahaz and one in the days of Caesar Augustus!

In October 1979, the OPA carried an article written by one of our own brethren entitled: "Lucifer and Satan." Within this article, a quotation is made from the writings of Clem and Dillard Thurman:

In Isa. 7:14, . . . the promise of a son is given; primary fulfillment is found in Isa. 8:1-3, but the passage is quoted in Matt. 1:23 with reference to the birth of Jesus . . . Thus do many prophecies have a 'primary' (or immediate) fulfillment and also a 'secondary' (later, and usually spiritual) fulfillment.

Although this was a quotation from digressive preachers, our own brother agreed with their conclusion. He wrote:

Bro. Thurman goes to [great] length to establish that some prophecies have secondary fulfillments. This is certainly accepted by all Bible believers and is clear from the three examples cited in this article. Certainly it is well and good to recognize double fulfillment prophecies because they do definitely exist. God in his all encompassing knowledge of the future was able to kill two future events with one prophetic stone, so to speak (ibid.).

According to this, Isaiah 7:14 was fulfilled twice and who knows how many more times! If there is "double fulfillment," perhaps there is triple fulfillment! Maybe there were a dozen fulfillments! And if there are a dozen meanings, then it has no meaning at all!

It should concern us when men suggest there was more than one meaning to this passage. This takes away from the Lord's unique birth. Five times Jesus is called the "only begotten" of the Father, but if there is a "double fulfillment" of Isaiah 7, Jesus would not have been the "only begotten"!

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Isaiah 7: Its meaning

What, then, is the solution to this text? Notice:

1. Ahaz is commanded by God to ask for a sign.

Isaiah 7:11 reads, "Ask thee a sign of the LORD thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above." This is a command! Ahaz does not have a choice as to whether he wants to ask for a sign or not! But Ahaz would not ask. He would not obey the word of God! He hated God and would lean upon his own strength!

2. Ahaz gave his reason for not obeying God.

Isaiah 7:12 reads, "But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD." Although Ahaz sounds modest and humble here, he was disobeying the command to ask for a sign! It is not tempting God to OBEY and ask for a sign as he was commanded. He is not as concerned about tempting God as you might think! For years he worshipped idols in Jerusalem, and never bothered him then to tempt God. You see, he knew that if he asked for a sign it would be granted and that would obligate him to trust and rely upon God, and this he does not want to do. He shall instead trust in Assyria.

3. In spite of Ahaz God Himself will give a sign.

¹³And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (vv. 13-14).

Note: Isaiah was addressing not just the King, but the entire court and the entire nation!

Since Ahaz refuses to ask for a sign as he was commanded to do, God will give His own sign. God's Son would be born of a virgin, and the length of Jesus' infancy becomes the length of time Judah is yet to suffer affliction at the hands of Syria and Israel. Ahaz might have asked for any sign he wanted, but by refusing, he loses the privilege of choosing a sign and God will deliver His own sign.

4. Isaiah concluded his prophecy with this final word:

¹⁵Butter and honey shall he eat, that ["until"] he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good,

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the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings (vv. 15-16).

"Butter and honey shall he eat"—These are not the ordinary foods of an agricultural land. The land would lie desolate and provide only wild and spontaneous food for the time it would take a child to reach maturity.

1. In the vision Isaiah was seeing it was as though the child was at that very moment before his eyes. The ASV footnote reads: "Behold a virgin is with child and beareth a son . . ."
2. The infancy of this child that is presently before the eyes of Isaiah shall be the measure of time that Judah shall be oppressed.
3. Butter and honey are the only foods available for this child, or any child to eat at the present time because the agriculture has been stifled.
4. These conditions shall continue until the child matures and begins to distinguish between good and evil.

Question: What did this prophecy mean to those people living in the days of Ahaz?

Reply: They learned that God was going to send His own Son into the world. The infancy of Jesus was the length of time Israel and Syria had left!

In four years they would see Israel and Syria collapse and they would know that Isaiah was indeed telling the truth. In return, the fulfillment of this part of the prophecy would reassure the nation that the Messiah would come just like Isaiah predicted!

Summary

In summary, Isaiah 7:14 prophesies of an extraordinary Child born to a virgin mother. This mother would name the child herself and would call Him Immanuel, meaning "God with us." Not just any woman would have the right to name a son Immanuel! It would require divine revelation and the only time such a revelation was given was in the case of Mary and her Son, Jesus. This did not happen in Isaiah 8 as some have imagined! Only in the person of Jesus was "God with us"!

This is a straight-line prophecy that predicts the birth of Jesus and of none other! Matthew used Isaiah 7:14 as a prophecy of Jesus' birth, and that is the way Isaiah himself intended this passage to be understood.

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The Flight to Egypt

We come now to the second example we wish to consider in Matthew's Gospel:

¹⁴When [Joseph] arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: ¹⁵and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son (Mt. 2:14-15).

Matthew is here quoting from Hosea 11:1. Admittedly, it is difficult to see how Matthew got out of this Old Testament passage what he did! Further, it seems unlikely that his use of this passage will convince anyone that Jesus is the Messiah!

Methods of Interpretation

Most commentators see Hosea 11:1 as a historical fact—a mere reference to Israel's exodus from Egypt and not a prediction of the future at all. There are three popular explanations offered for how Matthew uses this passage:

1. Catholic scholars take the "dual meaning" and "dual fulfillment" approach to this problem passage. In the literal sense this verse refers to the nation of Israel and in a spiritual sense to Jesus.
2. Liberal scholars say that Matthew is abusing the context and simply making a proof text of Hosea 11:1. William Barclay wrote:

It can be seen at once that in its original form this saying of Hosea had nothing to do with Jesus, and nothing to do with the flight to Egypt. It was nothing more than a simple statement of how God had delivered the nation of Israel from slavery and from bondage in the land of Egypt.

We shall see, again and again, that this is typical of Matthew's use of the Old Testament. He is prepared to use as a prophecy about Jesus any text at all which can be made verbally to fit, even although originally it had nothing to do with the question in hand, and was never meant to have anything to do with it. Matthew knew that almost the only way to convince the Jews that Jesus was the promised Anointed One of God was to prove that he was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. And in his

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eagerness to do that he finds prophecies in the Old Testament where no prophecies were ever meant. (*The Gospel of Matthew*, 35-36).

In other words, this "scholar" is saying that Matthew was so desperate to prove Jesus was really the Messiah that he went to any extreme!

3. Conservative scholars say that Israel was a type of Christ. Just as Israel took refuge in Egypt and later returned to Canaan, so Christ took refuge in Egypt and returned to His own land.

There is another possible approach, however, which is not so popular, but I believe can be proven true:

4. Hosea 11:1 is specific, predictive prophecy of the Messiah! If indeed this is specific, predictive prophecy, it would solve many problems, because that is exactly how Matthew uses the passage in his Gospel.

Technical Points

Let me preface my remarks with three important notes:

1. Hosea 11:1 fits the context of chapter 10 better than it does with chapter 11. If you will read verses 1 and 2 together, you will see that they really do not go together:

¹When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. ²As they called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.

Notice the following chart:

- | | |
|--|---|
| a. The subject of verse 1 is singular: "When <u>Israel</u> was a child . . ." | But the subject of verse 2 is plural: " <u>They</u> called them . . ." |
| b. The object of verse 1 is singular: "I loved <u>him</u> ." | But the object of verse 2 is plural: "They called <u>them</u> . . ." |
| c. Hosea had been using the husband-wife relationship to describe God and Israel. | But here the father-son relationship is being used. |

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The nation of Israel had been referred to as God's son in Ex. 4:22, but never again was this father-son relationship used to describe the nation of Israel . . . unless, of course, Hosea is now doing it here in 11:1.

These reasons give me serious doubts that Hosea is simply referring to the nation of Israel coming up out of Egypt. It would seem more logical to say that Hosea 11:1 should really be the final verse of chapter 10! So we need to go back into chapter 10 and focus on the context of that chapter.

2. Hosea is in the habit of describing the future Messiah in terms of bygone personalities. For example: Hosea 1:10-11 compares the Messiah to a NEW MOSES; Hosea 3:5 compares the Messiah to a NEW DAVID; and (I believe) Hosea 11:1 compares the Messiah to a NEW ISRAEL.
3. There is an alternate, but significant, translation of Hosea 11:1. The passage begins with the word "when." "When" (Hebrew: *ki*) is often translated "nevertheless" in the Old Testament (1 Sam. 15:35 and Isa. 9:1 being two examples). Also notice that the word "was" is italic—meaning it was supplied by the translators. We could just as easily supply the present tense "is," or the future tense "will be." Therefore, the proper reading could be:

NEVERTHELESS Israel IS a child and I will love him and
from Egypt I have called my son.

For these reasons, we say Hosea 11:1 fits in better with chapter 10 than it does with chapter 11.

Hosea 3: A Key Chapter

To fully appreciate the events of Hosea 10, it would help to recall a key passage in chapter 3.

4For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: 5Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days (Hosea 3:4-5).

Take note of the expression "David their king." This is a reference to the Messiah—a "new David."

Hosea 10: Its Context

Now, realizing that a new "David" is coming in the future for Israel, look at Hosea 10. Chapter 10:9 begins a thought that stretches forward and naturally encompasses chapter 11:1. Notice what the prophet is saying:

10:9—The foul events which occurred at Gibeah are referred to. There 25,000 Benjamites died because of sin (Jgs. 19-20). But Israel was still the same and had not changed. The only difference is those Benjamites were punished, but Israel has not yet been punished adequately.

10:10—God will use foreign nations to punish Israel for her sins.

10:11—Right now Israel is like a trained heifer that loves to thresh grain, but hard times are coming and Israel and Judah shall plow rough ground.

10:12—With illustrations from agriculture God warns Israel to repent.

10:13—Israel had been guilty of trusting in her own military strength.

10:14—An enemy is coming to teach Israel a lesson, and he will not spare either women or children.

10:15—The king of Israel shall also be destroyed. (Remember, Hosea 3:4 had already predicted this.)

11:1—NEVERTHELESS Israel is a child and I will love him and from Egypt I have called my son.

Hosea 11:1 is announcing a new beginning! In spite of the terrible punishment coming upon the nation, there is coming a "new Israel." Just like Israel would seek after a "new David" after "hard times" (3:5), they would seek after a "new Israel" after "hard times."

The Messianic Expectation

If Hosea 11:1 is genuine predictive prophecy, there are several important points to note:

1. The "NEW ISRAEL" would be like the Patriarch Israel
2. The "NEW ISRAEL" would spend time in Egypt

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Just as the patriarch Israel had to flee to Egypt to escape destruction from the famine, so the "NEW ISRAEL" would have to flee to Egypt to escape destruction from Herod.

3. The "NEW ISRAEL" would enter the world as a child

This is the first Old Testament prophecy that told the Messiah would enter the world as a child.

4. The "NEW ISRAEL" would receive God's special love

5. This "NEW ISRAEL" would be the Son of God!

Summary

Since Hosea 11:1 is specific, predictive prophecy, Hosea was well aware of what he was predicting. He knew and SPECIFICALLY predicted that the Messiah would be the Son of God and that He would sojourn in Egypt as a child. Matthew then quoted and applied the passage exactly as Hosea intended it to be understood! Matthew was not guilty of eisegesis (m. "reading into a passage what is not there").

Rachel Weeping

Moving on, we come to the next example we wish to consider:

¹⁶Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

¹⁷Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, ¹⁸In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not (Mt. 2:16-18).

The passage being quoted here is Jeremiah 31:15. A large portion of Jeremiah 31 is a beautiful description of the Messianic age, but for some strange reason Jeremiah interjects this brief passage of gloom right in the middle: Rachel is weeping for her children who are no more. Rachel was the mother of Benjamin and it is as though she is still living through her descendents and is now weeping and refusing comfort.

The Common Interpretation

The common interpretation is that Jeremiah is describing the mothers of Israel who wept when: (1) When the northern tribes were slaughtered and deported in 722 B.C. by Assyria, OR (2) When the southern tribes were slaughtered and deported in 587 B.C. by Babylon.

But, although Rachel is weeping, she is comforted in knowing that her children will someday return to the land of Judah. The main reason for this interpretation is the mention of Ramah. Ramah was a city about six miles north of Jerusalem where the Jewish POWs were herded together before they were deported into Babylon (Jer. 40:1).

Was Matthew Inspired?

Question: How, then, can Matthew take this passage and use it to describe the babies who were slaughtered by Herod in Matthew 2?

Some liberal "scholars" call Matthew's inspiration into question. Instead of questioning their own understanding of the passage they insist they understand the passage perfectly well and Matthew is the one who messed up! Note the comments of William Barclay:

The verse in Jeremiah has no connection with Herod's slaughter of the children . . . Matthew is doing what he so often did. In his eagerness he is finding a prophecy where no prophecy is (ibid., p. 38).

Perhaps instead of questioning Matthew's use of this passage we ought to be questioning the common interpretation of this passage! After all, Matthew said this prophecy was fulfilled when Herod slaughtered the infants in Bethlehem and Matthew's interpretation ought to carry a little more weight than ten dozen modern-day scholars!

To say that Jeremiah 31:15 is specifically dealing with the deportation of either the northern kingdom or the southern kingdom carries with it some problems.

1. The deportation of Northern Israel in 722 B.C. was total! There were no mothers left behind to weep over any children!
2. If Southern Judah was intended, why not say LEAH is weeping for her children? After all, who was the mother of Judah, not Rachel.

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3. These mothers are not weeping over children that are still alive! They are weeping over children that "are no more"—children that are all dead!

A Direct Prediction

It would seem better to say that Jeremiah 31:15-17 was a direct and specific prediction of the slaughter of babies by Herod! Rachel is introduced as weeping for at least two reasons:

1. Rachel's grave was located at Bethlehem where the infants would be killed (Gen. 35:19).
2. Rachel is symbolical of women who would weep most bitterly!

All women would weep at losing a baby, but Rachel would weep most bitterly, because she was for some time barren. She wanted children so badly that she felt she would rather die than live. Genesis 30:1 reads, "And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die."

No one would weep so bitterly over lost children as this woman who wept for years and years because she could not have any. Finally she has children and she is pictured now as having lost the very children she pled for! These mothers (represented by Rachel) would be the first ones to suffer loss for the sake of Jesus.

"Ramah"

Question: Why does Jeremiah say that Rachel is weeping in the city of Ramah when he should have said she was weeping in Bethlehem?

The Hebrew word Ramah is treated two different ways in the Bible. Sometimes "Ramah" is taken as a **PROPER NOUN**. In this case the word is not really being translated, but rather transliterated. Other times, "Ramah" is taken as a **COMMON NOUN**. In this case the word is actually translated, and it comes across into English as "the heights," or "a high place." This very word "Ramah" is translated "high place" in Ezekiel 16:24-25, 31, 39.

Bible translators must make a decision of whether to translate the Hebrew word "Ramah" as though it was a proper noun (referring to a city), or to translate it as a common noun (meaning simply "a high place").

Two Possible Translations

With this in mind, we have two possible translations and two possible meanings to the passage:

1. If we take "Ramah" as a PROPER NOUN referring to the city of Ramah, then Jeremiah 31:15 would seem to mean this: Herod's orders to slay the babies included all the region around Jerusalem with Bethlehem marking the southern extremity and Ramah marking the northern extremity of the area where babies were slaughtered. In this case, mothers from the grave of Rachel all the way up t Ramah wept.
2. If we take "Ramah" as a COMMON NOUN, without doing violence to the context, or grammar, we may properly translate Jeremiah 31:15 as: "Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in *the high place*, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not."

In other words, Rachel (who was buried in Bethlehem) is weeping very bitterly because of the slaughter of the infants by Herod. Her cry is so bitter it can be heard in "the heights," or high places—her cry ascends up to heaven!

There Is Hope

Jeremiah gives his readers some comfort:

¹⁶Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. ¹⁷And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border (Jer. 31:16-17).

1. **Their labor in bearing children was not in vain.** Their babies were not annihilated. They are still part of God's people even though they have been snatched away.

2. **These children shall "come again from the land of the enemy."** What is the "land of the enemy"? Assyria? Babylon? NO! These mothers are weeping over children that "are no more"! They are dead! The great "enemy" of God's people is death! These children are in the realm of the dead, but they shall someday return! Jeremiah is pointing to the resurrection to comfort these bereaved mothers.

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3. For these mothers there is "hope in thine end." When all is said and done, these mothers will be rewarded for the loss they suffer now.

4. These children shall "come again to their own border." These dead children would not be resurrected to receive physical land! The physical land of Canaan was but a pledge and preview of the heavenly Canaan. The Hebrew writer states, "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11:16). All these little babies that died would eventually receive their inheritance in the "heavenly Canaan."

Summary

So it was that these mothers of Bethlehem would weep and mourn over the loss of their little children, but it was in God's plan and in the end they would be rewarded for their sacrifice! This is what Jeremiah saw in his prophecy, and Matthew applies the passage according to its original context.

Conclusion

These three examples in Matthew have only scratched the surface of dealing with Old Testament quotations, but I hope that our study has set the stage for further investigation of the Old Testament quotes.

Have we drawn the proper conclusions from these three examples in Matthew? I hope so! But one thing I know for sure, the apostles never read into a passage something that was not there!

²² . . . [Paul said] I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: ²³ That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles (Acts 26:22-23).

On behalf of all the apostles Paul declared that they never abused the writings of the Old Testament prophets. Their conclusions were on solid footing and added nothing to what the prophet had said! Shame on any man who would question the apostles': (1) Inspiration, or (2) Integrity. 2710 Sumerton Dr., Morrow, GA 30260

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Cup of the N.T.

"This Cup Is the New Testament"

(Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25)

by Wayne Fussell

I. Introduction

A. Question: How many cups should be used on the Lord's Table?

1. We reply, "One." Others say, "The cup has no significance."

2. Is this so? Are there only two elements in the Lord's Supper with any significance? What did Jesus mean then when He said, "This cup is the New Testament?"

B. I suggest to you that Jesus gave significance to the cup. He called it the "New Testament." This is one reason we believe in using only one cup in communion. There is only one covenant between God and His people, represented by that cup.

II. The Parallel Passages

A. Matthew 26:26-29

Note: Matthew mentions the loaf, cup and fruit of vine. He gives significance only to the loaf and fruit of the vine.

B. Mark 14:22-25

Note: Again, only the loaf and fruit of vine are given meaning.

C. Luke 22:17-20

Note: This time significance is given to the cup.

D. 1 Cor. 11:23-25

Note: As in Luke, meaning is given to the cup.

E. We must take all the passages on any subject to learn truth. Example: the Great Commission (Mt. 28; Mk. 16; Lk. 24).

F. Notice the parallel statements concerning elements in the communion:

"This (bread) is my body which is given for you." (Lk. 22:19)

"This (fruit of the vine) is my blood of the New Testament" (Mk. 14:24)

"This cup is the new testament in my blood" (Lk. 22:20)

"This cup is the new testament in my blood" (1 Cor. 11:25)

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Notice some things that are parallel (cf. *The Divine Pattern*, by Alfred Newberry).

1. The three statements are contextual, analogical, syntactical and grammatical parallels in their essential particulars.
2. Each has a subject and a predicate joined by the copula "is."
3. Each embraces a metaphor which is a figure of comparison and which is suggested by "is"; in which usage "is" carries with it the idea of "represents." In other words, just as the bread represents the body and the fruit of the vine the blood, so the cup represents the New Testament.
4. Each also embraces a prolepsis—"is given," "is shed"; anticipatory language, in which a future event is spoken of as an accomplished fact.
5. The subject of each is a literal something. If the bread is literal and the fruit of the vine is literal, then "the cup is literal."
6. If after Christ made these statements, the bread was still literal bread but with a spiritual significance, and the fruit of the vine was still literal fruit of the vine but with a spiritual significance, then the cup was still a literal cup but with a spiritual significance.
7. If when Christ said of the bread, "This is my body which is given for you," the bread and the body of Christ were two different things but with a spiritual relationship; and if when Christ said of the fruit of the vine, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many," the fruit of the vine and the shed blood were two different things but with a spiritual relationship; then, when Christ said, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you," the cup and the New Testament were two different things but with a spiritual relationship.
8. If the bread Christ took was literal bread before, when and after He took it; and if the fruit of the vine He took was literal fruit of the vine before, when and after He took it; then, the cup He took was a literal cup before, when and after He took it.
9. Jesus was no more defining "cup" than He was defining "bread" and "fruit of the vine." Bread was still bread, fruit of the vine was still fruit of the vine, and cup was still cup.
 - a. Therefore, these passages in Matthew, Mark, Luke and 1 Corinthians are parallel statements. When they are taken together, we see that just as the loaf represents the body and the fruit of the vine represents the blood, the cup represents the New Testament.
 - b. The cup has meaning. It is the picture of the New Testament or New Covenant.

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G. Definition of Cup (Greek, *poteerion*):

Young: "A drinking vessel"

Berry: "A drinking cup"

Liddell & Scott: "A drinking-cup, wine-cup"

Bagster: "A vessel for drinking"

Robinson: "a drinking vessel, a cup"

Bullinger: "a drinking cup"

Thayer: "a drinking vessel"

Therefore, Jesus took a drinking vessel, a literal cup with literal contents.

H. Some Translations:

Moffatt: "This cup means the new covenant ratified by my blood."

Williams: "This cup is the new covenant ratified by my blood."

TCNT: "This cup is the new covenant made by my blood."

Goodspeed: "This cup is the new agreement ratified by my blood."

He took the wine cup and gave thanks and gave it to them and they all drank from it. And he said to them, "This is my blood which ratifies the agreement, I tell you, I will never drink the product of the vine again till the day when I shall drink the new wine in the Kingdom of God" (Mk. 14:23-25, Goodspeed).

From his translation, Goodspeed confirms that the fruit of the vine is the blood that ratified the New Testament, while the cup is the New Testament which was ratified by the blood.

I. Figure of Speech: Metaphor

1. In the clause, "This cup is the New Testament," a metaphor is used.

2. Figure often used:

a. Jesus said, "I am the door" - "the vine" - "shepherd"

b. Definition: "A metaphor is a trope, by which a word is diverted from its proper and genuine signification to another meaning, for the sake of comparison, or because there is some analogy between the similitude and the thing signified." (Horne's *Introduction*, p. 134)

c. The cup, or drinking vessel, represents metaphorically the New Testament. The copula *estin*, "is," suggests a metaphor.

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This is called by grammarians the copula of symbolic being. Otherwise, they say, the identity of the subject and predicate would form a conception equally impossible to both speakers and hearers (D. C. Troxel, professor of Greek In Transylvania University, from *The Cup of the Lord* by J. D. Phillips).

"This cup is the New Covenant." Not it itself, surely; for the two things are distinct. Its contents, then, cannot be the blood itself. One fact shows this. Just after saying, 'This is my blood,' He calls the contents 'this fruit of the vine.' The substance, then, in the cup, remained unchanged. The *esti*, "is" therefore, can only be the copula of symbolic relation. The cup symbolizes, and is a seal of the new covenant. "The fruit of the vine," then, must symbolize the blood of that covenant, and be the medium through which it is received. (*The Holy Supper*, H. M. Paynter, p. 182, quoted in *The Cup of the Lord* by J. D. Phillips).

The phrase is not, "This is the cup," but, "This cup is the new covenant." "This" qualifies "cup." Nor is the cup put for its contents. It is not "the contents," but the "cup," including its contents, that is the "new testament" (*ibid*, p. 163).

J. A Troubling Phrase: "Which is shed for you"

Some have problem with this phrase and suggest that it grammatically refers back to cup. Since a cup cannot be shed, some say that it is a metonymy of the container for the contained and therefore the fruit of the vine represents the New Testament as well as the blood. Authorities have been quoted and a case made for this view.

Sometimes we must just use common sense in interpreting the Word. We understand that a cup cannot be shed, but we also know that fruit of the vine cannot be shed. It was Jesus' blood that was shed. The only logical conclusion that can be reached is that "which is shed" refers to Jesus' blood. Ordinary folks do not have a problem with it because we can look beyond the verbage and come to a reasonable

understanding of what our Lord was saying. The simple fact is that Jesus said the cup was the New Testament, and we must accept this.

For further study of this passage, I refer you to the explanations offered by Jerry Cutter and Ellis Lindsey some years ago. (J. D. Phillips used the figure of speech "hypallage" to answer this argument. You can find his reasoning in *The Cup of the Lord*.)

They believe that the antecedent of which, or which is shed for you, is cup, agreeing with the lexicons, thus making the cup the fruit of the vine, rather than the literal cup. Passing quickly over this at the moment, they have found themselves in the unhappy position of having Jesus shedding fruit of the vine rather than his blood ("The Digressive View," Jerry Cutter, quoted from notes passed out at an annual study).

III. What Is the New Testament?

A. "Testament" (or "covenant") denotes an agreement between two or more persons.

1. The cup is the symbol of that agreement made by God with Jesus concerning us. We benefit from that covenant when we enter into a covenant relationship with God.

Covenant, from "con," "together," and "venio," "I come," signifies an agreement, contract, or compact, between two parties, by which both are mutually bound to do certain things, on certain conditions and penalties (Adam Clark).

2. The Greeks had two words for covenant viz., **suntheke** and **diatheke**. The former was used to denote a solemn agreement made between equals; and the latter, to denote any arrangement made by a superior for the acceptance and observance of an inferior. And hence it is, that all of God's covenants are expressed in Greek by **diatheke**. The **suntheke** is not found in the New Testament; but **diatheke** occurs in it thirty-three times; and **b'reeth** is used 267 times in the Old Testament. Three things are implied in every covenant, viz., the covenantor, the covenantee and the various stipulations which are made and entered into by the parties (Robert Milligin, p. 77).
3. The word originally "was an agreement between two clans or tribes represented by their leaders, and also between individuals for them-

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selves . . . The main object of such early agreements was the promotion of peace and safety, since the natural condition of primitive man was that of warfare (**The New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia**).

4. **The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia** says, "In essence a covenant is an agreement, but an agreement of a solemn and binding force."
5. All covenants have certain common characteristics. James Hastings (**A Bible Dictionary**) points out four:
 - Every covenant implies two parties.
 - A covenant benefits at least one of the parties.
 - A covenant creates a new relation between the parties
 - A covenant creates a right for each party.
6. **The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia** adds four other features of a covenant:
 - A statement of the terms agreed upon.
 - An oath by each party to observe the terms.
 - A curse invoked if the terms are not observed.
 - The formal ratification of the covenant by a solemn act.
7. We can see each of these characteristics exemplified in the biblical covenants.

B. Major covenants between God and men had signs or symbols:

- Covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:12-17)—Rainbow
- Covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17:9-14)—Circumcision
- Covenant with Israel (Lev. 12:3)—Circumcision
- Covenant of Salt (Num. 18:19; 2 Chr. 13:5)—Salt
- New Covenant - (Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25)—Cup

III. Covenants and Blood

("the New Testament in my blood," "blood of the New Testament")

- A. J. D. Phillips told us in a study many years ago about the custom of making covenants in ancient Oriental countries. The people making the covenant would sit around a table. Each would draw blood from his body into a cup and then the cup would be passed around. Each person would take a sip of the mingled blood. This sealed the covenant or agreement between those individuals. J. D. suggested that this practice would have been well-known by those who were present for the institution of the Lord's Supper. While they could not drink blood,

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they could drink a symbol of blood. All ancient societies have had blood covenants.

B. Blood has always been associated with God's covenants from the beginning.

1. Covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15)

God promised Canaan to Abraham. He told him to bring a young bull, goat, ram, dove and pigeons and kill them. These constitute the representative categories of sacrificial birds and animals. Abraham killed all of these and split the animals in two, laying each half over against the other, leaving a passageway between. In Jeremiah 34:18 we are informed that this was a solemn way of ratifying a covenant. The parties to the covenant killed an animal, dividing the carcass lengthwise. They placed the pieces opposite each other and walked between them to meet in the middle, where they took the ritual oath.

Abraham did as God required, and at sunset he heard God speaking and saw a smoking furnace and burning lamp pass between the pieces of animals, symbolizing that God was entering into a covenant. "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram" (Gen. 15:18). The point is, blood was shed in sealing this all-important covenant.

2. The Old Covenant (Ex. 24:4-8)

- a. Note: The "book of the covenant" was one thing—the "blood of the covenant" was another (2 Kgs. 23:2; 2 Chron. 34:30; Heb. 10:29).
- b. Both the blood and the covenant were visible. On the Lord's Table, both the cup and its contents are visible. Just as the people could see the covenant and the blood which ratified it, we can see a symbol of the covenant and a symbol of the blood which ratified that covenant.

3. The New Covenant (Heb. 9:11-20)

- a. Hebrews shows how the ratifying of the Old Covenant was typical of the ratifying of the New. The blood of animals was sprinkled on the "book of the covenant" then. The blood of Christ ratifies (makes effective) the New.
- b. Take note: The blood of the Old Testament was not the testament. And the blood of the New Testament is not the testament. The blood ratified the testament.
- c. Matthew and Mark call the fruit of the vine "the blood of the New Testament." Luke and Paul call the cup "the new testament in the blood"—Two vastly different statements. Matthew and

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Mark give significance to the grape juice. Luke and Paul give significance to the cup. Matthew and Mark emphasize the blood while Luke and Paul emphasize the New Covenant. Is that a contradiction? No more than the differences between the accounts of the Great Commission given by Matthew, Mark and Luke. Is baptism less important or unnecessary because it is not mentioned by Luke? Is repentance unnecessary because it is not mentioned by Matthew and Mark? Is belief unimportant because it is not imposed by the accounts of Matthew and Luke? The answers are self-evident.

C. Thayer says: "1 Cor. 11:25; Lk. 22:20 . . . (In both which the meaning is, 'This cup containing wine, an emblem of blood, is rendered by the shedding of my blood an emblem of the new covenant' " (p. 15).

D. James D. Bales writes in the **Firm Foundation**, July 17, 1973:

What is the New Covenant? . . . His blood is the blood of the covenant, his blood made the covenant operative, but the Covenant is not the blood itself, although the cup whose contents symbolized his blood was said to be the new Covenant in his blood (Lk. 22:20). However, Christ is the mediator of the Covenant (Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). He is not the mediator of his blood. His blood dedicated the Covenant and made it operative (Heb. 9:15-26). His blood is the blood of the everlasting covenant, but it is not the blood of the everlasting blood—as it would have to be if the blood and the covenant are the same thing (Heb. 13:20).

Even this scholarly brother who believes that it is all right to use individual cups, sees the difference in the blood and the covenant. We would wish that he could see the need to have only one cup to represent the covenant on the Lord's Table.

IV. The Cup Is a Sign of the New Covenant

- A. Genesis 9:16-17 reads, "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, *This is the token of the covenant*, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."
- B. God made a covenant, an agreement, to never destroy the earth again by water. The rainbow was a token, sign or symbol of that agreement.

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In like manner, the cup is a sign or token of the New Testament or new agreement. When we see the cup in communion, we are reminded of the agreement God made with Christ concerning our salvation.

- C. Someone might argue, "We do not need a token of the New Testament. We have the New Testament itself."

But remember: The cup is a symbol of the covenant—not a symbol of a book of new testament writings. The New Covenant is not a book. In your copy of the sacred Scriptures, the title page probably bears this statement: "The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments." This statement is correct, but not in the sense it is intended. There are not thirty-nine books in the "Old Testament." There are not twenty-seven books in the "New Testament."

The New Testament Scriptures explain the agreement and its terms. It was written to a covenant people—those who had entered into a covenant relationship with God. Also, the New Testament was not written when Jesus said, "This cup is the new testament."

V. Remembrance of the Covenant

- A. In the communion we remember Jesus. When we remember Him, we should remember the covenant He instituted. The Lord's Supper is a covenant meal.
- B. Illustration: In eastern countries, the act of eating with someone was very meaningful. It suggested that those who ate together bound themselves to care for and protect one another.
1. The same is true among Indians. Eating a common meal equals a promise never to hurt one another or be unfaithful. So, a covenant is suggested by the very act.
 2. When Jesus invites us to His table, something very similar is implied. In a sense, we renew our covenant with Him each time we take the cup. We promise to be faithful to the covenant.
 - a. On the table we have a reminder of that covenant.
 - b. Judas was unfaithful: Psalm 41:9 reads, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."
 - c. In literal meaning, "sacrament" has a good purpose. It is from the Latin, "sacramentus", which alluded to the oath Roman soldiers used when they swore to be faithful to the Emperor. We promise to be faithful to the Lord. We are reminded of that covenant each Lord's Day in a very special sense.

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Conclusion

- A. We have discussed a very important, yet little realized, symbol in the Lord's Supper.
- B. Let us realize that the blood and the covenant are inseparable. We cannot have one without the other. The blood seals the covenant; the covenant makes the benefits of the blood available.

This is beautifully portrayed in the communion. The cup, which represents the New Testament, and the fruit of the vine, which represents the blood, are also inseparable. Just as the New Covenant conveys the benefits of the blood, the cup conveys the representative of that blood. And the presence of the fruit of the vine in the cup is that which makes the cup significant. There is no covenant without blood. The cup does not represent the testament without the emblem of blood.

- C. There is only one New Covenant. There must of necessity be but one cup to symbolize it.

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Imputed Righteousness

Imputed Righteousness

by Johnny Elmore

There are some topics connected with this study that are truly deep and ponderous. In reading some of the writings of Calvin, Hodge, Shedd, Strong and others, I felt like the man who received as a gift a volume on Einstein's theory of relativity. He confessed, "I found that I could identify all of the words, but when I started to read the book, I could not understand any of the sentences." It surely must be obvious to all that the Bible does teach the doctrine of Imputed Righteousness. There is also a false doctrine of Imputed Righteousness taught in the world. I hope I can adequately set forth the Bible teaching and expose the false teaching on this subject.

Paul began his exposition of Imputed Righteousness in Romans 4:3, "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was *counted* (same as "imputed") unto him for righteousness." Again, in verse 5, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is *counted* for righteousness." (The word "counted" in Greek is the same word elsewhere rendered "imputed.") Romans 4:9, "Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was *reckoned* to Abraham for righteousness" (same word). Romans 4:11, "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be *imputed* unto them also." Look also at Romans 4:22-24, "And therefore it was *imputed* to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was *imputed* to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be *imputed*, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (form of the same word used three times).

There is also a passage in Galatians 3:6, "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Again, in James 2:23, "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God."

Meaning of Righteousness

The Hebrew word for "righteousness" is found in different forms hundreds of times in the Old Testament. It is defined by Gesenius as "rectitude, right."¹ In the New Testament, the word is found some ninety-two times. In the broadest sense of the term, according to Thayer, righteousness

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means, "The virtue or quality or state of him who is such as he ought to be, righteousness; the condition acceptable to God."² One of the simplest definitions is given by John: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous" (1 Jn. 3:7).

God is the ultimate standard of righteousness. "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright" (Ps. 11:7). Abraham asked, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25). Jesus is absolutely righteous because He is perfect. He is called by inspiration, "Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 Jn. 2:1). He is described by Paul as "the righteous judge" (2 Tim. 4:8). While on earth, friend and foe pronounced him "righteous" and "just." Men are said to be righteous, but only in an accommodated sense. Romans 3:10, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10). "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Solomon wrote, "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccl. 7:20).

Since no humans are righteous by virtue of their own efforts, they must be "justified," or "declared righteous." The verb, "to justify," and the noun, "righteousness," are from the same original word and their meanings correspond. Luke 7:29 says, "And all the people that heard him [Jesus], and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John." How did they "justify" God? They declared him to be righteous or just. God is also said to "justify" the ungodly (Rom. 4:5). That is, God declares or pronounces them just or righteous. On Romans 4:5, Thayer says:

Especially is it so used, the technical phraseology of Paul, respecting God who judges and declares such men as put faith in Christ to be righteous and acceptable to him, and accordingly fit to receive the pardon of their sins and eternal life.³

Righteousness means justification or forgiveness. It is obtained through pardon. It is a state of justification. The Jews were ignorant of God's righteousness. They did not submit to it but formulated their own. Note Paul's words:

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not sub-

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mitted themselves unto the righteousness of God (Rom. 10:1-3).

In a passage we have all learned, Paul said,

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith (Rom. 1:16-17).

The "righteousness" of God in these passages is not a reference to God's character. The Jews were ignorant of God's righteousness, but they were not ignorant of the fact that God is righteous. The gospel reveals how God makes men righteous, or how God forgives sinners. The Old Testament did not reveal it. In Galatians 3:21, Paul said, "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Note the double use of the word "given." Moses' law was a "given" law, but this "given" law of God could not give righteousness. The only way for a person to be righteous under the law would have been to keep it perfectly without sinning even once. But the law said that no one did that. So man had to be declared righteous. There are only two ways clothing may be clean—never having been soiled, or having been soiled, to be washed. In the same way, there are only two ways for man to be righteous—to never sin, or having sinned, to be forgiven. The gospel reveals that way of justification. Paul said, "For therein [in the gospel] is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." The word for "to" in Greek is *eis*, so it means "in order to." In other words, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith "in order to" faith—from the faith of the gospel to faith in the individual.

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The word "impute" is defined by Thayer:

1. To reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over, hence;
a) to take into account, to make account of . . . b) to number among, reckon with . . . 2. To reckon inwardly, count up or weigh the reasons, to deliberate.

Perhaps the most common meanings in the New Testament are "to calculate, to evaluate, to consider."⁴

Girdlestone says that the word indicates,

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What may be called a mental process whereby the love and mercy which exists in the Divine nature, and which was embodied in Christ, is brought to bear upon the case of every individual who believes in (and acts upon) the word of God.⁵

The word in the Greek translated "impute" is used 41 times in the New Testament, and eleven of these are in Romans 4, and it is translated by three different English words, count, reckon and impute, in the King James Version. The American Standard Version renders it "reckon" each time.

An outstanding use of the word in this sense is the statement of David: "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (Ps. 32:2). However, I fail to find any lexicographer who defined the word "imputeth" to mean "transfer." Now, if we understand the word "righteousness" to mean "justification," and the word "imputeth" to mean "account," the doctrine of Imputed Righteousness is simply that those who are ungodly are reckoned or accounted justified through faith in Jesus. Obviously, we must understand that sometimes "faith" is a synecdoche, whereby a part of something is named to suggest the whole thing; faith, in this case, to suggest the obedience of faith.

What a wonderful and sublime thought—that with God, we can be accounted righteous, even though we have sinned. Alexander Campbell listed seven causes connected with justification. He illustrated our justification by a man on a seashore, who sees a ship-wrecked crew clinging to a wreck in the midst of an angry sea. He commands his son to take a boat and go to their rescue. Obediently, his son rows out to the almost fainting crew. He commands them to seize his arm and get into the boat. They obey, and he commands them to take oars and cooperate in seeking safety in port. They cooperate and are saved. Spectators may have different views of the causes of their salvation, but all things done were necessary. The contemplative person would notice these concurrent causes: (1) the original cause was the kindness of the father; (2) the son was the efficient or meritorious cause; (3) the boat was the instrumental cause; (4) the knowledge of the men and the kind invitation was the disposing cause; (5) their consenting to the conditions was the formal cause; (6) their seizing the boat and getting in was the immediate cause; and, (7) their cooperative rowing was the concurrent and effectual cause.

Campbell shows that in the same way, we may harmonize the seven statements found in the Bible which attribute salvation or justification to men. We are pardoned and treated as righteous, or we are justified by the grace

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of God the Father, as the original and moving cause; by Christ, His Son, and by His blood, or sacrifice, and the meritorious cause; by faith and knowledge as instrumental causes; by our convictions of sin and penitence as the disposing cause; and by works as the concurrent or concomitant cause. Campbell's conclusion: "Indeed, true faith necessarily works; therefore, a working faith is the only true, real, and proper faith in Divine or human esteem." He continued to say: "The works of the law and the works of faith are as different as law and gospel."⁶

How Can God Do It?

When man sinned, he violated God's holiness, and God's justice came into play. God's decree is "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," (Ezek. 18:20). But because of God's mercy (remember, He is infinite in all these qualities), His grace provided a way. We could not achieve righteousness on our own for "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6). If we could live a perfect life from now on, it would not atone for past sins, for we owed God perfect obedience. God could not overlook our sins, or forgive without grounds, for God is just. He must uphold the majesty of His law. A price must be paid, but we have nothing wherewith to pay. The blood of bulls and goats would not do it; rivers of oil would not do it; our first born could not suffice. What it takes is a sacrifice, a perfect sacrifice, a sacrifice so great and so perfect that it is counted greater than all man's sin, and only Jesus fits this description. Because of our faith in Him, we are accounted righteous, or justified. The sacrifice of Jesus is the basis of God's accounting us righteous. I do not understand it; I am not worthy of it; but I am grateful and willing to receive it.

False Views of Imputation

If the Calvinist is allowed to define "imputation," he will say it means "to transfer," instead of "to reckon" or "to account." When he is allowed to do this, he can sustain the idea of the five points of Calvinism. Calvin believed that man was unable to do anything good, due to his inherited depravity, but because the moral excellence of Christ was transferred to the sinner, man could be saved. When Calvin's doctrines are summarized, he believed that three things are imputed: (1) The sins of Adam are imputed to mankind; (2) The sins of mankind are imputed to Christ; and (3) The personal righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers. Some preachers have been teaching the third doctrine among churches of Christ. It seems to me that consistency would demand that they accept the other imputations of Calvinism, if they accept number three.

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Calvin's Theory

The idea that number (1), the sins of Adam are imputed to mankind, simply is not taught in the Bible. The Bible teaches that sins are imputed, that is, put to my account, but they are my own sins. Such passages as Galatians 6:5, and Ezekiel 18:20 negate the teaching of Calvinism on this point. Also, imputation does not mean "transfer." Albert Barnes, the famous commentator, was a Presbyterian and a Calvinist, but his scholarship was such that when he came to the doctrine of imputation, he struck down the idea of transferring guilt or innocence from one to another. Barnes gives a list of scriptures where the principal word for "reckon" or "impute" is used in the Old Testament. Barnes said:

I have examined all the passages, and as the result of my examination have come to the conclusion, that there is not one in which the word is used in the sense of reckoning or imputing to a man that which does not strictly belong to him; or of charging on him that which ought to be charged on him as a matter of personal right. The word is never used to denote imputing in the sense of transferring, or of charging that on one which does not properly belong to him. The same is the case in the New Testament. The word occurs about forty times (see Schmidius' Concord), and in a similar signification. No doctrine of transferring or of setting over to a man what does not properly belong to him, be it sin or holiness, can be derived, therefore from this word. Whatever is meant by it here, it evidently is declared that the act of believing is that which is intended, both by Moses and by Paul.⁷

It is important to point out that the Calvinist editors who published **Barnes' Notes** later were not satisfied, and added a long footnote trying to uphold the doctrine of transference. They say in the Preface:

The principal point, in which Barnes is supposed to differ from orthodox divines, in this country, is the doctrine of imputation, which occupies so conspicuous a place in the opening chapters of Romans, and is argued at great length in the fifth chapter. In some other points also, of less moment, he may be accused of using inaccurate or unguarded language. To remedy these defects, supplementary Notes have been added in several places throughout the volume⁸

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Thus, imputation number (1) is simply denominational error.

But it is also taught that (2) the sins of mankind are imputed to Christ, that is, that the sins of mankind were transferred to Him. But the Bible nowhere says it. All the passages that speak of Christ taking upon Himself our sins, bearing our sins and of our iniquity being laid on Him are simply expressing the truth that Christ died for our sins. He took our punishment but not our guilt; otherwise, Ezekiel 18:20 would not teach the truth. He was punished for sins that were properly charged to us.

With reference to number (3), that is, that the personal righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers, the basic mistake made on this point is the same as the others, in that "impute" is defined as "transfer." The Bible does teach that Jesus was sinless, that He rendered perfect obedience; if this were not true, Jesus would have died as the thieves died. His perfect life and atoning death paid the penalty for sins, but I do not read that the moral excellence of Christ enabled us to don a robe of Christ's righteousness which covers our sins. When we respond to that sacrifice in the obedience of faith, God forgives those sins which had been put to our account. Since sins are forgiven, they are no longer imputed (Rom. 4:8), and God accounts men righteous on that basis.

Catholic Theory

Catholics believe that God imparts righteousness to the believer through "infused righteousness." The Council of Trent, which was convened to counter the influence of the Reformation Movement, dealt with this doctrine. It is consistent with Catholic philosophy, which holds that certain works receive "credit" with God. The conclusion of the Council of Trent:

Hence in justification itself a person together with the remission of his sins, receives simultaneously infused into him through Jesus Christ—into whom he is engrafted—all the following: faith, hope and charity. For faith, unless there be added to it hope and charity, does not perfectly unite a person with Christ, nor does it make him a living member of His Body; whence it is most truly said that faith without works is dead and unprofitable.⁹

However, the Bible teaches that it is "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" (Tit. 3:5).

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Neo-Calvinist Theory

The Neo-Calvinist theory of the imputation of righteousness is actually the same as the Calvinist theory. They hold that Christ's personal, perfect righteousness is imputed to the believer, and that this covers the believer with an umbrella of grace and conceals his sins. In essence, the believer is not actually made righteous; he is only counted as if he were righteous. Christ's righteousness has been transferred to the believer and what God sees when He looks at him is not his sins, but Christ's righteousness. Some believe that the "umbrella" covers all kinds of sins, while others limit it to sins of ignorance. I have already shown that this is denominational doctrine, but I want to quote Shedd: "Christ's perfect obedience which merits eternal life is not the sinner's perfect obedience, but God imputes it to him; he calls it or reckons it his."¹⁰ Again: "All the sins of a believer, past, present, and future, are pardoned when he is justified."¹¹

Guy N. Woods presents a point well taken and I quote:

It requires only the most elementary logic to observe that were the premises true once Christ's righteousness had been received the individual thus possessed *is as good as he [Christ] and will thenceforth be privileged to appear before God on the basis of merit rather than mercy!* Obviously, our Lord will not in judgment be required to justify his faithfulness in few or many things in the record books of life and, the foregoing conclusion being true, neither will those equally possessed of his character. What then of the Seer's description in Revelation 20: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, *according to their works.*" Why according to *their* works, if no works of any kind are involved in the reception and possession of the *Christian* life? If they have had transferred to themselves the righteousness Christ possesses why won't they be accepted on the same basis as he is—*actual merit?*¹²

The Bible View

Man's moral nature remains the same, whether saint or sinner, and is not corrupted, as both the Calvinists and the Catholics teach. Man is not forced to sin—he chooses to do so. Paul said, "Awake to righteousness, and sin

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not" (1 Cor. 15:34). John said, "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not" (1 Jn. 2:1). This shows choice. When man, by faith, obeys the gospel of Christ, he is justified, and it is the personal subjective faith in Christ that brings about justification, God imputing righteousness. This faith is not "objective faith," that is, outside of man, but subjective. Calvinists do not accept this, because faith is defined by Jesus as "the work of God" (Jn. 6:29). What kind of faith is it? It is more than mental assent, more than trust and reliance; it involves human effort—the life of faith.

Implications of Neo-Calvinism

Calvinists teach that Christ's perfect life of obedience is imputed to the believer. Their purpose is to uphold the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, better known to us as "once saved, always saved," or "once in grace, always in grace." Neo-Calvinists teach the doctrine, apparently, to broaden the base of fellowship. Their view is that no one keeps the law perfectly, i. e., none of us is a "hundred percenter," but we do not have to be, because the imputation of Christ's perfect obedience covers sins of weakness and ignorance, enabling us to fellowship such things as the use of instrumental music in worship, Sunday school, individual cups, etc. We are called "legalists." But we must not confuse legality with legalism. Legalism is the attempt to be justified on the basis of perfect law-keeping. We deny that, but do believe that conformity to law, legality, is involved in the life of faith in which we meet the conditions of the "law of Christ." The issue is not: Is salvation made possible wholly by God's grace? It is. But the issue is: Is Christ's perfect obedience to God's law while He was on earth imputed to the believer in Christ? The Bible does not teach it! If so, where?

Proof Texts Reviewed

The following are some of the Scriptures which are supposed to teach the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer.

1. Romans 4:3-8.

This is the place where this doctrine is supposed to be taught, but it says nothing about the perfect "doing and dying" of Christ being imputed or reckoned to the believer for righteousness.

Verse 3. Abraham believed (and obeyed) God. This is a quote from Genesis 15:6, but Abraham had obeyed God before this was said (Gen. 12:1-8; Heb. 11: 9-10; Jas. 2:21-24).

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Verse 4. By works is meant perfect obedience. If that were the case, it would have been debt, not grace.

Verse 5. "Worketh not," i.e., not perfect obedience. Instead, he looks to God for salvation.

Verses 6-8. This is about forgiveness. If it is forgiveness, it is not paying a debt for perfect obedience. Note some quotes from commentators on this passage.

The doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, as held by many, will not be readily found in this chapter, where it has been supposed to exist in all its proofs. It is repeatedly said that faith is imputed for righteousness; but in no place here, that Christ's obedience to the moral law is imputed to any man (Adam Clark).¹³

This doctrine, of the imputed righteousness of Christ, is capable of great abuse. To say that Christ's personal righteousness is imputed to every true believer, is not scriptural: to say that he has fulfilled all righteousness for us, or in our stead, if by this is meant his fulfillment of all moral duties, is neither scriptural nor true (Adam Clark).¹⁴

Further, as it is nowhere said in scripture, that Christ's righteousness was imputed to Abraham, so neither is it said anywhere, that Christ's righteousness is imputed to believers (Macknight).¹⁵

Observe that the believer's own faith is reckoned as righteousness. "In no passage in Paul's writings or in other parts of the New Testament, where the phrase to reckon for or the verb to reckon alone is used, is there a declaration that anything belonging to one person is imputed, accounted, or reckoned to another, or a formal statement that Christ's righteousness is imputed to believers" (President Dwight, "Notes on Meyer"). (Vincent)¹⁶

The Psalm, strictly speaking, says nothing of the imputation of righteousness, but it is implied by Paul, that the remission of sin is equivalent to the imputation of righteousness (Alford).¹⁷

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2. Romans 5:18-19.

In Romans 5:12, Paul shows that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Verse 18 takes up the same theme. It should be simple to see that Adam's trespass is contrasted with Christ's death. Paul is neither saying that Adam's trespass was imputed to us nor that Christ's obedience is imputed to us. Is Paul saying it was Jesus' life of perfect obedience or was "the obedience of one" Christ's death on the cross? Macknight says: "One act of righteousness . . . 'Christ's obedience to death' mentioned in Phil. 2:8, and called obedience simply in v. 19."¹⁸ Vincent concurs, saying: "The righteousness of one . . . correctly, one act of righteousness."¹⁹ Clarke: "One grand righteous act."²⁰ Just as "many were made sinners" by one disobedient act (sin got into the world), so by one act of righteousness "shall many be made righteousness."

3. 2 Corinthians 5:21.

This passage does not imply that our sins were imputed to Christ. (The word for impute is not in the text.)

He hath made a sin offering. There are many passages in the Old Testament, where sin signifies a sin-offering . . . In the New Testament, likewise, the word sin hath the same signification Heb. 9:26, 28; 13:11. [2 Cor. 5:12, 15; Gal. 3:13-14; 1 Pet. 2:24 explains this perfectly] (Macknight).²¹

4. Isaiah 53:6

"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." The word for "impute" is not in the text. This is another way of saying that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), and that Jesus paid the price (1 Pet. 2:24). He got the stripes, but we got the healing. Verse 10 says "thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." This does not help the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness.

5. Romans 3:22

"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference." Does this refer to the faith Christ had? Robertson: "Intermediate agency (*dia*) is faith and objective genitive, 'in Jesus Christ,' not subjective 'of Jesus Christ' . . ." ²² Vincent: "Faith of Jesus Christ. A common form for 'faith in Christ.'" ²³ Macknight: "The faith which Jesus Christ hath enjoined."²⁴ Some try to make this objective faith and fit it into their imputation theory, i.e., that the faith that Christ had is reckoned unto man for righteousness.

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6. Romans 5:10

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Question: Are we "saved by his life" before or after the cross? Robertson: "'In his life,' for he does live 'ever living to intercede for them' "(Heb. 7:25).²⁵ This refers to His life of intercession.

There are many other Scriptures which are used as proof texts, but none of them teach that Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer.

For more on this topic, I recommend the reading of Macknight on Romans 3:28.²⁶

End Notes

1. Gesenius' *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, 1979), p. 702.
2. Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, 1977), p. 149.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 379.
5. Robert Baker Girdlestone, "Imputation," *Synonyms of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, 1981), p. 174.
6. Alexander Campbell, "Justification," *Millennial Harbinger* (Joplin, 1987), 1851, pp. 321-323.
7. Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament*, 9th ed. (Grand Rapids, 1967), IV, p. 102.
8. *Ibid.*, iii.
9. Council of Trent, Session VI, *Decretum de Justification*, Chapter 7.
10. Dr. William G. T. Shedd, "Justification," *Dogmatic Theology* (Nashville, 1980), II, p. 542.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 545.
12. Guy N. Woods, *Questions and Answers* (Nashville, 1986), II, p. 116.
13. Adam Clarke, *Clarke's Commentary* (Philadelphia, 1838), VI, p. 34.
14. *Ibid.*
15. James Macknight, *Macknight on the Epistles* (Grand Rapids, "n.d."), p. 75.
16. Marvin R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, 1957), III, p. 53.
17. Henry Alford, *Alford's Greek Testament* (Grand Rapids, 1976), II, p. 348.
18. Macknight, p. 83.
19. Vincent, p. 63.
20. Clarke, p. 38.

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21. Macknight, p. 227.
22. A. T. Robertson, **Word Pictures in the New Testament** (Nashville, 1931), IV. p. 346.
23. Vincent, p. 41.
24. Macknight, p. 71.
25. Robertson, V, p. 357.
26. Macknight, p. 72.

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Islam

by Smith Bibens

It is surprising that a world religion such as Islam, with such far reaching effects upon modern life—historical, political, religious, social and economic—is so little understood by most Americans. In parts of Africa, where the church is trying to do mission work, Islam is growing in greater numbers than any other religion. The Islamic population in the world is around 750 million, and stretches from the northwest coast of Africa to the Indonesian and Philippine Islands half a world away. The world's three largest countries, in population terms, have sizable Muslim populations: China, India and Russia. The fastest growing religious body in America is the Black Muslims. The Islamic world has figured in the headlines of the world's press for many decades, and this continues in this time of renewed strife in that part of the world.

Virtually all of the historical narratives found in the Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, were set in lands that have been predominantly Muslim since the eighth century. The land of our Lord's nativity has been in Muslim hands for the largest part of the past twelve centuries. The area of Paul's early missionary endeavors has been Muslim for over a thousand years, and is so to this day. The largest congregations of the Lord's church, for the first three hundred years of its existence, were found in lands that are Muslim today. Look at the opening chapters of the book of Revelation. The churches of Asia have long since disappeared, and today, that area of the world is embraced by the Muslim country of Turkey.

John wrote in the Revelation, "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared" (Rev. 16:12). J. T. Hinds' comments on this passage are enlightening (*Commentary on Revelation*, [Nashville: Gospel Advocate, 1937], p. 238-9). While alternative interpretations of this passage might be offered, the one offered in the following excerpt from Hinds seems correct to this writer:

One view is that it refers to the same world power that was symbolized by the sixth trumpet (9:13-19)—the Turkish Empire from which arose Mahometanism. [sic] The probability here is in the facts that the Euphrates River is mentioned in both passages and that the "false prophet," mentioned in verse 13, presumably is Mahomet, the founder of this false system of religion. Elliot and Barnes

both defend this view and give historical events to indicate that Mahometanism about A.D. 1820 began a gradual loss of power, signified by the waters of the Euphrates River drying up. Probably the most plausible reason for this view is that such a great religious power as Mahometanism would hardly be left out of a system of symbols designed to portray the destinies of the church over a period when Mahometanism ruled so much of the world.

Further evidence that this passage refers to the Ottoman Empire, the great Muslim Turkish empire that held sway over the region until World War I, is seen in the phrase "that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared" (16:12b). The word for "east" in this passage is the Greek word *anatolee*, "rising of the sun," as the sun rises in the east (cf. Thayer, p. 48). Now, in Greek usage, this word was used to name a specific geographical area. In reference to the Greek peninsula, the country across the Aegean Sea was "Anatolia." To this day that region is referred to as Anatolia. Of this area, the **Random House College Dictionary** says, "a vast plateau between the Black and Mediterranean seas; in ancient usage, the peninsula of Asia Minor; in modern usage, Turkey in Asia." Several nations have come from the Turkish Ottoman Empire. The way was prepared for these nations to enter upon the stage of world affairs by the "drying up of the Euphrates"—the decline and destruction of the Ottoman Empire, which had its seat in Turkey. Included among these nations would be all of the Muslim nations of North Africa and the Middle East—nations like Libya, Egypt, Israel, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, to name a few. These nations have played a large part in significant world events effecting the West in recent years. Truly, the breakup of the Ottoman Empire prepared the way for the rise of these nations, and with their rise, the decline and fracturing of Islamic power. The vial of God's wrath continues to be poured out upon this false religion to this day.

Islam: Meaning and Significance

The word "Islam," used as the title for this religion, basically means "submission, surrender." It comes from the Arabic root *s-l-m*, "safe, sound, intact." (This Arabic root has linguistic ties to the Hebrew *shalom*, "peace.") The word "islam" thence takes on the meaning of "blameless, faultless, established, proven." Islam is, to its adherents, the surrender or submission to God that leads to peace with God and soundness in all aspects of one's life.

A "Muslim" is "one who submits." This is the title preferred by those who belong to this religion. They take offense at being called "Mohammadans" (archaic spelling, "Mahometans"), in the same way that a member of the church would resent being called a "Campellite." A typical Muslim would respond to this name by saying, "I am not a follower of Mohammad, but of God!" Truthfully, Mohammad is the founder of this unscriptural religion, but a Muslim resents any such identification. Christians believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the founder of the church; of Christianity (Mt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 5:20). Muslims deny that Mohammad "founded" their religion. They believe that Mohammad was the last of the line of prophets to God's community of people on earth stretching back to Abraham.

Islam is more than a set of religious beliefs. It is a philosophical system, a military commitment, a lifestyle, a political orientation, a judicial system, and a community identification as well. During the "Golden Age" of Islam, about A.D. 800-1200, this was especially so. Although somewhat weakened in recent decades, there continues to be strong ties in the Muslim world between the religious and temporal sides of life.

The situation in many Muslim countries today might be comparable to Western Europe in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, when the Roman Catholic Church dominated all aspects of life. For the typical Muslim, daily life is intertwined with religion to a degree far greater than in the typical Christian's life. Genuine Christianity should embrace every aspect of life, and mold a person's outlook on every question of life. The truth is, among those who are professedly "Christians," this is seldom true. While this is a growing problem in the Muslim world, their religion has a much deeper influence in their societies, than Christianity has in ours, at this time. To secular Westerners, used to nominal religion, the attitudes of Muslim peoples are perplexing. Of course, these same Westerners are equally perplexed when they see someone who is a true Christian, unreservedly devoted to following the teaching of Jesus Christ in every particular.

The Arab People

To understand Islam, one must understand the people from whom it sprang, the man who was its founder, and the times in which he lived.

The Arab people have a long history, going back to biblical times. The Arabs trace their lineage back to Ishmael, the son of Abraham by Hagar (Gen. 16:15). Discouraged by her inability to bear Abraham a son, Sarah gave her handmaid Hagar to Abraham. However, when Hagar conceived,

this sparked friction between her and her mistress Sarah. She was sent away by Sarah, but the angel of the Lord told her to return to Sarah and submit herself to her. The angel promised that she would bear a son, to be named Ishmael. Of this son, the angel said, "he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren" (Gen. 16:12). Years later, still lacking an heir by Sarah, Abraham asked the Lord to establish Ishmael as his heir, but God insisted that a son, to be named Isaac, would be born to Sarah. However, God promised that Ishmael would become "a great nation" (Gen. 17:20; 21:13). When Hagar and Ishmael were sent away by Abraham, because of continuing strife between Sarah and Hagar, God renewed this promise to Hagar (21:17). All of these promises have been fulfilled. Throughout their history, the Arab people have fought among themselves and with their neighbors. Characterizing them as a "wild man" has proven to be an accurate portrayal. War has been a continual way of life for Arabs, going back centuries before the rise of Islam, and continuing to this day. They have indeed become a great nation. In the century after Mohammad's death, the Arab armies swept over one third of the civilized world. Arabs control a significant part of the world's land and resources. The Arab nation is a major player in world power to this day.

At the time of Mohammad, the Arabs were not a powerful people. Confined to the Arabian peninsula, Arab society in the time up to Mohammad was factious and warring. Religiously, most Arabs were pagans, though there were Christians, Jews, Hindus, Zoroastrians and other religions represented on the peninsula.

The Religious Situation in Arabia Before Mohammad

The idolatrous religion that predominated the religious situation in Arabia was of the most degrading kind. A wide variety of deities were worshipped. Each tribe and clan had their own local deities. Practices among these pagans included: human sacrifice, child sacrifice by fire, live burial of children, and many of the immoral practices of the Canaanites in Joshua's day. The religious center of this pagan system was Mecca, a prosperous city on the trans-Arabian caravan routes. In Mecca, there stood a temple called the Kaaba (Arabic, "cube"), made of black granite. In this temple were idols representing the "gods" of all the tribes and clans involved in paganism; 360 in all. For one month of the year, the tribes and clans stopped their warring and barbarism, to engage in a season of unrestrained pagan indulgence at Mecca.

All over Arabia in Mohammad's time were scattered Jewish and Christian communities. Jews were influential in economic life. They owned much of the best land around the oases, they controlled the markets in the urban areas, they imported important commercial goods, and had a superior knowledge of agriculture and irrigation. They effectively controlled all finance and trade on the peninsula. In short, they were the "upper-class."

Christianity made inroads into the Arabian peninsula early in the First Century (cf. Acts 2:11; Gal. 1:15-17). Whole tribes were converted to Christianity. However, like the society at large, by the Sixth Century, the Christians were splintered into rival camps, and most of them were considered heretical by the "orthodox" Greek Church of the eastern Mediterranean area. In general, the "Christianity" of the peninsula was degenerate, and not fit to wear the name. These Arab Christians were hammered by persecution from the Greek Orthodox Church, which was centered in Palestine and Asia Minor. Due to this persecution, most of those "Christian" sects that survive in Arabia and Mesopotamia to this day are associated with the western rival of the Greek Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church.

While religion, whether paganism, Judaism, Christianity, or some other eastern religion, was practiced by virtually every Arab, the moral situation of Arab society was deplorable. Fornication and adultery were commonplace. Homosexuality, while not common, was openly practiced and tolerated. Violence and warfare were a part of the Arab's personal and tribal life. When the civilized peoples of the Mediterranean thought of the Arabs, they thought of unbridled lust and passion. And they were right on the mark.

Mohammad

Mohammad was born in Mecca in about A.D. 570. He was born into an impoverished branch of the royal family of Mecca. His father Abdallah died when he was two months old, and his mother Amina when he was six years old. His grandfather Abdul Mutilib, who was the chief priest of the Kaaba, assumed his care for a while. Other relatives cared for him for a while after his grandfather died, including an uncle named Abu Talib, who was the head of Mohammad's clan. This clan was a powerful and prosperous one in Mecca, but Mohammad never enjoyed the general prosperity of his kinfolks. Treated like the proverbial stepchild, Mohammad was forced to provide for himself by shepherding. His youth was spent as a poor orphan who worked as a shepherd and camel driver.

In later years, Mohammad's followers invented a number of fanciful myths about his birth. His mother was said to have no birth pains when he

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was born. Immediately from the womb, Mohammad allegedly proclaimed "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammad is His Prophet!" Supposedly, every idol in the world fell down. When the infant Mohammad was viewed by a soothsayer, the soothsayer was reported to have shouted, "Kill this child! I swear by all the gods that this child will destroy your gods and be victorious over you!"

At twenty-five, Mohammad attracted the attention of a wealthy widow that he worked for, named Khadiya. Though fifteen years his senior, they were married, and Mohammad became financially secure for life. She owned a prosperous caravan business, so Mohammad went from camel driver to manager of the concern. Two sons, both of whom died young, and four daughters were born to Mohammad and Khadiya.

As manager of a caravan company, Mohammad traveled extensively throughout the Arabian peninsula and even into Palestine. He came into contact with all the various religions that were represented on the peninsula. Like Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, many years later, Mohammad was disturbed by the number and contentiousness of the numerous religions. It was also evident to him that the religions of Arabia, as practiced by the Arab people of that time, did little to ennoble their lives and lift them above the level of carnality typical of the basest idolatry.

Between the ages of twenty-five and forty, Mohammad traveled extensively and pondered deeply on the religious situation of his people:

He would retire to caves for seclusion and meditation; he frequently practiced fasting; and he was prone to dreams. Profoundly dissatisfied with the polytheism and crude superstitions of his native Mecca, he appears to have become passionately convinced of the existence and transcendence of one true God. How much of this conviction he owed to Christianity or Judaism seems impossible to determine. Monophysite Christianity was at that time widely spread in the Arab kingdom of Ghassan; the Byzantine Church was represented by hermits dotted about the Hijaz with whom Mohammad may well have come in contact; the Nestorians were established in Hira and in Persia; and the Jews were strongly represented in al Madina (Medina-shb), the Yemen and elsewhere. There can be no manner of doubt, moreover, that at some period of his life he absorbed much teaching from Talmudic sources and had contact with some form of Christianity; and it seems

overwhelmingly probable that his early adoption of monotheism can be traced to one or both of these influences (*The World's Religions*, p. 54).

The religion Mohammad eventually founded, borrowed freely from the religions of Arabia. In this sense, Islam is an eclectic religion. Whatever Mohammad thought was commendable was taken over into Islam, and what was not so highly thought of by Mohammad, was branded "infidelity." Judaism first, then the Arab paganism Mohammad grew up with, were the most dominant influences upon his thinking. But Mohammad also borrowed elements of Christianity, though Mohammad thought Christianity was an impractical religion. He allegedly admired the high moral tone of Jesus' teaching, but he thought it was an impossible standard for men to live up to. For example, Mohammad could not accept the teaching of Jesus on how to treat one's enemies. Jesus taught, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Mt. 5:44). Believing that this was an impossibility for men, Mohammad opted for that which has been so characteristic of humanity: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy" (Mt. 5:43). Also, Mohammad taught, contrary to Jesus' teaching, that men could have more than one wife (cf. Mt. 19:3-9).

About 610, Mohammad claimed that while in a cave on Mount Hira outside Mecca, he had received a vision in which he was called on to preach the message entrusted to him by God. Further revelations came to him intermittently over the remaining years of his life, and these revelations constitute the text of the Koran.

At first in private and then publicly, Mohammad began to proclaim his message: that there is but one God and that Mohammad is his messenger sent to warn people of the Judgment Day and to remind them of God's goodness. The Meccans responded with hostility to Mohammad's monotheism and hatred of their idols. As long as Abu Talib was alive Mohammad was protected by the Hashim, even though that clan was the object of a boycott by other Quraysh after 616. About 619, however, Abu Talib died, and the new clan leader was unwilling to continue the protective arrangement.

In the face of persecution, Mohammad and about seventy followers reached the decision to sever their ties to Mecca and move to Yathrib, a city about 250 miles to the north. This city was later renamed Medina, "city of the prophet." This move, called the *hijra* (an Arabic word meaning "emigration, flight"), took place in 622, the first year of the Muslim calendar.

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(Muslim dates are usually followed by AH, *Anno Hegirae*, "the year of the hegira.") Muslims prefer the meaning "emigration"—it rankles them to have their prophet portrayed as fleeing for his life.

Those who have chronicled the life of Mohammad mark a profound change in the man about this time. Due the years of persecution at Mecca, Mohammad had become very bitter and vengeful. In the coming years, Mohammad was to turn his back upon the program of peaceful proselytizing and steadfast endurance of persecution, which characterized the earlier years at Mecca. He was to turn to a campaign of violence and treachery to wreak vengeance upon the haughty Meccans, and vindicate his pride, by forcing them, and all Arabia, to accept his new faith.

In Medina an organized Muslim community gradually came into existence under Mohammad's leadership. In his early years at Medina, Mohammad was sympathetic to both Jews and Christians, but they rejected him and his teaching. Upon that rejection, Mohammad turned from Jerusalem as the center of worship, to Mecca, where the famous Kaaba stood. Mohammad denounced all its idols and declared it a temple for the one true God, Allah. With this new emphasis, Mohammad resolved to return to Mecca, by force of arms if necessary.

Attacks on caravans from Mecca led to war with the Meccans. Mohammad's followers obtained a victory in the first pitched battle with Meccan forces, but were defeated a year later in another. In 627, however, they successfully defended Medina against a siege by 10,000 Meccans. Clashes with three Jewish clans in Medina occurred in this same period. One of these clans, the Banu Qurayza, was accused of plotting against Mohammad during the siege of Medina. In retaliation, all of the clan's men were killed and the women and children sold into slavery. Two years later, a different fate befell another Jewish group. After defeat, they were allowed to remain there for the price of half their annual harvest of dates.

Since A.D. 624 (2 AH) the Muslims of Medina had been facing Mecca during worship (earlier, they had apparently turned toward Jerusalem). Mecca was considered of primary importance to the Muslim community because of the presence there of the Kaaba. This sanctuary was then a pagan shrine, but according to the Koran, it had been built by Abraham and his son Ishmael and had therefore to be reintegrated in Muslim society. An attempt to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca in 628 was unsuccessful, but at that time an arrangement was made allowing the Muslims to make the pilgrimage the next year, on condition that all parties cease armed hostilities. Breaches on the part of Mohammad's followers ended the armistice in 629,

and in January 630, Mohammad and his men marched on Mecca. The leaders of Mecca offered to surrender, and their offer was accepted with a promise of general amnesty, and hardly any fighting occurred. Mohammad entered the city, threw all the pagan idols out of the Kaaba, and dedicated it to the worship of Allah alone. (Allah, "God," is the Arabic form of the Hebrew El, "God.")

In his final years, Mohammad continued his political and military involvements, making arrangements with nomadic tribes ready to accept Islam and sending expeditions against hostile groups. A few months after a farewell pilgrimage to Mecca in March 632 he fell ill. Mohammad died on June 8, 632, in the presence of his favorite wife, Aisha, whose father, Abu Bakr, became the leader of the Muslim community as Mohammad's successor.

The Koran

The Koran (also spelled Qur'an) is to the Muslim what the Bible is to the Christian. The Koran purports to be the collected revelations of God to Mohammad through the angel Gabriel (Arabic, *Jibral*). It is composed of 114 *surahs*, "chapters," and is nearly as long as the New Testament. As published, it is much longer, for the published version includes the *hadith*, "traditions." The *hadith* supplements the Koran in much the same way that the Talmud supplements the Old Testament for Judaism. For the Muslim, not only the Koran, but the *hadith* is authoritative.

The word "Koran" (Arabic, *Qur'an*) means "recitation." Muslims believe that the Koran was written in "pure Arabic" before the creation of the world, and that God has a copy of it sitting at His right hand. They believe that it was revealed to Mohammad by the angel Gabriel over a period of several years. They allege that when Gabriel would visit Mohammad, Gabriel would recite lines that Mohammad would have to repeat and remember. In effect, the words of the Koran were dictated to Mohammad in this fashion. Mohammad would later repeat these lines to his followers, and some of them wrote the lines down, resulting at length in the Koran as it now exists.

The Koran recognizes the previous revelation of God through Moses, the prophets of Israel, Jesus, and His Apostles. Many familiar figures appear in the Koran from the Old and New Testaments. But Mohammad taught that the Bible (Old and New Testaments) had become corrupt and was not accurately translated. Their message from God had been lost. Mohammad taught that he was God's last Apostle and Prophet to the human race, and the Koran was God's last word. This is an article of faith with Muslims.

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A reading of the Koran will produce two impressions. First, in writing, composition and literary excellence, it is far inferior to the Bible. Second, there are numerous points upon which the Bible and the Koran are in conflict. For example, in the Koran, it is Ishmael who Abraham offers in sacrifice, not Isaac. This is a bold contradiction of what the Scriptures teach (Gen. 22:1-14; Heb. 11:17-19).

Space would fail to present an exhaustive treatment of the conflict between the Koran and the Bible. Some will be treated later in this article when the articles of Islamic faith and the acts of worship are considered. There is one that needs to be treated here. This alone will suffice to demonstrate the contradiction between the Koran and the Bible, and the falsehood of the former. Let us note the teaching of the Koran concerning Jesus Christ, and compare that with what the Bible teaches.

The Koran proclaims that Jesus was no more than one in a long line of prophets stretching back to Abraham, and ultimately, to Adam. The Koran emphatically denies His deity and that He is the Son of God. Surah 4:171 states, "Jesus . . . was only a messenger of Allah . . . Far is it removed from His transcendent majesty that He should have a son."

The Bible emphatically teaches that Jesus is the Son of God. John says of Christ,

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made (Jn. 1:1-3).

Jesus' claims for His own deity and Sonship are unequivocal. In John 10:30, He states: "I and my Father are one" (cf. Jn. 8:58-59). He pronounced His blessing upon Peter, when Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt. 16:16). Jesus said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn. 8:24).

Of the crucifixion, the Koran states in Surah 4:157, "They slew him not nor crucified, but it appeared so unto them." Likewise, the resurrection is not accounted to be a bodily resurrection, but a vision, so that it appeared so. Most Muslims believe that God arranged for Judas Iscariot to be mistaken for Jesus, so that Judas died on the cross, while Jesus escaped to heaven, later to reappear, apparently resurrected, to his disciples.

The Bible teaches,

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep (1 Cor. 15:3-6).

Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses (Acts 2:23-32; cf. Lk. 24:26, 46; Acts 13:29-30; 26:22-23; Heb. 13:20).

The Bible teaches that Jesus went to the cross to bear in His body the penalty for man's sins. He died, His body was placed in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, while His spirit, which He had commended to God's care (Lk. 23:46) went to Paradise (Lk. 23:43). The third day, Jesus was resurrected, appeared to His disciples, and He showed Himself for a period of forty days, through many infallible proofs, to be alive (Acts 1:3). After this, Jesus went to heaven, to sit down at the Father's right hand.

Clearly then, the Koran, purporting to be an inspired prophetic oracle, falls under the anathema of God:

But though we, or an *angel from heaven*, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Gal. 1:8-9).

The Five Doctrines of Islamic Faith

The faith and practice of Islam may be considered under two headings: Doctrine and Duty. There are certain basic beliefs that a Muslim must hold, and there are certain prescribed actions for a faithful Muslim to engage in. The former are called the *iman*, "faith." The duties are often referred to as the "Five Pillars of Islam." These are distinct from the "Five Doctrines" of the *iman* which we consider here.

1. Faith in God's Unity. The first doctrine is faith in the absolute unity of God. Consequently, the doctrine of the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, is rejected by Muslims. To Muslims shirk, "associating" God with something is the one unforgivable sin. This is contrary to Scripture teaching however.

It is interesting to note that in the early days of his movement, Moham-mad did not preach a strict monotheism. He held to henotheism. Henotheism is a form of polytheism in which one "god" is esteemed above all others. Originally, to accommodate his movement to his Meccan relatives, Moham-mad taught that there were three "Daughters of Allah." He equated these daughters to three of the more popular Meccan deities. Note this passage from Rodinson:

There is one incident, in fact, which may reasonably be accepted as true because the makers of Muslim tradition would never have invented a story with such damaging implications for the revelation as a whole.

"When the Messenger of God saw his people draw away from him," wrote Tabari [Arab historian, A.D. 839-923 - shb] it gave him great pain to see what a distance separated them from the word of Allah which he brought to them. Then he longed in his heart to receive a word from Allah which would bring him closer to his people . . . It was then that Allah revealed to him the *surah* of the Star . . ."

When he came to the verse:

"Have you considered Allat and al-Uzza
And Manat, the third, the other . . ." (Koran, 53:19-20)

the demon put upon his tongue what he had been saying to himself and would have liked to hand on to his people:

"They are the Exalted Birds
And their intercession is desired indeed."

According to Muslim lore, when the Qurayshites [Mohammad's tribe—shb] heard this verse they were highly delighted and all prostrated themselves . . . It was only later that the archangel [Gabriel—shb] revealed to him that he had been deceived by the Devil. . . The additional verses were taken out and replaced by others rejecting the cult of the "three great aquatic birds" (the word that I have rendered "birds" is actually cranes or herons . . . Elsewhere they are called the "Daughters of Allah" (Muhammad, by Maxime Rodinson).

These verses became known as the "Satanic verses" of the Koran. Muslims, beginning with Mohammad, tried to explain this problem away by saying the the Devil had been able to slip things in on many of God's earlier prophets as well. Obviously, that is blasphemy. No true prophet, whose writings are preserved for us in the Bible, ever gave out the word of Satan as the Word of God, by mistake or otherwise. Of course, all this goes to show that the Koran is wholly uninspired and Mohammad is a false claimant as the "Seal of the Prophets" (Mt. 24:11; 2 Pet. 2:1).

2. Belief in Angels. The second cardinal doctrine of Islam is belief in angels and their important work as God's messengers. All the archangels are good except one. That is Iblis (Satan), who was cast out of heaven after he refused God's command to bow down to Adam (Koran 7:11-18). Iblis has a great host of evil followers from the lower ranks of angels. The angels are sexless, and are made of light, while man is made of clay. In addition to angels and man, there are supernatural beings created of fire called *jinn*s (singular, *jinni*). They are much lower than angels, being in most respects like humans. They have limited life spans, are either male or female, and can be good or evil.

There is not one word in the Bible to corroborate most of this. It may be observed that all this is the product of an overworked imagination. To learn of some of these beliefs reminds one of the fancies of Mormonism, also the fruit of a false prophet.

3. Prophets and Scriptures. Much has been said about this already. As mentioned earlier, Muslims believe that Jews and Christians had corrupted their Scriptures to suit their own inclinations. The Koran then is the purest extant Scripture on earth, according to Muslim teaching. (See earlier under "The Koran")

4. Final Judgment, Heaven and Hell. The fourth fundamental Islamic belief is in a final judgment, with a resulting consignment of souls either to heaven or hell. In the Koran the last day is called "the Day of Doom," "The Day of Resurrection," "The Day of Distinguishing" (the saved from the damned), and others. Most of the Koran's teaching on the final judgment has parallels and antecedents in other religions of the Mid East, like Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity.

There are numerous descriptions of heaven and hell in the Koran. In hell, there are punishing angels who do not allow the damned any respite from their sufferings, which include burnings, drinking boiling water and eating a very bitter fruit. There are seven levels to hell, in Muslim belief, each succeeding level more painful than the preceding: level (1) is for bad Muslims, (2) for Christians, (3) for Jews, (4) for Zoroastrians, (5) for Hindus, (6) for pagans and (7) for hypocrites. The level for the bad Muslims is envisaged as a kind of purgatory—they will be released from there eventually. Most Muslim theologians also teach that, in time, all but the those in the lowest levels of hell will have put in there time in hell, so to speak, and will be released to some unknown fate.

Heaven, or Paradise, was conceived by Mohammad in terms that would appeal to the rough Arabs of the barren desert wastes. Those ushered into Paradise will recline on soft couches, enjoying good food and a heavenly drink that thrills and satisfies without intoxicating. The men will be waited upon by beautiful young *huris*, the maidens of heaven, of whom each man may marry as many as he wishes. In heaven, as in hell, there are ranks and degrees of reward. First in place of prominence will be the prophets, next the "holy warriors"—those who died fighting Islam's *jihads* (see more below), then various ranks of religious teachers and faithful men and women.

Several points could be raised against Mohammad's revelations about heaven and hell. Two are mentioned here. First, Jesus taught that there will be no marriage in heaven, for the saved will be "as the angels" (Mt. 22:30). It is apparent that Mohammad's concept of heaven was revealed, not by God, but from within his own carnal heart, at the very least. Second, whatever may be said about degrees of punishment or reward, one thing is abundantly clear from the Bible—those cast into hell never get out! "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt. 25:46; cf. 1 Thess. 4:13). The punishment of the wicked will last as long as the life of the righteous.

5. The Divine Decree (Predestination). Islam is a very fatalistic religion. Called *kismet*, this doctrine of fate plays an important part in Arabic Islam especially. This is a very rigid view of predestination that states that all good and evil proceeds from divine will. Some parts of non-Arab Islam modify it somewhat however, allowing room for human free-will to author or choose good or evil. Truly, this one doctrine has been a battleground for centuries among Muslims. Both sides claim support from the Koran. At one extreme are the Muslims who believe as Mohammad himself taught, "God recorded the fates of all creatures 50,000 years before creating the heavens and the earth." On the other hand there are those who believe it is untrue that God decided the fate of every individual's life before the world began.

Purification

In Islam, as with Talmudic Judaism, there is a very strong emphasis upon ritual purification. Even before one can begin to observe the ritual duties, the five basic, minimal acts of devotions to God that are treated in the following section, one must first be "purified." As Mohammad said, "Purification is half the law." The Muslim traditions and contentions regarding pollution and purification are every bit as complicated as those of Rabbinical Judaism. Space would fail to describe the complicated purification regulations bound on Muslims, including food prohibitions (cf. 1 Tim. 4:3-4; Acts 10:11-15); circumcision for males and females (cf. 1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 5:6; 6:15); ritual washings and baths (Mt. 15:1-11); and many such things.

The Five Duties of the Faithful Muslim

Sometimes referred to as the "Five Pillars of Islam," these five duties, acts of worship, services or devotions, are the meritorious works, which, along with correct belief (see previous section) will save a Muslim from hell.

Islam

1. **Confession.** Also called "testifying," *shahada*. What is confessed is the *kalima*, "creed." The confession that makes one a Muslim, and which must be repeated daily by a faithful Muslim, is: "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammad is His Prophet." This confession is a blasphemy against the truth on at least two points: (1) it is an indirect denial of the deity and Sonship of Jesus, and (2) it sets forth a false prophet as the final revelator of God's Will to mankind.

2. **Prayer.** Called *salat*, the Muslim must pray five times in the day: upon rising, at noon, at midafternoon, at sunset, and before going to bed. The *salat* is the foundation of the Muslim's devotions. The worshiper recites specified portions of the Koran, and various praise formulas, while facing Mecca. There are various postures prescribed by the *hadith* "traditions," as well. The *salat* is not the usual sort of prayer that Christians are accustomed to: personal prayers to God of petition, supplication, intercession, thanksgiving and so forth. That sort of prayer is called *du'a*, and is not central to Muslim faith. *Salat* is a highly formal, intensely regulated observance that includes a variety of bodily postures, culminating in complete prostration while facing Mecca.

The Friday noon *salat* is the formal weekly congregational worship service of the Muslim. In distinction from the Sabbath (Saturday) of the Jews or the Lord's Day (Sunday) of Christians, Mohammad chose that his followers use Friday as their "holy" day.

3. **Almsgiving.** This is of two types: *zakat* and *sadeqah*. The *zakat*, "almsgiving," is a legal, obligatory act and considered part of one's service to God as a technical part of worship. Mohammad was an orphan, who often had to depend upon the generosity afforded by others. Hence, the large place that almsgiving plays in Muslim religion. *Zakat* is a sort of tax amounting to two and a half percent of one's wealth in one year. *Zakat* should not be confused with "charity," *sadeqah*. Muslims are commanded to give charity (*sadeqah*) often and freely. Also, the funds necessary to support the mosque and its employees comes from free-will offerings. But the *zakat* is considered mandatory, and as it is actually collected by the government in many parts of the Muslim world, amounts to a tax. The recipients of the *zakat* are: the poor and needy, widows and orphans, those who work to collect the *zakat*, converts to Islam who have lost their possessions because of their faith, slaves (to purchase their freedom), those who have large debts they cannot pay by themselves, scholarships, missionary projects, institutions for charity, culture or education, and the pilgrim—more or less in that order.

4. Fasting. One of the most visible worship acts of the Muslim world is the month-long daytime fast during the lunar month of Ramadan (roughly early March through early April). From dawn until sunset, those observing the fast are prohibited from eating, drinking or engaging in marital relations. Various classes of people, like soldiers, pregnant women or those with newborns, travelers, and the sick (physically or mentally) are exempted, though those who are healthy must make the fast up later. Intentionally breaking the fast entails a penalty: fasting sixty days (instead of 28), feeding sixty people the equivalent of one meal each, or giving to charity the equivalent of sixty meals. In many parts of the Muslim world, the Ramadan fast is a period of penitence and self-denial. In other parts, it is more like a holiday season with a very festive air. When the sun goes down, and the day's fast ends, it *really* ends! As with prayer and almsgiving, the fasting of Islam is done for public display, contrary to the teaching of Jesus (Mt. 6:1-18).

5. Pilgrimage. Every able-bodied Muslim is required to make a pilgrimage to the Kaaba at Mecca once in their lifetime. There are many important ceremonies attached to this pilgrimage, both in transit and in Mecca itself. The most important ritual of the journey takes place at the Kaaba. The pilgrim walks around the Kaaba seven times, then kisses the famous black stone in its wall. The pilgrimage ends with the "Festival of the Sacrifice." The pilgrim offers a sheep, goat or camel, and then gives the meat to the poor. It is also a very joyous season, in some ways akin to the spirit that predominates in Western societies at Christmas and New Year's.

Again, Mohammad took a spiritual concept and debased it into a carnal ordinance. The Bible teaches that Christians are pilgrims and sojourners in this world, not just once in a lifetime, but all our lifetimes (1 Pet. 2:11; 1 Pet. 1:17).

A sixth pillar is added by some. This is the **jihad**, "holy war," against the "infidels," i.e. those who rejected Mohammad and his message. Over the centuries, many "holy wars" have been fought, with the promise made to those who fell in them, that they would occupy a rank in heaven second only to the prophets. Modern Islamic leaders are heard declaring a "holy war" against America, the West, Israel, or some neighbor country, sometimes even fellow Arabs. The terrible tragedy here is the death and carnage that results when people are duped into believing such. The Koran teaches that the "believers" cannot be defeated in a true **jihad** against infidels. These people will sometimes give their lives, because they are deluded, for a lie—the lie of the false prophet Mohammad.

Jesus taught, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (Jn. 18:36). Jesus taught non-resistance to evil (Mt. 5:39). Jesus taught us his followers to love their enemies (Mt. 5:43-44). The weapons of a Christian's warfare are not carnal, and the object of our conquest is not physical:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

Christ conquers through love and the truth.

Conclusion

Since the Arabs hordes swept out of their desert fastness, and conquered one third of the civilized world, the world has not been the same. This fact, and the enduring legacy of Mohammad, is a powerful proof of the power of falsehood. But it is not, nor indeed can it ever be, as powerful as the truth, the gospel; which is the "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16), and to the Islamic peoples as well. *P.O. Box 725, Buffalo, MO 65622*

Translations Used During the Restoration

by Richard Bunner

A few years ago one of my brethren handed me a tract and said that I should read it. The tract was extolling the virtues and qualities of the 1611 Authorized Version of the Scriptures, more commonly known as the King James Version. The gist of the article elevated this translation above all others, claiming that newer ones were not only inferior, but also inaccurate.

I had nearly forgotten this little pamphlet when only recently I heard a brother preaching about the ills, the inadequacies, the evils of all modern twentieth century translations. Within the text of his sermon he made the statement, "Why can't we be content with the same Bible translation that our pioneer preachers used? Look at the numbers of people that were converted by their preaching." I thought about this, and I wondered exactly whom he may have had in mind. The term "Pioneer" is first used in reference to Jesus.¹ Certainly the apostles and numerous first century Christians blazed the trail for all of humanity by "preaching the gospel to every creature." But generally folks have those of a much later date in mind when they use the term "pioneer preachers."

This article takes a close look at those preachers of the nineteenth century who belonged to the Restoration Movement to determine what their attitudes were toward Bible translations. These men played an important part in the spread of Christianity on the North American continent and even abroad. Certainly they deserve to be called pioneer preachers. What Bible did they carry with them? How did they feel about "modern translations"?

In 1809, Alexander Campbell came to America to join his father Thomas Campbell who had already been here for two years as a Presbyterian minister in Washington County, Pennsylvania. Five years earlier the Last Will and Testament of Springfield Presbytery had been written and witnessed by six preachers from Bourbon County, Kentucky, among whom was Barton W. Stone. The seeds of the Restoration Movement had already begun to take root from the pleas of such men as James O'Kelley, Abner Jones, Elias Smith and others. Over the next generation the movement would sweep across America.

My research began first with Alexander Campbell. Since I live within a two hour drive of Bethany College and the old Campbell homestead I decided to pay a visit. The day at Bethany was quite rewarding. The college has an archivist who is quite familiar with the history of the Campbell

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family and the early Restoration Movement. As we were discussing different particulars, I explained what my research was about. Then, even as we were talking, a thought came to me and I asked, "May I see Alexander Campbell's personal Bible—the one that he read from the most and carried with him?" "Yes, I think I can do that," she replied. I watched with great anticipation and excitement as this keeper of the archives unlocked a glass-door cabinet and removed a leather bound sacred volume. The book looked well worn like it had spent many a night in the hands of one who loved to peruse its pages. What a great way to start my research—knowing which translation this pioneer preacher used. I must have looked silly when I opened the pages and beheld the Holy Writ in Latin. My eyes met those of the librarian, and she smiled. "Thomas Campbell taught Alexander Latin at an early age," she replied, "and he learned to read the Bible first from this. This was his favorite Bible."

Campbell did have some definite ideas about the English Bible. This first became apparent shortly after he began publishing the *Christian Baptist* in 1823. About this time a series of articles appeared entitled "History of the English Bible," evidently designed to prepare the reader for a new translation of the Scriptures. The objections to the common version, which had often been made by intelligent students of the Scriptures, were prudently, but forcibly presented; certain imperfections were pointed out, and finally, proposals were issued for publishing a *New Translation*, which the editor endorsed as the best in the English language. Early in 1826, he published a new translation based on the works of Doctors George Campbell, James MacKnight and Philip Doddridge. The book was advertised in his paper and widely sold, eventually going through four editions. In his preface to the first edition Campbell wrote:

"A living language is continually changing. Like the fashions and customs in apparel, words and phrases, at one time current and fashionable, in the lapse of time become awkward and obsolete." "But this constant mutation in a living language, will probably render new translations, or corrections of old translations, necessary every two or three hundred years. For, although the English tongue may have changed less during the last two hundred years, than it ever did in the same lapse of time before; yet, the changes which have taken place since the reign of James I, do now render a new translation necessary. For, if the King's translators had given a translation every way faithful and correct, in the language then spoken in Britain; the changes

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in the English language which have since been introduced, would render that translation in many instances incorrect"²

This volume, which later became known as the *Living Oracles*, generally was received well, although there was some strong opposition. There is one account of a man who purchased and read a copy and then burned it.³ But then we have record of men like Elder John Smith who had memorized the greater part of the New Testament from the Authorized Version who "crased from the memory and the heart, for truth's sake, phrase after phrase of Holy Writ, . . . to train the ear and the tongue to unfamiliar texts."⁴ Writers up until the mid 1800's often would use the *Living Oracles* as their text. Barton Stone's autobiography quotes Colossians 2:8 from the *Living Oracles* on the title page.

Stone, himself, even before Campbell had published the *Living Oracles*, had expressed the need for a better translation than what was available. In his article "Observations on Church Government" he noted

Our present copy of the New Testament, is but a copy of a copy, &c. of a translation of a copy, &c. of what was written by the Apostles; and what they wrote was only a copy of the internal law. Learned men say that a great many errors have crept in by so much copying and translating; and if so, it must be the more necessary to have the original made manifest.

Indeed there were a number of translations which were available during this period. Following is a partial list of what early nineteenth century Christians had access to: Wycliffe, 1380; Tyndale, 1525; Coverdale, 1535; Matthews, 1537; Cranmer, 1539; Geneva, 1557; Bishops, 1568; Anglo-Rhemish, 1582; Authorized, 1611; Anthony Purver, 1764; David Macrae, 1799; Dr. John Bellamy, 1818; Noah Webster, 1833; James Duncan, 1836; James Murdock, 1851; also, Ainsworth, Doddridge, Macknight, Lowth, Blaney, and others had published new translations of parts of the sacred books in English.

Still there was unrest and dissatisfaction among the Disciples and the religious world in general. Religious leaders wanted a translation that was easily understandable to the common man. This gave way to the Bible Revision Association.

The Bible Revision Association first met in 1853 for the purpose of revising the King James Version of the Scriptures. The association was made up of leaders from nine different religious bodies, but it was leaders of the

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Restoration Movement who formed more than a third of its census. Names such as Alexander Campbell, Jacob Creath, W. K. Pendleton, Tolbert Fanning, P. S. Fall, Walter Scott, H. T. Anderson are recognized as being active leaders throughout the proceedings of the meetings. These brethren worked hard raising huge sums of money and devoting countless hours to this project. They had in mind a first-class translation that would be as true to the original languages as was possible. W. K. Pendleton, in his opening remarks to the second annual meeting said,

If I thought it would turn out to be a sectarian Bible, I would not by word or money, help to make it. We have such a one now, and that is one reason, why I want another . . . But if they are sincere and really want a translation free from all sectarian influence in its preparation, how can they be content with the common version!

While these words may sound strong, we need to recognize that neither Pendleton nor any of the Restorers were anti-King James. Within the text of his speech also we find,

Let no one suppose, however, that in the absence of all these means for correcting and restoring the original text, and without this improved and scientific apparatus for its interpretation, the Word of God was not still the saving truth of God, that it did not intelligently and convincingly present the gospel, as "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," whether Jew or Greek.

The Bible Revision Association's goal was to give this new or revised translation to the general public sometime in the decade of the 1850s. Different sections of the Bible were assigned to scholarly men for translation. As each man finished his work, it was submitted to the other members of the Association (which was later called the American Bible Union). Plans were made to have a committee of final revisers from the theological schools of the major universities of the world. (Particularly desirous were scholars from the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, and London). While the emphasis seems to have been on the New Testament, work was also being done on the Old Testament.

Alexander Campbell may have been the only Disciple that actually worked on the translating. His assignment was the Book of Acts, which he completed and published on his own in 1858. His translation is in the likeness of Macknight's work on the epistles, with three columns at the top of

the page showing the King James Version, the Greek text, and the new translation. The bottom of the page is abundant with notes which make it a valuable tool for any student of the Bible who wants to study Acts.

The project seemed to go slower than had been anticipated, but the interest remained high. Almost monthly, articles appeared in the *Millennial Harbinger* expressing the excitement of a new translation. However the articles abruptly stopped in October 1859; and then, in January of 1861 W. K. Pendleton penned a letter with a different tone from that of the previous decade. It appeared in the *Harbinger* simply entitled "The Bible Union." Briefly, here is what happened: The selection for the Final Revision Committee somehow was botched. For some reason the scholars from the European universities declined to work on the project. When this failed, instead of complying with the rules that had already been set, or reconvening the Bible Union members to discuss the matter, the selection committee appointed Professor T. J. Conant, D.D., of the Rochester Theological Seminary, and Professor H. B. Hackett, D.D., of the Newton Theological Seminary, to make the final revision. Professor Hackett, although he agreed to help, did not devote himself very much to the project. Thus the final revision actually fell in the lap of Professor Conant. This was not the man for such a monumental task. The Bible Union could have done better choosing men from among their own ranks. Conant was accused of turning the entire effort into his own translation and taking too many liberties as an editor because of his sectarian bias. The only evidence that I could find to verify this was a comparison of Campbell's translation of Acts with the American Bible Union translation. The charge appears to be justified. J. W. McGarvey later wrote,

Thus the boasted results of five years' labor, and of a vast expenditure of money, were all found to be worthless, and cast aside as that much money and labor lost. When, some two or three years later, the people were favored with specimens of revision from the final committee, they fell so far short of public expectation that thousands of the most ardent friends of the enterprise began to lose confidence in its ultimate success.⁵

Perhaps Paul's warning to the Corinthians should have been spoken to the brethren before they entered this association:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what

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concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God (2 Cor. 6:14-16).

Shortly after this, in 1865, brother H. T. Anderson published a translation of the New Testament. It was an attractively bound volume, with large, easy to read pages that were in paragraph form. The *Millennial Harbinger* and the *American Christian Review* each gave it glowing reviews. Moses Lard was not as impressed and gave it a very critical review in his quarterly. Looking back, the translation's popularity was short lived. Still, the brotherhood was crying out for a new translation. Moses Lard wrote,

Of all the necessities of this or any other age, the sublimest is a translation of the New Testament so pure and simple as to convey the truth to the humble, unlettered heart at once, and with no aid but itself.⁶

During the time that *Lard's Quarterly* was published, parts of the gospels were translated by some brother under the pseudonym of John. Lard himself translated the Book of Romans, which he includes in his commentary.

In 1902, another Bible translation came from the pen of one closely associated with the Restoration Movement in England. J. B. Rotherham produced *The Emphasized Bible*, which includes both Old and New Testaments. While this work has proven to be scholarly (it remains in print yet today), it does not meet the needs of the average reader of the Bible. Also, Rotherham was from England, and his translation did not receive wide circulation here in America.

It is not real clear how much influence the restorers may have had in bringing about the *Revised Version* of 1881. None of them were on the Revision Committee, but they had corresponded with many that were. When the *Revised Version* first came out, David Lipscomb listed the translators in the *Gospel Advocate*, in what could appear to be a recommendation. Many brethren embraced this translation and used it in their preaching. B. W. Johnson used this for the text in his *People's New Testament with Notes*. It is not uncommon to find brethren in the late nineteenth century quoting from the *Revised Version* in books and articles.

Pioneer preachers were progressive in seeking a better translation to facilitate the preaching of the gospel. In some instances, if there was not a standard English translation that conveyed the meaning of the Greek text

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in a way that could be understood to the listeners, the preachers would translate it themselves with no apologies. They sometimes quoted from more than one translation without making a distinction. When they reviewed a new translation, they did not compare it to the KJV, but rather to the Greek text. If they disagreed with how one verse was rendered, they did not condemn the entire translation.

I have learned much from the pioneer preachers from a century ago. *Rt. 6, Box 313 B, Fairmont, WV 26554*

End Notes

1. Heb. 2:10; 12:2, Moffatt Translation
2. **Living Oracles**
3. **Christian Baptist**, Vol. 4, p. 183
4. John A. Williams, **Life of Elder John Smith**, p. 176
5. **Lard's Quarterly**, Vol. 1, pp. 22
6. **Lard's Quarterly**, Vol. 2, pp. 181

Translations: Should We Insist on the King James Version Only?

by L. G. Butler

To "prove all things" is essential and noble. But for many people this may be a difficult, if not impossible task due to their limited reading ability. For years I, like others, have preached to audiences: "prove all things;" "search the scriptures to see whether those things are so." Some recent experiences have illustrated to me, however, that it is not safe to assume that all listeners have sufficient reading ability to do so. Some examples will illustrate. A few years ago a mother in her mid thirties brought her daughter to the Reading Lab which I direct for help with reading. After I explained how I felt we could help her daughter, the mother looked at me with tears welling in her eyes and asked, "Do you think you can help me learn to read?" On another occasion a thirty-five year old man came and said "I can't read. Can you help me? I want to be able to read to my six year old daughter." We did, and I shall never forget the joy he expressed when he read his first simple children's book to her. Another time I was getting onto a middle aged, fellow Christian pretty good for not studying his Bible more. He hesitated, then in sort of a broken voice said, "L. G., I can't read very well." I had known him for five or six years, and never knew. We just cannot assume, even among Christians, that all can read well enough to "search the scriptures" and "prove" as needed.

Moreover these are not just isolated cases. Research indicates that approximately 25 million American adults are functionally illiterate; that is, they lack sufficient reading ability to meet the demands of current society.¹ This represents about one out of every six Americans. We are talking about a major problem! But, while I am concerned about their ability to read, I am more concerned about their having access to the Word of God.

This concern, I learned from Brother Richard Bunner, was shared by the restoration preachers in the early 1800s. Many of them argued that new translations were needed so the common people of their day could be able to read God's Word with understanding. It is almost ironic that there are more than twice as many functionally illiterate adults in the United States today than the entire population of the United States in 1820 when the restoration preachers were making their plea on behalf of those who had limited reading ability.

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But do these "common people" who cannot read or cannot read well want to read the Bible? The data indicate yes. In fact many people who sign up for adult literacy programs indicate they do so in order to read the Bible.²

Readability and test normative test data indicate that about 4-5% of college graduates (1 out of 20) and 9% (or 1 of 11) high school graduates would have difficulty reading the King James Version of the Bible with understanding. This is of major concern to me that millions of persons in the world cannot gain access to the word of God, "the bread of life."

Three options appear to be available. We can get easier to read material, easier to read translations. Or, we can help increase the reading level of people to match the difficulty level of the material through adult literacy programs to teach those to read. In fact, the primary reason that schools were founded in the colonial period of the United States was to teach the citizens to read so they could read the Bible.³ A third option is just to say "The King James Bible does not seem all that hard to me; this is no problem of mine." I am concerned that we cannot let it go at that.

We are at a pivotal point. Speakers in many congregations are changing translations whether we want to or not. I see many speakers using various translations: the Amplified, the New King James, the American Standard Version, the New International Version, and the Revised Standard. Bible sales also indicate a change. The New International Version is quite popular. Statistics from an evangelical group indicate that this fall for the first time in the history of this country that any other version of the bible has ever out sold the KJV. The NIV is outselling the KJV this 1990 Christmas season. That tells us something. We cannot ignore this important topic.

I have difficulty dealing with this topic, however. Let me illustrate. There is an intellectual side of this topic and an emotional side. The intellectual side of me tells me that we need to change to a more readable version, and to do so quickly. The emotional side says, hold back. I find it not easy to change. When the back came off of the KJV Bible I have used for over thirty years, I elected to have it rebound. It is familiar. For me this is not an easy task.

Using more than one translation/version in the worship service can cause a lot of confusion and make it difficult for people to follow along in the reading and to "prove all things." Recently I read from another version during a chapter study. As I announced the chapter and started to read, I observed many persons in the audience reach for a pew Bible (which is KJV). Not long after starting to read from the other version, many people

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started to look confused, then closed their bibles, and leaned back. In a business meeting one of the brethren asked "I wonder if we are going to read from one of the other translations should not we have copies of that translation for the audience to be able to follow along?" That is a compelling argument to me. This situation is not good. The big question is which version do you get? I do not have an answer to this one yet. First, we have to decide whether we are going to change to another version; then, we must decide which version.

My thesis today is that we need to make a change from the KJV for a number of reasons to be noted later. I am perplexed, however, as to what to change to, even after an intensive study of this topic for the past several months.

This is a very sensitive topic. After the topic of this presentation was announced I have received phone calls arguing for staying with the KJV, with strong feelings being expressed. In fact, what I have to say may press a "red button" for some of you. By that I mean cause negative reactions. I just appeal to you to be open minded and examine the evidence. Then, "prove all things."

The primary reason we have the Bible in written form (like other written material) is because people have a tough time remembering things that are heard. We tend to get things confused; so we write them down. But once written there is a lot more permanence to the ideas. In view of this fact a lot of prayer and thought have gone into preparing these materials. Like Tyndall put in the preface of his translation, if you find anything that is not right, let me know. This is also my plea. If I know my heart, and I think I do, there is nothing more that I want to do than to please God. In dealing with this topic I feel like I am treading on ground where angels fear to tread. I tell you; I have prayed much about this. I solicit your prayers as we examine a very, very important topic. What we are dealing with is how we define or identify or "north star"; where we get our bearings. What is really valid, true? For when we "prove all things" we must have something that we can rely on, have confidence in it that it is true-on which we can anchor our souls.

Let us now examine the reasons some people insist on using only the King James Version, why we should consider some other version, and review the evidence in relationship to this crucially important topic. We are dealing with issues that affect peoples' souls. On the one hand it needs to be readable, but it also needs to be doctrinally sound. The thing that scares me right now is that I see other translations that are being used because they

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are more readable, but are not safe. I am afraid that some people are getting materials primarily because they are easier to read without adequate thought to their doctrinal soundness. And in the final analysis many people are going to change to others no matter what we do. It concerns me, however, that we may select a bad version by default. And that is scary. Included in this study are some guidelines for selecting a translation/version.

Why Some People Insist on the KJV Only

For many people the KJV is "The" Bible, the Word of God or truth. Hence, anything else is seen as "not truth." Like Timothy they have heard it from childhood. It just rings in our ears. The KJV is an outstanding translation. It has a majestic quality about the language. It inspires readers. It has been unequalled over the years. This is why it has stood for over 379 years. So, for many people it is "The Bible."

Many people hold to it because of tradition. As has been pointed out earlier today not all traditions are bad. Tradition means something that has been handed down. Traditions can be either good or bad. Many people have used it all their life. Anything else sounds unfamiliar. The problem with this reason is that persons have not really examined the issue carefully to determine the soundness of the reasons. Doing something just because that is what we have always done does not make it either right or wrong.

Some people hold to the KJV because they have responded to what we have preached, but have mistakenly applied it. We have taught: "Do not add to nor take from" the Word of God. A warning that is worth hearing: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8-9)⁴ So if any thing does not sound "right", does not ring true or does not sound like what I know in my Bible or if it does not look like my bible, that is, the version I am accustomed to using. I remind us that "wolves in sheep's clothing look mostly like sheep. It is only when we see what might look like a tail, a paw instead of a hoof, one is alerted that something may be amiss. So any time there is any variance in the wording it may be viewed as error, although it may be saying the same thing; just worded a little differently.

Others consider it to be the only "Authorized" version. Indeed the KJV is referred to as the "Authorized Version." This is printed in many Bibles. However, there appears to be no evidence that it was ever officially

"authorized" by anybody.⁵ It appears that the printers put this on it because it sells. King James indeed commissioned the translation, but there is no evidence that this version is any more authorized than any other translation.

Other arguments for the KJV include: It has stood the test of time—379 years and is still popular. We owe much of our spiritual heritage to the KJV. It has worked well in converting thousands; and indeed it has. This could also have been said of earlier translations/versions prior to the KJV (e.g. Latin Vulgate, Septuagint). Some people believe it to be from a better Greek text (The Received Text) than many of the more recent versions. This is an area that I believe we really need to study. Some of our brethren are doing some work in that area. My topic does not deal with textual criticism, and I am not prepared to pursue that issue today. But this is an important issue. For it appears sufficient now to note that all translations are not from the same Greek text. The American Bible Society Chart⁶ shows various translations from the Greek and Hebrew. It may appear from the chart that these may be from the same text but they are not.⁷ Indeed, many of the New Testament translations were from the Greek language, but they were from at least three or four Greek texts.⁸ We have no original Greek manuscripts of the Bible, only copies.⁹

Some people feel that the KJV uses more reverent language (e.g., thee, thou in reference to God). There is no evidence that "thee" and "thou" were any more reverent in 1611 or in Bible times than other pronouns such as "he" or "you."

Some say, "Why Change? I do not have any trouble understanding it." This is to ignore some information we noted earlier about the difficulty the KJV presents to persons with low reading ability. Others are not changing because of expedience. Some feel we should change, but do not want to offend others. Others feel we should change, but have not found an acceptable alternative. I am at that point right now. I feel we should change, but I have not found a version that is acceptable, yet.

Why Some People Insist on Using Other Versions

They find the other translations much easier to understand. There is a scriptural basis for being concerned about ease of reading, that is understanding. Note Paul's instruction to the Christians in Corinth. It is true that he is not talking about translations, but he is talking about communicating in the church. "So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air."¹⁰ Note—"utter words easy to be understood." In the early

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church there were people endowed with a gift to be able to “interpret.” We have talked a lot about tongues over the years, the ability to speak to people in their own language. We know very well on the day of Pentacost when the apostles stood up to speak, the people later asked, “And how hear we every man in our own tongue, whercin we were born?”¹¹ This has been a theme throughout time. I am not unaware of the fact that Peter said of Paul: “As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some¹² things hard to be understood . . .”¹³ It is instructive to note however that it says “some” and not “all.” The thesis is that generally words easy to be understood. And in every case, if it be hard to be understood, there were put into the church individuals whose responsibility it was to interpret.¹⁴ It may be for dealing with hard words or foreign language. They were to translate the message so that everyone would be edified.¹⁵ Therefore, we have biblical reasons for making communications so that the people can understand—“easy to understand.”

Language Change

Language change has made the King James Version no longer easy for the common person to understand. Sometimes I hear persons say that mistakes were made in the KJV translation, because some words mean this or that-i.e. redefining words in the KJV. In 1611 some words had a different meaning than they do today. It is important to note that some of the problems today are due to the fact that the language has changed and not that a bad translation was made in 1611. It is important to note that in 1611 the King James Version was a very good translation. It is not that it was a bad translation. The translators of the King James Version all of whom were prominent scholars, including deans and professors of Greek and Hebrew at Cambridge and Oxford Universities, recognized the fact that language changed. This is noted in the preface to the original King James translation. Note their words:

But it is high time to leave them, and to shew in brief what we proposed to ourselves, and what course we held in this our perusall and survey of the Bible. Truely (good Christian Reader) we never thought from the beginning, that we should need to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good . . . but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principall good one, not justly to be excepted against; that hath been our endeavour, that our mark.¹⁶

Translations (2)

They also stated: "But how shall men meditate in that, which they cannot understand?"¹⁷ Further,

Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernell; that putteth aside the curtain, that we may look into the most holy place; that removeth the cover of the well, that we may come by the water, even as Jacob rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well, by which means the flocks of Laban were watered. Indeed without translation into the vulgar¹⁸ tongue, the unlearned are but like children at Jacobs well (which was deep) without a bucket, or something to draw with: or as that person mentioned by Esay, to whom when a sealed book was delivered, with this motion. Read this, I pray thee, he was fain to make this answer, I cannot, for it is sealed.¹⁹

This was printed in every copy of the original King James Bible. It has long since been removed from most copies of King James Version bible.

Through the years many people have seen the need for translating the Bible into the language of the common people of their day. Let us examine this from a historical perspective. See Appendix A for the Time Line: Language Change, Bible Translations, and the Common Man. Let us start from today and move backwards on the chart. It is important to keep in mind while examining this evidence that "the word of God endureth forever."²⁰ Some people have problems thinking that if a translation is made that it is actually changing the word of God. In fact, some people have the mistaken notion that the apostles must have used the King James Version, not realizing that the KJV did not come into existence until nearly 1600 years after the apostles lived. On the chart note the center reference point of B.C./A.D. Let us begin in 1990 and follow the bottom line for the KJV to note how little a distance back in history it goes. Note at the bottom of the table that the KJV only goes back to 1611. There are centuries prior to that during which no person, including the apostles could have had access to the KJV. There were English translations prior to 1611 as are noted on the chart going back to as early as A.D. 1380.²¹ In fact, prior to about A.D. 449—four hundred years after Christ lived—there was not even the English language much less a translation of the Bible into English. We are so culture bound!

It is important for us to view the use of English language in a proper perspective. Because English is so prominent today we may be seduced into thinking, mistakenly that it has always been so prominent. For example,

Translations (2)

English is spoken all over the world today. There are more copies of the Oxford English Dictionary sold in Japan than in the United States; and there are more people in China studying English than the total population of the United States today. With the prominence that the English language occupies today it would be easy for us to think that this may have always been the case, but it is not. As one follows the chart, it may be noted that prior to A.D. 449 there was no English language, instead the language of the common people was primarily Latin. And prior to Latin, Greek was the language of the common people, dating back to the 1400s B.C. And prior to it Hebrew was the language of the common people.

Note on the time line going from left to right that God has spoken to His people from the very beginning using the language of the common people. He spoke to Abraham and others nearly 2000 years B.C. using their language, Hebrew. For several years Hebrew was their primary language until after the Babylonian captivity. When the Israelites, God's people, were dispersed throughout the world, the language of the common people was primarily Greek. The Greeks had gained primary control throughout the world; God was setting the stage for the coming of Christ. As may be noted, the Greek language had developed by around 1400 B.C. By around the third century BC the Jewish people were speaking Greek primarily. This is the way language works; we learn the language of the people around whom we work. There developed a need for people to have a Bible in the language of the common people. The Septuagint translation of the Old Testament was made from Hebrew into Greek language. The primary reason for this translation was so that God's Word could be read by the common person. The Greek language was the universal language at the time of Christ, and that is what they preached in, and I understand that New Testament quotations of the Old Testament were in the Greek, although the original was in Hebrew. This provides evidence that the Word of God is not in any particular language or particular word. The Word of God is ideas, His will. It does not matter the language. But it was brought over into Greek from Hebrew. As is illustrated on the time line, the Greek language lost its prominence with the rise of the Roman Empire. Latin became the primary language of use. By around A.D. 150 there was a need again to translate God's Word into other languages. They translated it into Coptic, which is an Egyptian language; they translated it into Old Latin. And by around A.D. 300 there was a great need for another translation because most people could not read the Greek Bibles. Jerome was commissioned to refine the Old Latin Bible, and the Latin Vulgate was developed. I had heard of the Latin Vulgate all of my life, but one day I thought "Vulgate" sounds an awful lot like "vulgar"; I wonder if they are related. Sure enough, they are both from the Latin

Translations (2)

word **vulgaris** which means "of the mob, vulgar, fr. **volgus** mob, common people"²² Vulgar, used to mean common or of the masses, rather than "filthy" as it does today. Thus, Vulgate was a bible for the common people, or masses, hence the name "vulgate." It is no longer in the language of the common people of today, but it was at that time. It appears to be instructive to note that about 300 years after the Latin Vulgate was translated, peoples' language changed and it got so that only the preachers and the clerics (who were generally well educated people) could read it, but not the common people. The priests said "trust me; trust me." You know what happened in the A.D. 600s: the rise of the papacy, the first pope and the Roman Catholic Church. This appears to be instructive. When the common people cannot get access to (i.e. read with understanding) the Bible, they can be controlled by others. The church went into the dark ages. After a number of years, some preachers were beginning to argue that they needed to have the Word of God so the common people can understand it. Some preachers, the priests-mostly Catholic-were writing in the margins of the Latin Bibles the Anglo-Saxon translation.²³ In effect they were making an interlinear.

To illustrate the degree of language change, see Appendix B for a reprint of how the Bible looked in A.D. 950. The bottom line is Latin and the top is the English translation.²⁴

By 1384, the Wycliffite Bible (C) is somewhat easier to read, but still illustrates how much the English language has changed since then. By comparing it to the Lindisfarne Gospels, C. 950 one can see how much change can occur in approximately four hundred years. As may be seen in Tyndale's translation, it is getting easier still. Not only did the visual printing change, but its sound (pronunciation) changed, too.²⁵

I do not know whether English language will change as much in the future as it has changed in the past. The point is this: language is changing; we cannot change this. Instead we must address it.

As may be seen on Appendix C (Time Line: Bible Translations, English Language and Church History), many translations came out at about the time of major historical movements. Note on the time line all of the events that occurred during the reformation period starting in the 1400s. Note in the right hand column of the time line the first printed book: Gutenberg Bible, England Breaks with Rome (1534), Tyndale's translation (1535), in 1534 Henry VIII, then the Great Bible (1539), incidentally the Geneva Bible was the one used by the Puritans in contrast to the Bishop's Bible. I understand the Pilgrims brought the Geneva Bible to Plymouth Colony, America in 1620.

Translations (2)

Effects of Language Change on the KJV

Let us examine some examples of potential sources of reading problems due to 379 years of language change.

Words

The following are examples of words used in the KJV which are no longer in current use. Many people would likely have difficulty reading these with understanding. For example: chapt, habergeon, stacte, wimples, ouches, ambassage, needed.²⁶ See Appendix D for other examples.

Sentences

Consider examples of sentences which may be extremely difficult if not impossible for many readers to understand. "The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour" (Job 36:33). "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia" (2 Cor. 8:1). For other examples see Appendix D.

Familiar Words, But Different Meanings

But perhaps of more concern are words that are still in use today but had different meanings in 1611 when used in the KJV. This appears to be the most scary area of all. When it says "fetched a compass," I know I do not know what that means. But when it says nephews I may say I know what nephews are, but not realize that the word "nephews" in 1611 was used to refer to "grandchildren, nephews or other descendants."^{27 28} For other examples see Appendix D.

As may be seen in the "Comparison of various translations of selected KJV terms" in Appendix E, some of the other translations make it much clearer, easier to understand. Wisdom requires that we consider some alternatives to the KJV.

All of these examples suggest that the KJV may present many comprehension problems for twentieth century readers. As has been noted historically, when language has changed, making it difficult for the common man to be able to read it with relative ease new translations have been made. It is suggested therefore that a new translation is needed. But the big issue is what translation. As may be noted in Appendix F, there are numerous English translations available. From among all of these translations, how does one select one or more that may be safely used for Bible study?²⁹ To assist in such a selection process, I have developed some guidelines for selecting a Bible translation (see Appendix H). It appears extremely impor-

tant to keep in mind that doctrinal soundness is more important than readability, but this is not to take away from the importance of readability. May God help us in this crucially important endeavor.

Summary and Conclusion

Jesus has assured that His "words shall not pass away" (Mk. 13:31) even when people hear them in the tongue wherein they were born (Acts 2:8). But the challenge for the future is to make sure that God's Word always is spoken in "words easy to be understood" (1 Cor. 14:9) lest his message be lost. Language change requires new translations. If we are wise, we will not wait too long. As the wise man, Solomon, has said: "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov. 29:18).

End Notes

- 1 Kozol, Jonathan. **Illiterate America**. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1985.
- 2 Jonathan Kozal in a speech delivered at Texas Tech University, 1989.
- 3 Smith, Nila Banton. **American Reading Instruction**. Newark, DL: International Reading Association. 1965, 1986. One chapter discusses the role of religion and the Bible in reading instruction in the United States.
- 4 See also Revelation 22:18-19; Galatians 1:6-9; 2 John 9; 1 Peter 1:21.
- 5 Opfell, Olga S. **The King James Bible Translators**. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1982.
- 6 American Bible Society. **A Ready-Reference History of the English Bible** (1971 Revision). New York: American Bible Society, 1971.
- 7 Bruce, F. F. **History of the Bible in English** (Third edition). New York: Oxford University Press, 1978. Also, Lightfoot, Neil R. **How We Got the Bible** (Revised edition). Abilene, TX: A.C.U. Press, 1986. An excellent introductory work on this topic.
- 8 op cit.
- 9 op cit.
- 10 1 Cor. 14:9
- 11 Acts 2:8

Translations (2)

- 12 italics mine, LGB.
- 13 "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:16).
- 14 1 Cor. 14:27-28
- 15 1 Cor. 14:5, 26
- 16 Preface to the KJV: "Translators to the Reader" in Opfell, Olga S. *The King James Bible Translators*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1982, p. 157.
- 17 op cit., p. 147.
- 18 In 1611 vulgar meant common or of the masses.
- 19 Opfel, op cit, p. 148.
- 20 "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:25).
- 21 Wycliffe Translation.
- 22 **Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary**, G. & C. Merriam Company, 1976, p. 1314.
- 23 Lightfoot, Neil R. **How We Got the Bible** (Revised edition). Abilene, TX: A.C.U. Press, 1986. An excellent introductory work on this topic.
- 24 American Bible Society. **A Ready-Reference History of the English Bible**. (1971 Revision). New York: American Bible Society, 1971, p. 38.
- 25 The reader is referred to an audiotape, "A Word in Your Ear" for what scholars believe to be the way the Lord's Prayer sounded between A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1300.
- 26 From Lewis, Jack P. **The English Bible From KJV To NIV: A History and Evaluation**. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981, 1982, p. 55. [Young's or Strong's concordances may be used to locate verses in which these words are used.]
- 27 Burchfield, Robert W. **The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary**. Oxford University Press, 1971. The Oxford English Dic-

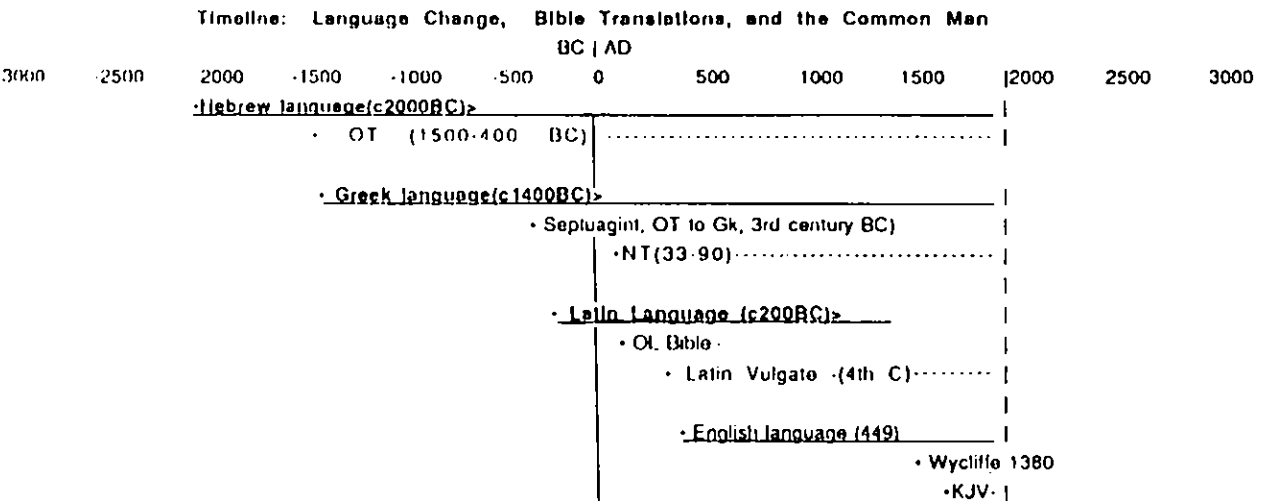
Translations (2)

tionary, First edition, together with the Supplements and the Second Edition (20 volumes) published in 1989, are outstanding sources of information regarding the meanings of English words during various periods. This is an excellent reference for checking meanings of words as they were commonly used in 1611. It is expensive. Many, if not most, public or university libraries have it. **Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Words**.

- 28 Oxford English Dictionary provides the meanings of words in different periods of history.
- 29 In view of the current state of affairs, it appears wise to consult multiple versions. By making comparisons, and then using appropriate references, we will more likely arrive at God's intended message. Parallel Bibles, such as the **Comparative Study Bible** (Zondervan), which uses the KJV as the base, are highly recommended.

Translations (2)

Appendix A: Timeline—Language Change, Bible Translations, and the Common Man



The OT was originally written in the language of the people of that time, Hebrew and Aramaic
Septuagint-translation of the OT from Hebrew into Greek, the language of the common people of the day
The NT was originally written in Koine' Greek, the universal language of the Roman Empire at that time.
As the gospel spread through out the world the NT was translated into other languages

Coptic-common language of Egypt
Syriac-

As the Greek language diminished and Latin gained prominence

NT was translated into Latin. First into OL and in mid 4th century AD Jerome, Latin Vulgate.
(Vulgate is from L vulgaris, mob, common man)

As English gained prominence, the Word of God was translated into the English language.

Wycliffe made first c 1384 from the Latin Vulgate, Tyndale made the first from original languages, 1526-30

As can be seen God's word has been in English a very short time, in comparison to other languages.

It can be observed that due to language change other translations are required periodically, in order to keep God's word in the tongue of common people.

Developed by L. G. Butler, 4503 53rd Street, Lubbock, TX 79414
December, 1990

Translations (2)

Appendix B: The Lord's Prayer in the Historic English Versions

Lindisfarne Gospels, C. 950

From *The Lindisfarne and Rushworth Gospels*
Surttees Society, London, 1864. See p. 3

fader gehalgad sie noma ðin tocymæð
Pater scificetur nomen tuum, adveniat
ric ðin
regnum tuum,

hlaf userne dægubæmlice sel us eghuec
panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis

dæge
cotidie,

Ʒ f̃gef us synna usra gif faestlice æc
et dimitte nobis peccata nostra siquidem

Ʒe f̃gefæs eghuec scyldge us
et ipsi dimitimus omni debenti nobis,

Ʒ ne usic onlæd ðu in costunge
et ne nos iuducas in temptationem

Wycliffite Bible, C. 1384

The earliest version, reprinted from the text
edited by Forshall and Madden. Oxford,
1850

Fadir, halewid be thi name. Thi kyngdom
come to. 3yue to vs to day oure eche
dayes breed. And for 3yue to vs oure
synnes, as and we for 3yuen to ech owynge
to vs. And leed not vs in to temptacioun.

Tyndale New Testament, 1525

Reprinted from a facsimile of the Bristol copy.
See p. 7

Oure father which arte in heuē, halowed
be thy name. Lett thy kyngdō come.
Thy wil be fulfilled, even in erth as it is in
heven. Oure dayly breed geve us this
daye. And forgeve vs oure synnes: For
even we forgeve every man that tras-
paseth vs; and ledde vs not into tempta-
ciō, Butt deliver vs from evyl. Amen.

Coverdale Bible, 1535

O oure father which art in heauen, hal-
owed be thy name. Thy kyngdome come.
Thy wil be fulfilled upon earth, as it is in
heauen. Geue vs this daye oure daylie
bred. And forgeue vs oure synnes, for we
also forgeue all them that are detters
unto vs. And lede vs not in to tempta-
cion, but delyuer vs from euell.

Great Bible, 1539

O oure father which art i heauen, halowed
be thy name. Thy kyngdome come. Thy
will be fulfilled, euē in erth also as it is
in heauē. Oure dayly breed geue vs thys
daye. And forgeue vs our synnes: For
euē we forgeue euery man that treas-
paseth vs. And Leade vs not ito temp-
tacyon. But delyuer vs from euyl.

Geneva Bible, 1560

- 2 Our Father, w^e art in heauē, halowed
be thy Name: Thy kingdome come:
Let thy wil be done euē in earth, as it
is in heauen:
- 3 Our daily bread giue vs for the day:
- 4 And forgiue vs our sinnes: for euen
we forgiue euerie man that is indetted
to vs: And lead vs not into temptation:
but deliuer vs from euil.

Bishops' Bible, 1568

- 2 O our father which art in heauen,
halowed be thy name, thy kyngdome
come, thy wyll be fulfilled, euen in
earth also, as it is in heauen.
- 3 Our daily breade geue vs this day.
- 4 And forgeue vs our synnes: For
euen we forgeue euery man that
trespaseth vs. And leade vs not into
temptation, but delyuer vs from euyl.

— Reproduced by permission of American Bible Society

Translations (2)

Appendix D: Potential Sources of Reading Problems Due to 379 Years of Language Change

Obsolete Words in KJV

almug, algum, charashim, chapt, earing, gat, habergeon, hosen, ligure, leasing, maranatha, nard, neesing, pate, pilled, rabboni, raca, ring-straked, stacte, strake, sycamye, trode, wimples, ouches, brigandine, ambassage, occurrent, purtenance, bruit, fray, cracknels, mufflers, anathema, corban, talitha cumi, cphrata, aceldama, centurion, quarternion, delectable, carriage, let, pityful (for full of pity), wot, trow, sod, and swaddling clothes.

Sentences from the KJV : "Easy to understand?"

Job 36:33 "The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour."

2 Cor. 8:1 "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia."

1 Cor. 4:4 "For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord."

2 Cor. 6:12 "Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels."

2 Cor. 10:16 "To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand."

Eccl. 12:11 "The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd."

1 Cor. 8:7 "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: 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."

Ex. 19:18 "And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly."

Psa. 5:6 "Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man."

1 Kgs. 11:1 "But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites."

Translations (2)

Job 36:33 "The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour."

Isa. 31:1 "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!"

Ezek. 27:25 "The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas."

Lk. 17:9 "Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not."

In. 15:2 "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

Ecc. 12:11 "The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd."

1 Cor. 8:7 "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: 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."

Words Still in use Today but with Different Meanings than in 1611.

(Numerous other examples may be found in Lewis, pp. 55-58, 343-347)

Mean

Prov. 22:29 "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before *mean* men." (common men "that which is in the middle," **Oxford English Dictionary**)

Man / Men

Mt. 5:13 "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of *men*." ("A human being, irrespective of sex or age; = L. homo in OE," **Oxford English Dictionary**)

Peculiar

1 Pet. 2:9 "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a *peculiar* people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (that which belongs to one person)

Translations (2)

Carriage

Acts 21:15 "And after those days we took up our *carriages*, and went up to Jerusalem." (that which is carried, *Oxford English Dictionary*)

Nephews

1 Tim. 5:4 "But if any widow have children or *nephews*, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God." (grandchildren, nephews or other descendants, *Oxford English Dictionary*, the meaning of the Greek word, Vine, p. 171.)

Suffer

1 Cor. 10:13 "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not *suffer* you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (permit)

Meat

Lev. 14:10 "And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour for a *meat* offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil." (meant food in 1611)

Corn

In. 12:24 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a *corn* of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (In 1611, corn meant "kernel or grain," clarifies the "corn of wheat")

Quit

1 Cor. 16:13 "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, *quit* you like men, be strong." (to do ones part, behave, bear oneself, usually in a specific way *Oxford English Dictionary*. Same meaning in Vines)

Spelling of Proper Names in KJV Different in NT from OT

Boaz—Ruth 4:13 • Booz—Luk 3:32 • Boos (in 1611 edition)

Elijah—2 Ki 1:3 • Elias—Matt 27:47

Isaiah—Isa 40:3 • Esaias—Mat 3:3

Jeremiah—Jer 31:15 • Jeremy—Mat 2:1 • Jeremias—Mat 16:14

Judah—Gen 35:23 • Judas—Mat 1:2

Judah—Mic 5:2 • Juda—Mat 2:6 • Judaca—Luk 2:4

Translations (2)

Jonah—Jonah 1:17 • Jonas—Mat 12:40
Mahalaleel—Gen 5:12 • Malcleel—Luk 3:37
Methuselah—Gen 5:22 • Mathusala—Luk 3:37
Noah—Gen 5:30 • Noe—Luk 3:36 • Noah—Heb 11:7
Passover—Ex 12:11-48 • Easter—Acts 12:4 (Young's)
Sarah—Gen 17:15 • Sara—Heb 11:1 • Sarah—Rom 9:9
Shem—Gen 5:32 • Sem—Luk 3:36
Uriah—2 Sam 11:3 • Urias—Mat 1:6
Zion—Isa 28:16 • Sion—Heb 12:22; 1 Pe 2:6

Notes

- 1 From Lewis, Jack P. **The English Bible From KJV To NIV: A History and Evaluation**. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981, p. 55.
- 2 "So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air" (1 Cor. 14:9). It is important to keep in mind that this is not a criticism of the Word of God nor the KJV; instead it is to note that this particular translation of it may no longer be "easy to understand."
- 3 Lewis, op cit., pp. 53-54.
- 4 Burchfield, Robert W. **The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary**. Oxford University Press, 1971. The Oxford English Dictionary, First edition, together with the Supplements and the Second Edition (20 volumes) published in 1989, are outstanding sources of information regarding the meanings of English words during various periods. This is an excellent reference for checking meanings of words as they were commonly used in 1611, as well as other periods. It is expensive. May be found in many public or university libraries.
- 5 Vaughn, Curtis (general editor). **The Bible from 26 Translations**. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House (for 1 Tim. 2:15), p. 2424. This appears to be an excellent tool for alerting the reader to possible language change which may cause readers to misunderstand the KJV. It could then send the reader to other authoritative sources such as Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Words or The Oxford English Dictionary among others for clarification or verification of meanings.

Translations (2)

Appendix E: Comparison of Various Translations of Selected KJV Terms

Term	KJV	NIV	NCV	NKJV
filthy lucre (Tit. 1:11)	"teaching things they ought not for filthy lucre's sake"	"teaching things they ought not to teach—and that for dishonest gain"	"teaching things that they should not teach. They teach them only to cheat people and make money"	"teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain"
firkins (Jn. 2:6)	"containing two or three firkins apiece"	"each holding twenty to thirty gallons"	"each jar held about 20 or 30 gallons"	"containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece"
propitiation (1 Jn. 2:2)	"and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world"	"he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world"	"Jesus is the way our sins are taken away. And Jesus is the way that all people can have their sins taken away, too"	"and He himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for our's only but also for the whole world"

Note: KJV = King James Version (1611); NIV = New International Version (1978); NCV = New Century Version (1987); NKJV = New King James Version (1982); NRSV = New Revised Standard Version (1989)

Translations (2)

Appendix F: Chronological List of Bible Translations/Versions

English Versions/Translations

- 700 Anglo-Saxon Paraphrases by John Bede (?)
- 1384 Wycliffe (from Latin Vulgate) (c1384)
- 1535 Coverdale's Bible
- 1526 Tyndale's NT (1526) & Pentateuch (1530)
- 1537 Matthew's Bible
- 1539 Taverner's Bible
- 1539 The Great Bible
- 1557 Whittenham New Testament
- 1560 The Geneva Bible
- 1568 The Bishop's Bible
- 1582 The Rheims New Testament; English College at Rheims
- 1609 The Douai Old Testament (1609-1610)
- 1611 King James Version (KJV), also called Authorized Version
- 1749 Challoner's Revision (1749-1750)
- 1772 Douai Revision
- 1796 Four Gospels by George Campbell
- 1818 New Testament Translation by George Campbell, Doddridge and (James?) Macknight.
- 1826 Campbell. The Sacred Writing of the Apostles and Evangelists of Jesus Christ, Commonly Styled The New Testament. Modification of an earlier translation by George Campbell, Doddridge and Macknight. Improvements by Alexander Campbell.
- 1862 Young's Translation. Literal Translation of the Bible by Robert Young, author of Young's Concordance.
- 1867 Smith's Holy Scriptures by Joseph Smith (Mormon) It is now popularly referred to as Inspired Version.
- 1869 Alford's New Testament
- 1876 Smith's Bible by Julia E. Smith Parker. literal translation
- 1881 The English Revised Version (OT, 1885)
- 1900 Hayman's Epistles
- 1901 American Standard Version
- 1901 Modern American Bible
- 1901 Moffatt's Historical New Testament
- 1901 Way's Letters. The Letters of St. Paul to Seven Churches and Three Friends (WL). By Arthur S. Way. Revised to include Hebrews, 1906.
- 1901 Young People's Bible
- 1902 Emphasized Bible by Joseph Bryant Rotherham.
- 1902 Godbey's New Testament (date uncertain)

Translations (2)

- 1902 **Twentieth Century New Testament** (WH text)
1903 **Fenton's Bible in Modern English**
1903 **Weymouth Modern Speech New Testament**
1904 **Worrell's New Testament**
1905 **Lloyd's New Testament**
1906 **Forster—St. John, Epistles and Revelation** by Henry Langstaff Forster.
1907 **Bourne's Gospels** by A. E. Bourne
1907 **Moulton's Modern Reader's Bible** by Richard G. Moulton
1908 **Rutherford's Epistles** by W. G. Rutherford
1909 **The Bible in Modern English**
1909 **Weaver New Testament** by S. Townsend Weaver
1910 **Cunard's revision of St. Matthew's Gospel**
1912 **Improved Bible Union Version** by American Baptist Publication Society
1913 **Moffatt Bible**
1914 **Cunnington's New Testament** by E. E. Cunnington
1914 **Numeric New Testament**. "From Greek text as established by Bible Numerics." Edited by Ivan Panin
1916 **McFadyen—Psalms in Modern Speech and Rhythmical Form** by John Edgar McFadyen
1917 **Jewish Publication Society Bible**
1918 **Anderson New Testament from Sinaitica Manuscript** by H. T. Anderson
1919 **The Messages of the Bible**. Edited by Frank K. Sanders and Charles F. Kent. Free rendering in paraphrase.
1921 **Pym: Mark's Account of Jesus in Common Speech** by T. W. Pym
1921 **Shorter Bible** by Charles Foster Kent, et al; omits about 66% of OT and 33% of NT.
1922 **Plainer Bible for Plain People in Plain American** by Chaplain Frank Schell Ballentine.
1923 **The Riverside New Testament** by William G. Ballantine
1923 **Robertson's Translation of Luke's Gospel** by A. T. Robertson
1923 **Smith-Goodspeed Bible**
1924 **Centenary New Testament**
1924 **Labor Determinative Version** by Determinative Revision Committee. "revised for the recovery of Biblical labor standards."
1924 **Montgomery's Centenary New Testament** by Helen Barret Montgomery
1925 **Askwith's Psalms (Book IV and V)** by E. H. Askwith

Translations (2)

- 1925 **Children's Bible.** Selections from OT & NT translated and arranged by Henry A. Gherman and Charles Foster Kent.
- 1925 **People's New Covenant** by Arthur E. Overbury. Based on Mary Baker Eddy premises.
- 1926 **Moffatt's Translation of the Bible** by James Moffatt. (revised in 1935)
- 1927 **Kent's Student's Old Testament.** Logically and chronologically arranged and translated by Charles Foster Kent.
- 1927 **Smith-Goodspeed.** OT by J. M. Powis Smith (1927) and NT (1923) by Edgar J. Goodspeed. Revised 1935. Reprinted with Apocrypha (1938), 1939.
- 1928 **Christian's Bible—New Testament** by George Le Fevre
- 1928 **Czarnomska Version** edited by Elizabeth Czarnomska
- 1928 **Spiritualist's Matthew** by J. W. Potter
- 1929 **Gowen's Psalms** by Herbert H. Gown
- 1930 **Loux' Mark** by DuBois H. Loux
- 1931 **Wale's Psalms** by Frank H. Wales
- 1932 **Chaplain Ballentine** translation and rearrangement to read as a modern novel, by Chaplain [Frank Schell] Ballentine.
- 1932 **Kleist's Memoirs of St. Peter (Gospel of Mark)** by James A. Kleist.
- 1933 **Torrey's Four Gospels** by Charles Cutler Torrey, "to show that Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John were composed in Aramaic."
- 1934 **Old Testament in Colloquial English.** "Listed in E. H. Robertson's *The New Translation of the Bible.*"
- 1934 **Royds' Epistles and Gospels** by Thomas Fletcher Royds
- 1934 **Wade. The Documents of the New Testament** by G. W. Wade. From WH text.
- 1935 **Westminster Version of the Sacred Scriptures** by English Roman Catholic scholars under the editorship of Cuthbert Lattey, S. J. Not an "official" translation.
- 1937 **Cornish's St. Paul from the Trenches.** Of 1 & 2 Corinthians and part of Ephesians by Gerald Warre Cornish.
- 1937 **Greber's New Testament** by Johannes Greber. "based mainly on Codex Bezae..."
- 1937 **Martin's New Testament** by William Wallace Martin. (Other parts of the bible between 1928-1941) "reconstructed 36 epistles into 21".
- 1937 **Spencer's New Testament** by Francis Aloysius Spencer, O. P. ; edited by Charles J. Callan, O. P. and John A. McHugh, O. P.
- 1937 **Williams' New Testament** by Charles B. Williams' in "language of the people" from WH text.
- 1938 **Book of Books. New Testament** by the United Society for Christian Literature to celebrate the centenary of the Annotated Paragraph Bible.
- 1938 **Buttenweiser's Psalms** by Moses Buttenweiser. Chronologically treated.

Translations (2)

- 1938 **Clementson's New Testament** by Edgar Lewis Clementson. The Evangelization Society of the Pittsburgh Bible Institute.
- 1939 **Oesterley Psalms**. by W. O. E. Oesterley
- 1940 **Dakes' Gospels** by John A. Dakes, a Greek businessman
- 1940 **St. Mark in Current English** by Mary L. Matheson.
- 1941 **Confraternity New Testament**
- 1941 **Challoner-Rheims Version (Revision)**
- 1942 **Emphatic Diaglott** by Benjamin Wilson,
- 1944 **Callan's Psalms** by Charles J. Callan
- 1944 **Wand's New Testament Letters**, a paraphrase by J. W. C. Wand; Australia.
- 1944 **Knox Bible (1944-1949)**
- 1945 **Stringfellow's New Testament** by Ervin Edward Stringfellow. From WH text.
- 1946 **Lenski** by R. C. H. Lenski
- 1947 **Eerdmans' Psalms** by B. D. Eerdmans
- 1948 **Letchworth New Testament** by T. F. Ford
- 1949 **Basic Bible** by C. K. Ogden
- 1949 **New Testament of Basic English**
- 1949 **Leslie's Psalms** by Elmer A. Leslie
- 1951 **Authentic Version** by anonymous translator
- 1951 **Vernon's Mark** by Edward Vernon
- 1950 **New World Translation of the Christian Scriptures** (revised 1951 & 1961) Jehovah's Witness
- 1952 **New Testament in Plain English** by Charles Kingsley Williams'
- 1952 **Penguin Bible (Rieu)** by E.V. Rieu
- 1952 **Revised Standard Version (NT in 1946)**
- 1954 **Kissane's Psalms** by Monsignor Edward J. Kissane
- 1954 **Kleist and Lilly's New Testament** by James A. Kleist and Joseph L. Lilly
- 1954 **Kleist and Lynam's Psalms** by James A. Kleist and Thomas Janes Lynam
- 1954 **Moore's New Testament** by George Albert Moore
- 1955 **Fides Translation (Psalms)** by Mary Perkins Ryan
- 1955 **Knox** by Monsignor Knox
- 1955 **Schonfield's Authentic New Testament** by Hugh J. Schonfield
- 1956 **Laubach's Inspired Letters** by Frank C. Laubach
- 1957 **Concordant Version**
- 1957 **Lamsa's** by George M. Lamsa, translated from the Peshitta, an ancient Eastern MS ("original Aramaic")

Translations (2)

- 1957 **Phillips New Testament**
- 1958 **Hudson** by James T. Hudson
- 1958 **The Amplified Bible** by Frances Siewert(Paraphrase)
- 1958 **Phillips' Modern English New Testament** by J. B. Phillips
- 1958 **Tomanek's New Testament** by James L. Tomanek
- 1959 **Cressman** by Annie Cressman
- 1959 **Modern Language Bible** (Berkeley) by Gerrit Verkuyl
- 1960 **The Children's "King James"** by Jay Green and "Peter" Palmer
- 1961 **New World Translation—Jehovah's Witnesses** by the New World Bible Translation Committee. Revised edition.
- 1961 **Noli's Greek Orthodox New Testament** by Fan S. Noli
- 1961 **One Way: The Jesus People New Testament** (same Norlie's NT 1951)
- 1961 **Simplified New Testament** (Norlie) by Olaf M. Norlie
- 1961 **The New English New Testament** (bible in 1970)
- 1961 **Wuest's Expanded New Testament** by Kenneth S. Wuest
- 1962 **Children's Version**, simplification and modernization of the KJV, Preface by Jay Green
- 1962 **Revised Standard Version** (New edition)
- 1962 **Jewish Publication Society Old Testament** (1982)
- 1963 **Beck's New Testament** by William F. Beck
- 1963 **Gelineau's Psalms** by Joseph Gelineau
- 1963 **New American Standard Bible**
- 1963 **The Holy Name Bible** by A. B. Traina
- 1964 **Anchor Bible** by William F. Albright and David N. Freedman
- 1964 **Hadas' Psalms** by Gershon Hadas
- 1964 **Revised Standard Version** (Catholic edition)
- 1965 **Amplified Bible** by Frances E. Siewert
- 1965 **Bruce's Expanded Paraphrase** by Drs. Scrivener, Moulton & Greenup, F. F. Bruce
- 1966 **Burke's God is For Real Man.** by Carl F. Burke. A free treatment of text.
- 1966 **Good News for Modern Man Bible** (1971)
- 1966 **Jerusalem Bible** by Alexander Jones
- 1966 **Living Scriptures** by Jay Green
- 1966 **The Bible in Simplified English**
- 1966 **Today's English Version**
- 1967 **Dale's New World** by Alan T. Dale
- 1967 **Liverpool Vernacular Gospels** by Dick Williams and Frank Shaw
- 1967 **The Living Bible** (Paraphrase) by Ken Taylor

Translations (2)

- 1967 **Greatest is Love (Paraphrase) Paraphrase** by Ken Taylor
- 1968 **Cotton Patch Version** by Clarence Jordan
- 1968 **Hanson's Psalms in Modern Speech** by Richard S. Hanson
- 1968 **Restoration of Original Name New Testament**
- 1969 **Barclay's New Testament** by William Barclay
- 1969 **Children's New Testament** by Gleason H. Ledyard
- 1970 **New American Bible** by members of the Catholic Biblical Association of America (Confraternity New Testament)
- 1970 **The New English Bible (NT in 1961)**
- 1970 **The Mercier New Testament** by Kevin Condon
- 1971 **Blackwelder's Exegetical Translation** by Boyce W. Blackwelder
- 1971 **New American Standard Bible**
- 1972 **The Bible in Living English** by Steven T. Byington
- 1973 **Common Bible** (appears to be another name for RSV)
- 1973 **New International Version**
- 1973 **The Better Version of the New Testament** by Chester Estes
- 1973 **The Translator's New Testament** by team of 37 under the direction of W. D. McHardy.
- 1979 **New King James Bible**
- 1982 **Reader's Digest Bible** Bruce M. Metzger, general editor (condensed)
- 1986 **Marshall Parallel New Testament**. An interlinear by Alfred Marshall.
- 1987 **New Century Version** by the World Bible Translation Center, Ft. Worth, Texas.
- 1987 **Easy-To-Read Version** (1978, 1981, 1982) by the World Bible Translation Center, Ft. Worth, Texas. Based on the New Century Version. Also published under the name of English Version for the Deaf.
- 1987 **The Everyday Bible** by the World Bible Translation Center, Ft. Worth, Texas. Based on the New Century Version.
- 1988 **International Children's Bible** (1983, 1986) by the World Bible Translation Center, Ft. Worth, Texas. Based on the New Century Version.
- 1988 **McCord's Translation of the New Testament** by Hugo McCord
- 1989 **New Revised Standard Version**

Latin Versions

- 300 **Septuagint Greek Old Testament**
- 400 **Jerome's Latin Vulgate**
- 1528 **Pagninus' Latin Bible**
- 1556 **Beza's Latin New Testament**

Translations (2)

Note: Boldface indicates complete New Testament or complete Bible; lightface type signifies a portion of the Bible.

Compiled by L. G. Butler. Information came primarily from Kubo, Sakae and Walter Specht. **So Many Versions? Twentieth Century English Versions of the Bible**. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Corporation, 1975. **Chart of the English Bible**. New York: American Bible Society, 1990. Herbert, A. S. **Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of the English Bible 1525-1961**. (Revised and Expanded from the Edition of T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, 1903), London/New York: The British and Foreign Bible Society/The American Bible Society, 1968. **A Ready-Reference History of the English Bible** (1971 Revision). New York: American Bible Society, 1971. These, in addition to a limited personal collection. For most entries it was not possible to confirm accuracy in a primary source. This list is probably not comprehensive. Time and space limitations constrained the amount of information which could be included. For more detailed information see the references cited. This list should be viewed as a working draft rather than a final list. Please send any corrections, additions, or suggestions to L. G. Butler, 4503 53rd St., Lubbock, TX 79414.

Translations (2)

Appendix G: Guidelines for Selecting Bible Versions¹

- 1. Is it a safe, sound, reliable source for helping me learn what was God's original message?**
 - a. Is it a translation, or a paraphrase or condensed version? A translation is the most reliable.
 - b. If a translation, is it literal, idiomatic or a free rendering? Idiomatic is best, major problems can occur with the others. A literal translation sounds the best, until one considers the problems that could occur if a translator used the same word in another language to translate "kicked" in each of the following: "Joe kicked the ball." "Joe kicked the habit." and "Joe kicked the bucket." The translator must understand the meaning in the original language; then, "carry it across" into the other language, wording it in such a way that the original meaning—not just the word—remains the same.
 - c. Is the version by more than one translator? Generally, a single translator has a higher potential for error than does a group; "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety" (Prov. 11:19). However, one competent, unbiased scholar is probably far better than a host of incompetent or biased persons.
 - d. Are the translators competent scholars? To carry meaning across, the literal meaning of "translate", the translator must have mastery of both the original language/culture and the language/culture of the language translating into.
 - e. Is the translation from the original language, not a translation of a translation? In the case of the Bible: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.
 - f. Are manuscripts of the text in the original language the most reliable? A major controversy arises on this point. Which text should be used: the Received Text, the Westcott and Hort, the Nestle's or the United Bible Societies' Greek text or another? This is no simple issue.
 - g. Did the translators take into account the latest and most reliable archaeological, historical, cultural and linguistic information currently available? It is important to keep in mind that the KJV scholars did not have available the vast amount of information such as the Dead Sea Scrolls obtained during the last 379 years—but this is no fault of theirs. They needed the translation then; they felt they must not wait. But now we do have much more information.
 - h. Does the translation have good reviews among people whose judgment you value?
 - i. Do the reviewers avoid bias, to the extent humanly possible? Evidence of possible bias is the use of "name calling," "emotional

appeal," "card stacking," "bandwagon," et cetera. Have they examined both the strengths and weakness, or is it a one sided review? The use of such propaganda techniques does not mean that the points are not valid nor worth considering, but they often do signal bias, indicating that there may be more that should be considered, which hadn't been noted.

- j. Do the reviewers provide good documentation and sound reasoning to support their ideas? Or, do they make bold unsupported or weakly supported assertions? Or worse yet ask or imply that the readers should trust them, providing no documentation.
- k. What are the reviewers' credentials? Is good scholarship indicated? Are they really knowledgeable about what they write or say?
- l. Does the version have a good preface which provides the reader with information needed to make an informed decision about the translation/version? For example, from which language and text was it translated; how did they deal with meanings that are not always clear in the originals; who sponsored the work; who did the translation?

2. Is it readable, "easy to be understood" 1 Cor 14:9²

- a. Will common people be able to read it, thus really have access to God's Word? Keep in mind that an estimated 25 million functionally illiterate adults in the United States alone would have considerable difficulty even with the most easily read version. For many trying to read the KJV is a formidable, if not impossible, task. As the translators argued in the preface to the original KJV Bible, "But how shall men meditate in that, which they cannot understand? . . . Indeed without translation into the vulgar tongue, the unlearned are but like children at Jacobs well (which was deep) without a bucket, or something to draw with: or as that person mentioned by Esay, to whom when a sealed book was delivered, with this motion. Read this, I pray thee, he was fain to make this answer, I cannot, for it is sealed."³
- b. Will common people be able to safely reconstruct God's original message? The need for frequent or lengthy explanations by a preacher may signal problems in this area. This dependence on a/the preacher is what led to the rise of the papacy and ultimately to the Dark Ages. Tyndale gave his life to help break this strangle hold on common people's access to the Word. His life's goal was to translate the Word of God into language that even the plough boy could know as well as or better than the cleric. Ultimately, he, as history records, was martyred for his commitment to this principle. Nonetheless, he succeeded in making the first English translation of the NT from the original language before his death. We must

Translations (2)

ever be on guard that, if at all possible, history does not repeat itself in this area.

- c. Does it have few instances of words in common use today whose meanings have changed since 1611; hence the reader may think he/she understands, but hasn't correctly reconstructed God's message? For example, in the KJV: peculiar, mean, nephews, man (mankind) have different meanings now than 379 years ago.
 - d. Will all readers find it sufficiently readable that they will spend time in the word? Even among good readers, if the task is overly challenging, it will become frustrating or at least so tiring that they will not spend as much time; or if they do spend the time, they will not be able to accomplish as much as they otherwise would.
 - e. Will the version, when read by the preacher from the pulpit, be readily understood by the congregation? Can more of the sermon time be devoted to the sermon content/message rather than having to define or redefine words, and explain awkward sentence structures?
3. Can people of different language variations use it?
- a. Does the translation take into account the major language variation among English speaking people? The meanings of words, figures of speech, syntax, and usage varies greatly from one region of the United States to another, e.g. Boston, Atlanta, Milwaukee, Brooklyn, New Orleans, Palo Alto or Mud Lick, KY; it varies ethnically: e.g., German, Black, Hispanic, British or Native American heritage.
 - b. Does it take into account language variation by age? Often the younger generation "speaks another language" than the "older generation's"? In short, English is a melting pot of language varieties which variation must be considered in selecting a version for general use.
4. Does the style and tone inspire the reader and reverence God?
- a. One of the hallmarks of the KJV is the majesty of its language. As Kubo and Specht have said, "Although it is desirable that a version have a simple, direct form of English, the language must be dignified and reverent. Slang, colloquialisms, and momentarily popular expressions should be avoided. It should be a worthy vehicle for the expression of the profound truths of the Word of God. At the same time, the version must have a literary appeal. It must be readable, euphonious, and interesting. It must be clothed in language that will grip the heart. Only then can it speak with full force the words of truth the world needs to hear."⁴

Translations (2)

5. Do the marginal notes inspire confidence?

- a. Notes, such as, "The best manuscripts omit . . ." have potential of shaking a weak person's confidence in the accuracy of the version, and worse yet in God's Word.

6. Does the particular version fit the particular purpose(s)?

- a. Is it to be used for sustained reading for inspiration or to grasp the structural overview of a book, or for careful reading, or depth study of a particular topic? verse?
- b. Is it to be used for public reading in worship? private reading and study?
- c. Is the selection being made for one's own private use or to recommend for use by others? What might work well for one person as far as language is concerned may not be appropriate for others. For example, many people in the church are fluent in two dialects, KJV and modern. However, many people with limited or no religious background likely will have far more difficulty than people who have basically learned 1611 English as a second language variety from the KJV; hence what may be easy for one person may be very difficult for another.

7. Other?

- a. Do we need to be limited to one translation? It appears safer to consult more than one. It is strongly recommended that the Preface to the 1611 KJV "The Translators to the Reader" be carefully read on this point. Unfortunately, the original preface is deleted in most KJV Bibles today.
- b. For many people, as Lewis has said, the major problem is not that they read a different translation, but that they read no translation!

1. Information, drawn from many sources, is gratefully acknowledged. The following reference was helpful: Kubo, Sakae and Walter Specht. **So Many Versions? Twentieth Century English Versions of the Bible.** Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Corporation, 1975, pp. 200-207. Reactions and suggestions are welcomed. L. G. Butler, 4502 53rd St., Lubbock, TX 79414. December, 1990.

2. "So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air" (1 Cor. 14:9).

Translations (2)

3. Preface to the original KJV Bible, "The Translators to the Reader" reprinted in Opfell, Olga S. *The King James Bible Translators*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company. 1982. p. 148.
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Parallel-Like Bibles

Bible From 26 Translations. Complete KJV with quotations of variations by other translations. (Baker) This can be an invaluable aid for cuing the reader for possible changes in meanings of familiar words and structures which had a different meaning in 1611.

Eight Translations New Testament. KJV, Phillips, RSV, Jerusalem, Living, NIV, TEV, NEB. (Tyndale) Does not have the complete text of all versions.