

Gospel Truths

Front Page

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An Examination of The Jehovah's Witnesses Cult # 1 – Part 1



by H.E. Phillips (Deceased)

THE cardinal fact of the saving gospel and the infallible integrity of the revelation of God is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. If he did not arise from the dead, we have no salvation. The Holy Spirit by the apostle Paul revealed that God promised Christ before by the prophets in "the holy scriptures" which concerned "his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, **by the resurrection from the dead**" (Romans 1:3-4). The resurrection of Christ DECLARED him to be the Son of God with power. The religious system called "Jehovah's Witnesses" that was started by Charles Taze Russell will destroy millions in hell.

Generally, people do not know how to respond to religious views with which they are wholly uninformed. This is an effort to give basic information of the *Jehovah's Witnesses* religion from their own writings. We have no intention of misrepresenting this religious body, hence, we are giving their positions on their religion in their own words.

The roots of this religion are in *Adventism*, *Mormonism*, *Universalism*, *Unitarianism* and *Materialism*. Individuals who started other religious bodies, and who had an influence upon Charles Taze Russell were Joseph Smith, Ellen G. White and Mary Baker Eddy. All these claimed "revelations" from God, and put these revelations (?) in the form of their Creeds to which their followers were obligated. They have very little respect for the Bible.

The Jehovah's Witnesses Cult - Part One - # 1

In 1964 I wrote a series of articles on the history and doctrine of the religious system called "Jehovah's

Witnesses." These articles have been reprinted in at least two gospel papers since that time. They are now printed here as one article, with some minor changes. I have this commendation for members of this cult: they are zealous for what they claim to believe.

Any religious system that originates with man cannot be of God; any religious teaching that does not originate with God is not true and cannot save the lost, no matter how devout the persons involved are. Be it understood from the very beginning of this study that I am not just criticizing the individuals in this religious system, but the system itself. Of course, the individuals connected with it must suffer the consequences of its teaching.

Any study of a religious movement originating with man must first consider the founder, his (or her) background, the reasons for promoting the system, and the consequences of the doctrine. We shall, therefore, begin with the study of the founder of Jehovah's Witnesses and a few certified facts of his life.

Charles Taze Russell

Charles Taze Russell was born February 16, 1852 in Pittsburgh, Pa., to Joseph L. and Anna Eliza Russell, Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. He was fanatically religious even in childhood, and had a fear of the judgment and especially the fires of hell. At the age of 15 he became a member of the Congregational Church and the Y.M.C.A. The Calvinistic doctrine of hell tormented him. Shortly thereafter he came under the influence of an infidel and became an agnostic. This lasted but a short time before he came in contact with some of the writings of Ellen G. White, who had developed the system known as *Seventh-Day Adventists*. Many of the ideas of Ellen White fascinated him, especially the idea of soul-sleeping and the annihilation of the wicked. He began to formulate a doctrine of his own, beginning with the idea that "hell" meant only the grave. This was the beginning of Russell's doctrine.

Russell, like Ellen G. White, Mary Baker Eddy and Joseph Smith, first conceived the idea of his system and then set about to formulate arguments from perverted scriptures to substantiate the system. His system is an ungodly mixture of *Infidelity*, *Adventism*, *Universalism*, *Unitarianism*, and *Materialism*.

At the age of 18 he organized a "Bible Class" in 1870 in Pittsburgh, Pa. His efforts were to restudy the Bible with a view of eliminating the idea of eternal punishment for the wicked. Six years later, in 1876, this "Bible Class" elected Russell "Pastor," a title which he wore to his death. At the age of 25 he was manager of several men's clothing stores. He was a clever business man, which enabled him in the

development of his religious system known at first as

The Dawn Bible Students.

"Pastor" Russell worked as assistant editor of a small Magazine published monthly in Rochester, New York, from 1876 to 1878. Walter R. Martin in his book, *Jehovah Of The Watch Tower*, page 11, says that Russell resigned "when a controversy arose over Russell's counter arguments on 'the atonement' of Christ."

The "Pastor" began publishing a pamphlet called *Food For Thinking Christians* and distributed it everywhere. It professed to be a new way to study the Bible. In 1879 Russell founded *Zion's Watch Tower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*. He promptly condemned all churches and preachers as being of the Devil, and declared himself to be the servant of Christ with the "New Light" or "Present Truth."

In 1884, five years after beginning *Zion's Watch Tower*, he selected six others to form a corporate charter in Allegheny County, Pa. It was known as The Watchtower Tract Society, and in 1889 it was renamed The Watchtower Bible And Tract Society, Inc. (There is some discrepancy in dates here between historians. The Brooklyn Daily Eagle gives this latter date as 1881). This chief publication of Jehovah's Witnesses was spelled two ways: Watchtower Bible And Tract Society, Inc. and Watch Tower Bible And Tract Society. Both names appear on the opening page of *Let God Be True*, a much used publication of Jehovah's Witnesses. These volumes are seldom seen except in used bookstores. I have all of them in my library.

"Pastor" Russell wrote six volumes known as *Millennial Dawn*, later republished as *Studies In The Scriptures*. His first volume was published in 1886 entitled, *The Divine Plan Of The Ages*. The second in 1889 entitled, *The Time Is At Hand*. The third in 1891 entitled, *Thy Kingdom Come*. The fourth in 1897 entitled, *The Day Of Vengeance*. The fifth in 1899 entitled, *The At-One-Ment Between God And Man*. The sixth and last one Russell wrote was in 1904 entitled, *The New Creation*. The seventh was written one year after Russell's death in 1917 by J. F. Rutherford, his successor, entitled, *The Finished Mystery*.

Russell was the master of The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Inc. and accumulated a large fortune through the sale of his books. His writings drew heavily on the works of Ellen G. White, but he never gave credit to anyone for his works.

Charles T. Russell died on a train near Pampa, Texas on October 31, 1916 (the very day I was born in Kentucky, HEP). His image remains in The Watchtower Bible And Tract Society. Jehovah's Witnesses owe their existence to Charles Taze Russell.

Who Are Jehovah's Witnesses?

The religious group known as Jehovah's Witnesses resent being called "Russellites" largely because of the shady character of Russell. It is not right to call people religious names which they disavow. Jehovah's Witnesses deny following the teachings of Russell, but their writings today are filled with his quotations and ideas. In the April 8, 1951 issue of *Wake* it denied following Russell's teaching, yet they continue to echo the doctrine which he established.

The history of the Jehovah's Witnesses Cult is written in the court records. Russell was involved in several law suits instigated by him against those who opposed his teaching and prophecies. He sued The Brooklyn Daily Eagle for false statements about him, but lost the case.

In *Jehovah Of The Watchtower*, by Martin and Klann, page 14, a quotation from the Obituary Column, November 1, 1916 of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, the day following the death of Russell, tells something of the trials in court by Russell: "There was much litigation then that was quite undesirable from the 'Pastor's' point of view regarding alimony for his wife, but it was settled in 1909 by the payment of \$6,036 to Mrs. Russell. The litigation revealed that 'Pastor' Russell's activities in the religious field were carried on through several subsidiary societies and that all of the wealth which flowed into him through these societies was under the control of a holding company in which the 'Pastor' held \$990 of the \$1,000 capital and two of his followers the other \$10.00"

"After the 'work' had been well started here, 'Pastor' Russell's Watchtower Publication advertised wheat seed for sale at \$1.00 a pound. It was styled 'Miracle Wheat,' and it was asserted that it would grow five times as much as any other brand of wheat."

"The Eagle first made public the facts about this new venture of the Russellites and it published a cartoon picturing the 'Pastor' and his 'Miracle Wheat' in such a way that 'Pastor' Russell brought suit for libel, asking \$100,000 damages. Government departments investigated the wheat for which \$1.00 a pound was asked, and agents of the Government were important witnesses at the trial of the libel suit in January 1913. The 'Miracle Wheat' was low in the Government tests, they said. The Eagle won the suit."

The separation and divorce filed by his wife were on the grounds of gross immorality and familiarity with other women. The court records in Pennsylvania show him as saying at the trial: "I am like a jelly-fish; I float around here and there; I touch this one and that one, and if she responds, I take her to me; and if not, I float to others."

He filed suit for "defamatory libel" against a Baptist preacher by the name of J. J. Ross of Hamilton, Ontario because Ross wrote a booklet denouncing Russell's theology and personal life. The Brooklyn Eagle of January 11, 1913 gave the account of the suit. Russell had for his attorney a man by the name of J. F. Rutherford, later to succeed him as head of The Watchtower Bible And Tract Society.

J. J. Ross wrote his booklet in June 1912 and Russell filed suit at once in an effort to silence the Baptist preacher. He charged that Russell knew nothing of theology, philosophy, or the dead languages (Hebrew and Greek). Russell lost his suit against Ross in the Higher Court in Ontario, March 1913(?). It cannot be denied by Jehovah's Witnesses that Russell was a liar and cheat. It was proven again and again in the courts.

On page 20 of *Jehovah Of The Watchtower* by Martin and Klann a quote is taken from a second pamphlet by Ross after the trial, entitled: *Some Facts And More Facts About The Self-Styled Pastor - Charles T. Russell*: "But now what are the facts as they were brought out by the examination on March 17, 1913(?) As to his scholastic standing, he (Russell) had sworn that what was said about it was not true. Under the examination, he admitted that at most he had attended school only seven years of his life at the public school, and that he had left school when he was about fourteen years of age. . . ."

Under oath Russell answered the cross-examination of Attorney Staunton for Ross by saying, "Oh, yes" to the question: "Do you know the Greek alphabet?" He was handed a *Westcott and Hort Lexicon* and Staunton asked: "Would you tell me the names of those on top of page, page 447 I have got here?" Of course, Russell could not read them. Again, Staunton asked: "Are you familiar with the Greek language?" Russell answered, "No." Lying seemed easy for Russell. He employed this evil to promote his religious system and him.

EDITORIAL . . .



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Soldiers of Christ

How Does One become A Soldier?

He enlists ~ "en-lists. --tr. 1. To engage (persons or a person) for service in the armed forces. 2. To engage the support or cooperation of. --intr. 1. To enter the armed forces. 2. To participate actively in a cause or an enterprise."

Recently I had the opportunity to spend some time with my grandson who is in the United States Navy. He is a recruiter in the Denver, CO area. Many young men and women have enlisted in the armed services in order to give their time – and even their lives if necessary – in order to preserve peace for the people of our nation and nations elsewhere. But what promises do they make?

Oath of Enlistment

"I, (State Your Name) do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the uniformed code of military justice. So help me God."

That is the commitment that is made. There is no doubt that many who make it, and are true to it, will give their lives. Some are doing so almost every day in Iraq. Also in the wars that have been fought by soldiers in the past.

Statistics

Revolutionary War (1775-1783)

1.) Served: No Data - 2.) Death: 4,435

3.) Wounded: 6,188

Civil War (1861-1865)

1.) Served: 2,213,363 - 2.) Death: 364,513

3.) Injured: 281,881

World War I (1917-1918)

1.) Served: 4,734,991 - 2.) Deaths: 116,516

3.) Injured: 204,002

World War II (1941-1946)

1.) Served: 16,113,566 - 2.) Deaths: 147,493

3.) Injured: 671,846

Korean War

1.) Served: 6,800,000 - 2.) Deaths 33,629

Vietnam War (1964-1973)

1.) Served: 8,744,000 - 2.) Deaths: 58,177

3.) Injured: 153,303

Their lives are examples of commitment, pride, honor and sacrifice. Their mission is the pursuit of justices and freedom.

There is another kind of war going on. It is a war between mankind and Satan. It is not a physical battle for this kingdom cannot be extended or defended with tanks and bombs and planes. Paul said in II Corinthians 10:3-5, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴For the weapons

of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

In writing about the soldiers in this war Paul said, “You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ⁴No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier” (II Timothy 2:3-4). Another translation of II Timothy 2:4 is, “No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs - he wants to please his commanding officer.” (NIV) Also in Philippians 2:25, “Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need.”

The Bible gives the rules of enlistment for becoming a soldier in this army. Those who enlist must also contemplate a life of sacrifice.

Let's Look at Christ's Recruitment Poster

Jesus says, “Come follow me.” Luke 9:23 “Then He said to them all: ‘If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.’” Luke 14:27 “And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow Me cannot be My disciple.” Luke 9:23-24 “Then He said to them all: ‘If anyone would come after Me, He must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. ²⁴For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me will save it.’” Here Jesus states both positively and negatively what we must be willing to do in order to be in His army.

Our Captain

The Scriptures also tell us of our Captain, Jesus Christ, who gives us our marching orders. Hebrews 2:10 “For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

The Battle

Our battle is with Satan, the enemy of all righteousness. It is a battle for the souls of men and women, boys and girls who are accountable to God. He is seeking to destroy God's army. I Peter 5:8 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” He has co-workers. II Peter 2:1 “But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.” Philippians 3:17-19 “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk

so as ye have us for an ensample. ¹⁸(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: ¹⁹Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)”

Our weapons are spiritual weapons for a spiritual battle. “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:10-17).

As you will observe the armor listed above is for both defense and offense. In view of the fact that we are in a war, we are to approach the enemy “head on.” God doesn't give us any armor for our back. Deserters will not be tolerated. II Peter 2:21 “For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.”

Our attitude toward Satan and evil should be as Paul pointed out in Romans 12:9 “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.” The word “abhor” means, “1. To shrink back with shuddering from; to regard with horror or detestation; to feel excessive repugnance toward; to detest to extremity; to loathe” (*Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary*).

Satan will tell you exactly what you want to hear. You may be an adulterer, a wife-beater, hooked on drugs or alcohol, etc. Satan will lead you to believe that you are all right.

On the other hand, even when the truth hurts, and it isn't exactly how you imagined it to be, Christ will tell you. For example, “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God” (I Corinthians 6:9-10).

Christ agenda becomes our agenda. Matthew 28:18-20
“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’”

Back To the Enlistment

Adam Clark made a bold statement about the declaration that is to be made for Christ. He said, “But this power to believe, like all other gifts of God may be slighted, not used, or misused; in consequence of which is that declaration, ‘He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned’.” (from Adam Clarke’s Commentary). Like many teachers in the world today, Mr. Clark misquoted Christ’s declaration of enlistment. Though Jesus said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16), hundreds of thousands of teachers misquote this passage leaving out “*and is baptized.*” How can one possible be in the Lord’s army and not meet the requirements of enlistment?

Every passage in the New Testament that speaks of baptism is either misquoted or misused by most religious leaders today. If you will look up all the passages in the New Testament on baptism you will find this is true. For example, in the Acts of the Apostles not one single person was said to be saved, receive remission of sins or rejoice until AFTER he/she believed, repented, confessed their faith in Christ *and was baptized.* Please read Acts and see for yourself.

God’s Army Has A Great Reward Awaiting Its Final Victory

We have a crown of righteousness laid up for us. II Timothy 4:7-8 “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

How Can I Do These Things?

Philippians 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Ephesians 3:20 “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”

If we are Christians “...our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:20). If your citizenship is NOT in Heaven, come and sign up for

the Lord’s Army. We are at war and souls are in danger – yours in particular. Come join the fight

Why?



Geneva Brown Smith

“Truly the light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to behold the sun; but if a man lives many years and rejoices in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they will be many” (Ecclesiastes 11:7-8). As Christians we enjoy numerous blessings in Christ. We have the forgiveness of sins, the privilege of calling God our father, and the promise of Heaven. Another great blessing we enjoy is the kinship with others of the same precious faith. Most of us enjoy many material blessings also. We live in comfortable homes, drive fast automobiles, eat nourishing and delicious food, and wear good quality clothes. God has been so good to us!

Dark days? For the Christian? Could it be?

In the book of Job we read about a man of God who was blessed with everything one could possibly desire in this life. He had family (wife and children), possessions, and popularity. In addition, because of his faithfulness, God was proud of him. To Satan God said, “have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?” Satan said, “have you not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has, on every side? But now stretch out your hand, and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.” God said, “behold he is in your hand, but do not take his life.” Satan caused the loss of Job’s cattle, the death of his servants, and all his children. He struck Job with painful boils from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. Even Job’s wife from whom he should have received comfort and support told him, “curse God and die.” Job, in his despair over the loss of his children, and in his own physical torment wrestled with the question “WHY?”

As Christians today, amid all the wonderful blessings

we enjoy, there are at times dark days in our lives. Many of our families have been torn asunder by the evils of divorce. Some of our beautiful and talented children have fallen into the pitfalls of drugs and/or fornication—perhaps even to their own destruction. Some of us have seen our loved ones stricken with serious physical or mental disease. Others have stood at the graveside of a beloved parent feeling the loss of that nurturer-mentor forever. Frequently, in our own despair, we also wrestle with the question “WHY?”

Job, even in his darkest hour, never entertained the idea of turning his back on God. He knew that his creator was the source of all his strength. He remained upright and righteous in spite of his adversity. When Satan was finished, Job possessed a faith that was as genuine and precious as pure gold. Everything that had been lost was returned to him in abundance. Though he did not understand why he was tried, his blessings far exceeded the losses he had sustained.

When dark days come to us, we should remember and imitate the faithfulness of Job. We, as Job, may not know why Satan’s slings and arrows are so brutal. We do know, however, that we must remain faithful. Of course we sometimes ask “WHY?” We are only human! But God has given us answers to every human problem imaginable. Bright days and dark days come to all of us. Adversity, from time to time rears its ugly head. But let us not despise it! In James 1:2-3, also 12-13, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man.” Remember, if we endure and remain faithful through every trial, we, as Job, will receive a blessing ❧



What Kind of Sinner Was Jesus? # 2



by Maurice Barnett

WE are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be

ye reconciled to God. Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him.” II Corinthians 5:20-21. The usual interpretation of the statement, “made to be sin,” echoes Lutheran/Calvinist theories that Jesus actually became sin. Supposedly, He took all of the sins of the world, all of the guilt and punishment for sins, upon Himself. Let’s look at a couple of authors who take that position so we can see what this means— “And this, no doubt all the prophets did foresee in spirit,—that Christ should become the greatest transgressor, murderer, adulterer, thief, rebel, blasphemer, that ever was or could be in the world. For he, being made a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, is not now an innocent person and without sins...” Martin Luther, Commentary on Galatians, page 213. “Because He was ‘made sin,’ impregnated with sin, and because the very essence of sin, on the cross He was banished from God’s presence as a loathsome thing. He and sin were made synonymous.” Paul Billheimer, *Destined For The Throne*, page 83. “God made him sin: that is to say that God the Father made His innocent incarnate Son the object of His wrath and judgment, for our sakes, with the result that in Christ on the cross the sin of the world is judged and taken away. . . Our sin is transferred to Him and His righteousness is transferred to us...” P.E. Hughes, *Paul’s Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, pages 213-214. Such quotations could be multiplied many times over. Not only is it supposed that all of mankind’s sins were embedded in Christ but His righteousness was thus embedded in us, which is what “that we might become the righteousness of God in him” is supposed to mean. That is the “imputation” theory of Calvinism. The verse works just as well in one direction as the other. It doesn’t matter whether we call it imputed to Him, laid on Him, placed on Him, transferred to Him or any of a number of other expressions. If Jesus literally took all of our sins upon Himself, they were transferred to Him 2000 years ago, then we have no sins which means we are therefore righteous. There is the imputation theory of Calvinism. The worst “translation” of II Corinthians 5:21 that I have seen is that of *Living Letters*, the *Paraphrased N.T.* It is not a translation at all but a brazen effort to insert a theological position into the Bible. It shows just how far Calvinists will go to support their doctrines. Here it is— “For God took the sinless Christ and poured into Him our sins. Then, in exchange, he poured God’s goodness into us.” Is this really what II Corinthians 5:21 is saying? Remember we noted in the beginning of the article last month that the superficial reading of a word or phrase can be dangerous. Words and phrases can easily mean different things in different

contexts. The focus here is on the meaning of “sin.” Does it really mean that Jesus became the biggest sinner in the history of the world? No.

(1) I will start with an assertion and then present the evidence. The word sin, in this passage means sin-sacrifice. It is a figure of speech called synecdoche, meaning a part is given for the whole, one word is given to stand for a larger thought. There are many such instances of synecdoche in the Bible. Even the words faith and grace are used as the figure, synecdoche, in some passages. If we miss that fact, we will pervert revelation and wind up with false doctrine. For evidence we will begin in the Old Testament—In the book of Leviticus alone, just the single word for “sin” is translated as “sin-offering” over 50 times because that is what it means in those verses. For instance—

“Speak unto Aaron and to his sons, saying, This is the law of sin offering: In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the Lord: it is most holy.” Leviticus 6:25.

In both places where sin offering is found here, just the word for sin is in the original text. The word “offering” is not in the Hebrew text at all. This is also true concerning trespass and trespass-offering, *asham* in Hebrew. In Isaiah 53:10, it is said “when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.” The phrase, offering for sin, is from the single word, *asham*. This word for “trespass” is appropriately understood to be “trespass-offering,” or “offering for sin.”

(2) In the Septuagint, a translation into Greek by Hebrew scholars long before Christ, the phrase, “sin offering,” from the Hebrew word for sin, is translated into the Greek word, *hamartia*, the single Greek word for sin. Not so strangely, that is exactly what we find in II Corinthians 5:21.

(3) Let’s now go to the New Testament. First, Hebrews 10:6 says— “In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hadst no pleasure.” This is a quotation from Psalm 40:6. The word “sacrifices” has been added to the word, “sin.” It is just the Greek word for sin, *hamartia*, again as in II Corinthians 5:21. We thus have a New Testament commentary, made by the Holy Spirit, on how the word is to be understood in many passages. We find the same fact in Hebrews 10:8. Romans 8:2-3 says— “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” In the phrase “and for sin,” the single Greek word for “sin” refers to sin sacrifice, which is identified as such in a footnote in the American Standard Version. Notice what the footnote says and

the verses it lists as references— “Or, ‘and as an offering for sin,’ Lev. 7:37 &c. Heb. 10:6 &c.14.” The New Testament usage of the word “sin” to stand for “sin sacrifice” is rooted in the Old Testament as we have seen in Leviticus. Notice also that in Hebrews 10:14, the word translated from prophera is “offering.” Take the time to run the context and you will see that “offering” in verse 14 is the same as “sin offering” from the word for “sin,” *hamartia*. So, *hamartia*, “sin,” and prophera, “offering,” are synonyms in that context. We might also note that the UBS New

Testament Greek Dictionary, #271, says that just the word for sin, *hamartia*, is “often sin offering.” (4) Here is another interesting item of translation. The Jewish New Testament, translated by David Stern gives us this proper rendering of II Corinthians 5:21— “God made this sinless man be a sin offering on our behalf, so that in union with him we might fully share in God’s righteousness.”

(5) For what it is worth, here is an interesting portion from Adam Clarke on II Corinthians 5:21. Clarke goes on in his commentary to list many passages where the word “sin” stands for sin-sacrifice. “In the second place, it signifies a sin-offering, or sacrifice for sin, and answers to the *chattaah* and *chattath* of the Hebrew text; which signifies both sin and sin-offering in a great variety of places in the Pentateuch. The Septuagint translate the Hebrew word by *hamartia* in ninety-four places in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, where a sin-offering is meant; and where our version translates the word not sin, but an offering for sin. Had our translators attended to their own method of translating the word in other places where it means the same as here, they would not have given this false view of a passage which has been made the foundation of a most blasphemous doctrine; viz. that our sins were imputed to Christ, and that he was a proper object of the indignation of Divine justice, because he was blackened with imputed sin; and some have proceeded so far in this blasphemous career as to say, that Christ may be considered as the greatest of sinners, because all the sins of mankind, or of the elect, as they say, were imputed to (6)

him, and reckoned as his own. One of these writers translates the passage thus: *Deus Christum pro maximo peccatore habuit, ut nos essemus maxime justi*, ‘God accounted Christ the greatest of sinners, that we might be supremely righteous.’ Thus they have confounded sin with the punishment due to sin. Christ suffered in our stead; died for us; bore our sins, (the punishment due to them), in his own body upon the tree, for the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all; that is, the punishment due to them; explained by making his soul

- his life, an offering for sin; and healing us by his stripes.”

Everything about the sin-sacrifices in the Old Testament was most holy to God. The animal itself had to be pure, without blemish. The place where the animal was slain had to be most holy. The priest had to be holy in order to make the offering. Whoever touched the flesh of the sin-offering was holy. I Peter 1:18-19 says—

“...knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without spot, even the blood of Christ.”

If Jesus was a blemish free, spotless, most holy and righteous sacrifice, how could He actually and literally be the blackest of sinners on the cross? Further, look at Hebrews 7:26-27. Notice especially the phrase, “when he offered up himself.” The “offering” of Christ was more than just His death on the cross—

“For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people: for this he did once for all, when he offered up himself.”

Jesus was both sacrifice and High Priest. He neither had sins He had committed nor did He become sin, as such, but a sin-sacrifice offered up on our behalf. Read carefully Hebrews chapters 7-10 to see just what He did for us.

In studying any subject, we must consider related passages and subjects, the context, figurative versus literal language, etc. If we do not do so, then we wind up in error. We have seen the evidence from both Old and New Testaments that the word, sin, when connected with what Jesus did, refers to a sin-offering, a figure of speech known as synecdoche.

Lastly, notice II Corinthians 5:20 that leads in to our disputed verse 21—“We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.” If “reconciliation” took place on the Cross as Calvinist substitution makes it to be, why does Paul put on us the responsibility of “be ye reconciled to God?” Did not Jesus do all the reconciling while on the cross? We sing, “He bore it all,” paid it all! Well, He did His part but we have to do our part. You see, He made it possible for us to be reconciled. He is the door, the bridge between man and God just as He was both man and God. That made Him the perfect intercessor. And, the theory that He had to become the blackest of sinners in order to satisfy law and justify

man is a figment of man’s imagination. Such a doctrine leads us directly into other errors. ❏

Hand Waving In Worship

by Wayne Goforth

IN recent years, there has been a push in many otherwise conservative churches to do things differently. Now, I do not mean different because they find the changes expedient, but different (a sort of “iconoclasm” if you would) at least from appearances and conversations I have had with such proponents. Added to this list of changes has recently come the raising and or waving of hands in worship and prayer. I suppose most of us have seen the commercials on television for some community church or charismatic group programs waving their hands. Until recent years, I had never heard of this among brethren (except raising of a hand to ask a question) but is becoming more discussed and practiced.

Certainly there were times in the Bible when people prayed with extended arms, even as we might beg something of someone with arms outstretched. For example, we find in I Kings 8:22-23, “Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. And he said, O Lord, the God of Israel ...”

But that was not a consistent manner even for the Jews. In I Samuel 1:12-13, we find Hannah praying to herself with her lips moving. Eli assumes she is drunk. Now, had she had hands outstretched, then surely he would have realized that she was in prayer rather than to assume drunkenness.

Apparently it was customary to pray with outstretched hands and arms at times, but with all of the specific regulations of the Old Testament laws of worship, there was nothing that required such posture. I am reminded of the story told by a preacher who once held a meeting at a “kneeling church” when that issue had become debated. A brother led the prayer and everyone knelt except the meeting preacher. He did not realize until he opened his eyes that others were kneeling. After services, one brother approached the preacher and said “brother so-in-so, you sinned by not kneeling for prayer.” To which the preacher retorted, “Well, you sinned by peeking during prayer!”

Now, in our society, it has at least been the custom in some places and in some times to kneel. But when has it ever been our custom to raise arms except in the emotional display of the charismatic? I have to wonder if the hand waving will soon be accompanied by the swaying which typically goes with it among those

groups. Now, may one pray in that manner? Certainly! But, my question is, why? It was neither Bible command nor our culture that establishes 'raise your arms with me in prayer?'"

It is true that I Timothy 2:8 says, "I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." But is this literal lifting of hands? Barnes states, "The idea is, that when men approach God they should do it in a pure and holy manner." Similarly, Johnson says, "Lifting up holy hands. This seems to indicate an attitude in prayer. The hands lifted up must be sanctified to holy deeds." Too, others have stated that it is the "holy hands" that is figurative, but the "lifting up" is literal. How then does one literally hold up a figure? If this is literal, why not apply this to other passages as well. We will take Romans 12:1 as an example where Paul says that we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. Must we literally sacrifice our bodies?

The Pulpit Commentary states that Chrysostom condemned those who were praying against their enemies asking the Lord to "smite him" or "recompense him." To this, Chrysostom wrote, "Do you pray against your brother? Your prayer is not against him, but against yourself" I saw some glass candle holders a few years back with various prayers on each. One holder said, "Oh Lord, may my enemies eyes become stuck with mesquite thorns." This seems to be the type I of background of our passage.

Also consider that 1 Timothy 2 is setting a contrast to the roles of men and women. If you notice carefully, only the men are told to pray with the out' stretched hands. Yet, both men and women do so in the charismatic churches which practice such so freely today, as well as some of the advocates of this practice among us. Does this then mean that women cannot pray? No, this is more evidence that we have under consideration the qualification of the one leading the worship in prayer. Vincent agrees in his Word Studies by offering, "The point here is that only men should lead in public prayer who can lift up 'clean hands' (morally and spiritually clean)."

In the past, I have assumed that these various "change the church" advocates were just seeking change because they were tired of tradition (before you accuse me here of reading minds, I have talked with many such), but more and more it seems that it is an effort to mimic the community church type movements. By all means, change when it is a scriptural, expedient practice that helps the local work and builds up rather than offends. But to change for the sake of change or to get more like the denominations will only create a desire to move away from scriptural practice and will create a hunger for the new.

These preachers may soon find themselves putting out fires which they themselves helped to spark. Will it next be accompanied by the emotional swaying and gyrating also common to these same people? What about the common practices of clapping and shouting out? What will advocates of change do when these innovations come alone (notice I wrote "when" instead of "if")? Paul said, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40), and that God is not the author of confusion" (I Corinthians 14:33).



The Seed of the Kingdom

by Bob Myhan

On the third day God created vegetation and the seed of everything was "*in itself according to its kind*" (Genesis 1:11-13).

When Jesus walked the earth He taught His disciples the manifold nature of His coming kingdom through a series of parables, one of which was the parable of the sower (found in Matthew 13:1-8, 18-23; Mark 4:1-8, 13-20; Luke 8:4-15).

In His explanation of this parable, Jesus said, "*The seed is the word of God*" (Luke 8:11). The kingdom is perpetuated by the word of God being planted in the hearts of men and women. But if "*the seed [of the kingdom] is the word of God*" what is the seed of denominationalism?

Surely, one does not become a member of **every** denomination simply by obeying the word of God. Does anyone become a member of **any denomination** simply by obeying the word of God? Did **any** of the Christians in the New Testament become members of a denomination simply by obeying the word of God? Does it not, indeed, take something in addition to or other than the word of God to become a member of a denomination?

Denominationalism involves more than just a name. It involves differing doctrines and practices. Do all of these differing doctrines and practices come from the word of God? Surely not! When Paul wrote his letter (by inspiration) to the Galatian churches, he said,

I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6-9).

From this we learn that when anyone, even "*an angel from heaven,*" preaches "*any other gospel*" than Paul preached, those who receive this "perversion" of the

gospel are turned away "to a different gospel, which is not another." That is, when people are taught—and believe—anything in addition to—or other than—the word of God, they either do not enter the kingdom or do not long remain therein. If this is not so, then what was Paul concerned about? Someone may be thinking, "He was just concerned about the fate of the false teacher." But Jesus said, "And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch." (Matthew 15:14) If no one had ever begun to "pervert the gospel of Christ," thus creating "a different gospel, which is not another," surely there would be no denominationalism today. But some did, and they continue to do so. Denominationalism is perpetuated by planting something in addition to or other than the word of God. The word of God says, *Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.* (II John 9-11)

Are you being taught the gospel which Paul preached? Does your preacher "abide in the doctrine of Christ"? Are you sure? ❧



A Tribute to Rick Shamas



I met Rick Shamas when I went to Huachuca City, AZ for the first time to preach in a gospel meeting. Bill Robinson, Jr. was preaching there at the time and he and Rick became fast friends. He was young in the faith and eager to learn. I went there for thirteen consecutive years and each time I could see the spiritual growth in Rick. I do not recall the year he began to preach for the small congregation in Huachuca City, but everyone talked about his spiritual growth and the good lessons he was bringing – even though he worked at secular work and preached. Both Bill and I encouraged him to go into full time work. He preached in Albuquerque, NM and in Dumas, TX before moving to Frankfort, KY. He did a

good work everywhere he went. His lessons were well prepared and true to The Book.

An interesting coincidence happened. One year when I was there in a gospel meeting, Rick and Sandy's first child was born – a baby girl. Two years later I was there in a gospel meeting when their second child was born – a baby boy.

Rick was, as Bill Robinson said at his funeral, always helping someone in need "almost to a fault." Oft times he would help others when he had needs himself.

Case in point: When he was living in Albuquerque, he and a friend of his had been out fishing one night and were returning home. They came upon a man having car trouble on a bridge. While playing the Good Samaritan, a truck came onto the bridge and would have hit them. They both jumped over the edge of the bridge planning to grab the rail on top and pull themselves back up when the truck passed. His friend caught the rail; Rick missed it and fell 50 feet onto a dry rocky river bed. He broke his back in 5 places and was in excruciating pain from that time to the end of his life. He had a number of operations after that time, would be better for period of time, and then start the whole process over again. However, I never heard him complain.

I have told this story many times about Rick and his son Michael when Michael was about five years old. Rick had a van. When they were moving from Huachuca City, Rick and Michael were in the front seat, and Sandy and Rosalie were in the back seat. Michael kept asking Rick (as we have all heard at times when traveling) "Dad, how long will it be till we get there?" Rick kept telling him, "it is a long way son, I will tell you when we are nearly there." His persistence finally prompted Rick to say, "I've told you it is still a long way. When we get nearly there I will tell you. If you ask me again you are going in the back seat with your sister." I suppose that was one of the worst things that he thought could possibly happen, he held his peace for a long while. Finally he said, "Dad" – to which Rick said, "You are not going to ask me that again are you?" "No!" said Michael. "Ok" Rick said, "What did you want to say?" Michael: – "How old will I be when we get there?"

Good husband, wonderful father, friend, brother and servant of the Most High God. Yes, I have lost a good friend and brother. Brown and I extend our very deepest sympathy to his good wife, his children, and grandson – who was the light of his life. It is our hope and prayer that he lived his life (and that we will live our lives) so that we can meet in heaven some day. ❧



Profane, Obscene, and Indecent Speech



by Don Martin

IT appears that many Americans have reached the bottom when it comes to profane, obscene, and indecent speech. Many seem to see absolutely no correlation between a person's speech and the character of the person thus speaking. A number of religious teachings that advocate when God looks at you, he does not see you, but his Son Jesus Christ and how you live is irrelevant to your salvation have been influential in encouraging such thinking as we stand detached from how we live. Notwithstanding, the scriptures clearly indicate the importance of speech. Speech can either justify or condemn. Jesus said, "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matthew 12:37, see addendum 1). It seems that everywhere one looks today, there is a concerted effort to pollute with profanity, obscenity, and indecency. There appears to be a race to see just how corrupt we can make our speech, even movie and television ratings are being determined by just how vile the language is. Such language, I submit, is not innocent and inconsequential, as we shall see. Let us begin our study of profane, obscene, and indecent speech by noticing some common and simple definitions.

Definitions of our key words. Profane is commonly defined as: "Characterized by irreverence for God or sacred things" (Random House College Dictionary, page 1056). Obscene: "Offensive to modesty or decency; indecent; lewd. Causing or intended to cause sexual excitement or lust" (page 917). A simple definition of indecent is, "Offending against recognized standards of propriety or good taste; vulgar" (page 675, see addendum 2). There are other classifications of speech, some of which we shall notice in our expansion.

Profane, obscene, and indecent speech and civil law.

In view of the casual way in which many use the sort of language being discussed, one might not think that such language is against the law, but to my knowledge this type of speech is illegal in all states. Needless to say, a violation of these public speech laws is seldom enforced.

Such may appear laughable today, but it is a violation of federal law to air obscene programming at any time. It is also a violation of federal law to air indecent programming or profane language during certain hours. Congress has given the **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** the responsibility for administratively enforcing these laws. The **FCC** may revoke a station license, impose a monetary forfeiture, or issue a warning if a station airs obscene, indecent, or profane material (Federal Communications Commission, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Title 18 of the United States Code, Section 1464, prohibits the utterance of "any obscene, indecent or profane language by means of radio communication.").

Those who abuse the ability of man to utter words and syntax, one of the abilities that distinguishes man from the lower animals, fall back on, "The First Amendment provides freedom of speech!" Beloved, the First Amendment never was intended to provide profane, obscene, and indecent speech (see addendum 3).

The Supreme Court in an attempt to define and illustrate what they believe constitutes "obscene broadcasts" has set up a three-pronged test. Indecent speech in connection with the **FCC** is perhaps the most subjective and situational, yet, even man's laws and values recognize the impropriety of such language (I am aware of the various circumstances and rulings of the **FCC** involving, at times, the matter of the nature of the content, the time of the content, and the intended audience of the speech. I am not appealing to the **FCC** as the standard of the Christian, but to illustrate the universal repulsiveness of such language). During December of 2008, there was a discussion on one of the talk shows that airs on radio in my area. These particular talk show hosts had some appreciation of speech and were concerned about "profane," "obscene," and/or "indecent" speech that is becoming so common in our American culture. One caller said, reflecting a too common attitude of parents:

"I have a nine year old boy and we are allowing, even encouraging him to use whatever language he desires, including all manner of 'swearing,' 'cursing,' and 'course references to various body parts and sexual acts.' They are going to talk this way, regardless. So, you might as well allow such. Yes, my husband and I also use such speech before him."

Relative to the subject of the kind of public speech used, one said: **"I confess: I'm 17, a junior in religious high school, and I swear a lot. Everyone always goes on and on how using the swearing words are wrong. But why are they? I mean all they are, are a couple words that don't really mean**

anything, and the only reason I like using them is because when you can't find a word strong enough to describe how you feel, usually one of the swearing words does the job."

There are, no doubt, a myriad of influences when it comes to the use and, yea, even popularity of the kind of speech being reviewed. Rap music is at the very head of such a list. Television is a manifest major source of the spread of trashy language as well as Hollywood, the music scene in general, etc. Many, alas, are now desensitized and are not even aware of such language.

Consider what the scriptures teach: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29). I know that words can and do change their meaning, but in every language man has devised some way to violently condemn others to hell, speak disparagingly of God, invent vile words for body parts and waste, and just in general use language to be repulsive and disgusting.

I am aware that many speak without thinking.

However, such thoughtlessness does not justify heinous speech. Words have meaning and tone and we need to deliberately use speech. Speech has been used to accomplish all manner of things: "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3: 6). The human tongue can also involve a lofty use: "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God" (James 3:9). On occasion, the same tongue that praises God in one instance is also used to curse man, this is a point James is making. Moreover, notice James' illustration of the fountain (verse 11). The water comes from the source and is constant.

It is common, even popular with some today to take God's name in vain (profane speech). "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain," the third law in the Ten Commandment Code states, Exodus 20:7. This law has all the requisite requirements to be considered a moral law, changeless and forever binding on man. The frivolous taking of oaths in which God's name is invoked is taking God's name in vain (cp. Matthew 23:16ff., Matthew 5:33ff., such expressions as "gee," "good heavens," etc. are what we call euphemisms and constitute oaths and thus used, involved using God's name in vain).

Speaking "things which ought not" involves a misuse of the tongue. Regarding certain young widows in a given circumstance, Paul wrote: "And

withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not" (1 Timothy 5:13). Such speech may not necessarily be profane, obscene, and/or indecent, but it can involve inappropriate content and the revealing of private matters to others, what we might call gossip.

It is high time that America cleans up its speech (see Addendum 2). If we still had the foul mouths to wash their mouths with soap, soap stock no doubt would soar! The way we talk indicates our values, respect for others, and thinking in general. One who loves others will not be cursing them (hatefully condemning them). One who respects womanhood will not be using words that deprecate women. Do not be fooled into thinking that the speech one uses is inconsequential. Our speech reveals who and what we really are. Jesus taught: "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Matthew 12: 33-35).

The ideal speech is, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Colossians 4:6). We must avoid profane, obscene, and indecent speech or "corrupt speech" as well as all other speech condemned in the Bible and use speech "...good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29). May we have the attitude and desire of David: "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me" (Psalm 39:1).

Addendum 1: Jesus in the context of Matthew 12: 37 has in mind "idle words" (verse 36). "Idle words" contextually involves words of blasphemy or speaking against the Spirit (verses 22-37). Hence, such words are not simply words lacking substance, but they are words that express evil sentiment, even sinful accusation.

Addendum 2: Again, these definitions are simple and I realize that there are more expansive, legal definitions. Such is seen in the **FCC** rulings and laws regulating the public air ways. Relative to such matters, it is ridiculous how common sense in defining and testing speech seems to have vanished in many circles. Disgusting words publicly expressing hatred, irreverence for God, the verbal abuse of females, degradation for sacred acts such as marital acts of procreation and the expression of true love between a husband and wife, vile human excrement, and using

vulgar language to reference body parts are now said to be a part of a legitimate vocabulary and even good, emphatic speech. There are now "translations" of God's word reflecting the so called language of the people. Much of this language is what we call street language, the vocabulary of the ignorant, defiant, and degenerate who have no regard for God or fellow man, tawdry, cheap, and reprehensible words. Words or combinations of words that adversely refer to one's parentage or mother, even express fornication committed by a son regarding his own mother! Much of this language reflects the ignorance, hatred, and utter bitterness of the speaker as such assertions are usually irrelevant and seldom based on fact, anyway.

Addendum 3: There are nuances of the subject of speech that I shall not attempt to address in detail. For instance, there is a marked difference between one using speech that one would not commonly use, in an environment of seriousness to teach what not to say and in the flagrant use of such language (I do not necessarily advocate even using gutter speech in this fashion). Also, there is usually a proper way to express matters without resorting to street language, matters such as body parts, human excrement, etc. ❧

used synonymously with the word and the truth. Earlier, Paul spoke of several things that were "contrary to sound teaching," adding that this sound teaching was "according to the glorious gospel" (I Timothy 1:10-11). "Sound words" are "those of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Timothy 6:3). This included the words of Paul and the other apostles (II Timothy 1:13; I Corinthians 14:37).

How much of the gospel is to be categorized as sound doctrine? When Paul preached, he "did not shrink from declaring... the whole purpose of God" (Acts 20:27). Peter said, "Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God" (I Peter 4:11). Paul warned the Galatians that one who would "distort the gospel" is in fact teaching "a different gospel" (Galatians 1:6-7). Sound doctrine is the word of God without and additions, subtractions, or changes.

What Is False Teaching?

This is another term that causes some difficulty for people. False teaching is simply a message that is contrary to the truth of the gospel. As Paul told the Galatians, it is a perverted form of the gospel (Galatians 1:6-7). He told the brethren in Thessalonica that one can either "believe what is false" or "believe the truth" (II Thessalonians 2:11-12). There are those who claim that one can only be called a false teacher if his motives are corrupt. But it is God's place, not ours, to judge the hearts and minds of men (Hebrews 4:12; John 12:48). Our responsibility is to judge their fruits (Matthew 7:15-16). The basis for determining whether one is a truth teacher or a false teacher is their message.

How Does the Progression Occur?

So how do we move from sound doctrine to false teaching? First, we must understand that this shift really does occur. The Bible tells us so. The Ephesian elders were told, "from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20:30). Peter said, "there will also be false teachers among you" (II Peter 2:1). Paul wrote, "The Spirit explicitly says" that some will depart from the truth (I Timothy 4:1). He told Timothy of two of these men – Hymenaeus and Philetus. These men had "gone astray from the truth" (II Timothy 2:17-18). In order to go astray from the truth, they first had to be in the truth. Yet they departed from it. How does this happen?

We first begin with sound doctrine. Without this, one does not need to fall into apostasy, he is already in error. So in this article, we are talking about those who begin in the truth and move away from it into error. Our responsibility is to "retain the standard of sound words" (II Timothy 1:13) and to "contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3). If this is what we are currently

The Progression From Sound Doctrine to False Teaching

by **Andy Sochor**

PAUL gave the young evangelist Timothy this charge: "preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction" (II Timothy 4:2). Why was it so important for Timothy to do this? Paul goes on: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths" (II Timothy 4:3-4).

Apostasy was coming. At some point, those who were once receptive to the pure, unadulterated gospel would want something different. How does such a change happen? It certainly does not happen overnight. There is a progression that takes place, leading Christians away from sound doctrine and into false teaching.

What Is Sound Doctrine?

We must first understand what we are discussing. These terms may be defined differently by different people. But we are interested in how the Bible defines them. In the passage quoted above, sound doctrine is

doing, we need to continue on this path. But sadly, many depart and eventually end up in total apostasy.

The first step into apostasy is for one to teach the right message, but without the proper appeal to Scripture. At this stage, their points and conclusions may be valid, but they are abandoning the book, chapter and verse style of preaching. They no longer preach as Paul did, where he “reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence...” (Acts 17:2-3). They may still agree with sound doctrine, but they are no longer backing up their points with Scripture.

As one removes Scripture from his teaching, he must fill his lessons with something else. What will he use then to back up his points?

Stories – It may be that there is nothing wrong with the occasional story to illustrate a point. But when a sermon is built around and filled with stories, then there is a problem. Paul said that those who “turn away their ears from the truth... will turn aside to myths” (II Timothy 4:4). We need to focus on the word of God. If it’s necessary to use a story to illustrate a point, there are lots of events in the Bible itself we could use. Relying too much upon non-Biblical stories and analogies is dangerous. I’ll explain why later in this article.

Human wisdom – The Bible warns against following after human wisdom. The proverb says, “There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12). Yet many preachers use human wisdom to support their preaching. This comes in many different forms, such as famous quotes, song lyrics, scientific theories, psychology, etc.

Misused Scriptures – One can make a passage say almost anything if they ignore the context. A preacher may sometimes be tempted to take shortcuts in his studies, and rather than find the right passage that supports his point, he finds one he can twist into making his point, even if the context indicates that the passage is not making the same point he wants it to make. Want to teach about brotherly love? Great! Just don’t use a passage about the Lord’s rebuke of the Ephesians departure from Christ to do it (Revelation 2:4 – “you have left your first love”). Use passages that actually talk about brotherly love.

Remember, at this first stage, the message is still basically the same. The only difference is the way in which it is presented. This new way appeals to many people. For many in the audience, this style of preaching will hold their attention better. For the preacher, he may have an easier time writing lessons since he doesn’t have to spend as much time in careful study of the word of God. But when this style of preaching is adopted, there are several things that begin to happen:

People begin to trust in what they’ve heard before and what they already think, rather than God’s word. If the appeal is no longer made to Scripture, then another standard must be adopted in order to determine the truth. Naturally, that standard becomes that which is familiar and agreeable.

They believe something because it makes sense. Human wisdom prevails when it comes to subjects with which they are unfamiliar or if they lack maturity in them. Failing to approach new and/or difficult topics with careful and targeted Bible study leaves us to follow whatever seems reasonable to us.

They also begin to put their trust in man, particularly the preacher. God’s word is a “lamp to [our] feet” (Psalm 119:105). But if we no longer rely upon the light of His word to show us the way, we have to find direction from some other source. For many, this source becomes the preacher. If he is teaching myths and fables, instead of the word of God, the dependency of the brethren upon him grows.

When Christians become accustomed to this kind of preaching, error can take hold and do severe damage to the brethren, both individually and to a congregation as a whole. Eventually, false teaching will be introduced. If we have not been trained sufficiently with “the sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17), or are out of practice with it, we will not be able to fight off the error that is creeping in. We’ll notice why in a moment.

But first, think of how a false teacher must introduce his error. We know he cannot do so through a reasonable explanation of the Scriptures as Paul did (Acts 17:2-3). So what style of preaching will the false teacher use to advance his doctrine?

He will use stories to back up his points. People enjoy stories. A good story-teller can keep an audience captivated. But further, you can teach anything, make any point, through a story. This is perfectly suited to a false teacher (and is also why it is dangerous to rely too heavily on non-Biblical stories and analogies).

He will use human wisdom to validate his claims. False teaching is based upon human wisdom. Society, in general, is conditioned to follow after human wisdom. If one uses human wisdom to promote a message, rather than contrasting the wisdom from above (the word of God) from earthly wisdom (James 3:15-17), he can teach almost anything because he is using the standard that society generally accepts.

He will misuse Scripture to state his case. This is a common tactic – ignore the context, change definitions, explain away certain passages. This is how there are so many different denominations teaching differing doctrines, yet all claiming to follow the Bible. They twist the Scriptures and convince many people

that their message is actually from God.

Notice that this style of preaching is the same as it was under the first step towards apostasy – stories, human wisdom, misused Scriptures. As a result, it is often hard for people to see the difference between truth and error. Why? They have become accustomed to this style of preaching. It makes sense. It sounds familiar.

And they have forgotten how to accurately handle the word of God to “test the spirits” (I John 4:1), and, upon finding one who is teaching error, to destroy “speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God” (II Corinthians 10:5). As a result, they eventually go along with the error, oblivious to the fact that they have departed from “the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ” (II Corinthians 11:3).

How Is This Stopped?

How can we stop this progression from occurring? The solution is simple: We must use the style of preaching commended to us in the Bible. We must “speak as the oracles of God” (I Peter 4:11), just as Paul who “reasoned... from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence” (Acts 17:2-3). We must not be afraid to talk about all that God has revealed to us, lest we “shrink from declaring the whole purpose of God” (Acts 20:27).

Preachers must use this style of preaching. Elders, along with the rest of the brethren, must not only tolerate this type of preaching, but demand it. This may not be popular, but it is God’s way. We ought to trust Him, knowing that His way is best.

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The State Of The Nation, The World, And The Church

by James P. Needham



PAUL said "...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. (II Timothy 3:13). (II Timothy 3:1-7) “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ²For men shall be lovers of their own

selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. ⁶For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ⁷Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Every serious minded American, and certainly every Christian, is disturbed by the graveyard spiral of public morals in this country and around the world. This is receiving serious attention by outstanding authors. Judge Robert Bork recently published a book entitled Slouching Toward Sodom. Bill Bennett, previous federal commissioner of education, and drug Czar, recently published a best selling book entitled, The Death of Outrage. Judge Bork's book chronicles the downward spiral of public morals, and Bennett's deals with the lack of the public outrage over it.

Such books as these demonstrate the extent to which humanism has permeated the morals of the world. Our nation sowed to the wind in the 1960's and now is reaping the whirlwind (tornado). By means of a well-planned program to corrupt public morals, the humanists have infiltrated public education, and the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of our government. Its

philosophy also dominates the communications media. Moral corruption runs all the way from our house (salacious TV programs and internet pornography) to the Whitehouse, and worst of all, the majority of our citizens not only are not outraged, but even reward the perpetrators. Politicians who are under investigation or indictment for various crimes or are guilty of immoral and/or dishonest conduct continue to run for office and are re-elected by a public steeped in moral decadence and unconcern about such matters. The worse the morals of the Whitehouse get, the higher the approval ratings of the President! What a commentary on our society! Minors must have parental consent to have their ears pierced, but not to have an abortion, or for a doctor to prescribe birth control pills! A public school teacher cannot teach that God exists, but he/she can legally teach that He doesn't. Our society has stood reason and right on their heads and is going to hell in a hand-basket. (Psalm 9:17) "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

We have cheapened the value of human life. The abortion industry is the greatest blight on our society in its history. It is a regression from the civilized to barbarism. Millions of unborn babies are sucked into a

sink with no compunction of conscience by doctors who stuff their bank accounts with blood money or by mindless women who use it as a method of birth control. Legalized abortion is a Pandora's box. Once we cross the barrier of respect for human life, the sky is the limit. Lack of respect for human life in the womb leads to disrespect for it outside the womb. The travesty of disregard for human life does not limit itself to the unborn, it escalates and infiltrates other areas of thought. The point in a pregnancy at which it can be legally terminated has moved from its early stages to partial birth abortion where the infant is killed as it emerges from the womb. As the head shows the skull is punctured and its brains are sucked into a sink before it takes its first breath. Several attempts to outlaw this procedure have failed at the highest level of government. From that we have moved to euthanasia and Dr. Kavorkian who has been involved in many cases of suicide, and recently he actually showed one taking place on television. Kavorkian is on a crusade to legalize euthanasia in this country, and it appears that he will succeed. All efforts to prosecute him have failed. We are in the process of our "Hitlering" Hitler!

The President and certain governors have refused to sign bills that would outlaw partial birth abortion. This is done on the specious basis that to outlaw it in all cases leaves no protection of the mother's health. Nonsense! How can it protect the mother's health to kill the baby as it emerges from the womb? This is a typical politician's rationale for legalized murder. It is a dilemma that exists only in the minds of demagogic politicians.

The devaluation of human life, therefore, is the inevitable consequence of abortion. The number of parental homicides in this country is absolutely appalling. Following are the headlines copied

from a single issue of the Orlando Sentinel: MOTHER PLEADS GUILTY TO MURDERING HER 6 CHILDREN, STARVATION, DEHYDRATION KILLED 15-POUND TEENAGER, ITALIAN MAN ADMITS ON TV TO KILLING HIS ENTIRE FAMILY, LITTLE GIRL'S BODY FOUND NEAR CREEK IN WOODS. This last one (a long-time abused first-grader) was beaten to death by her father because she soiled her underwear! Mind you, this all came from a single issue of our daily newspaper, and the sad thing about it is that it is duplicated in newspapers all across the world every day.

Sexual immorality: Sexual misconduct has become so common a place that a large portion of society thinks nothing of it. Millions of people live together without marriage, bear children and abandon or murder them. If the parents don't do it, new bed partners move in and abuse or kill the children. Sex of all descriptions is the

predominant topic on television programs and in the movies.

The internet, like many other technical inventions, is abused under the guise of freedom of expression. It is swamped with pornography of every sort and kind, including, according to what I read in the papers, child pornography. A man in my neighborhood recently was arrested for downloading child pornography from the internet. He was turned in by his wife! He was arrested and sentenced. Child pornography and molestation have to be the most heinous crimes known to man. Any adult that would molest a child has to be a poor excuse of a human being.

Pornography is said to be the most lucrative industry on the internet. It is estimated that there are one million pornographic sites on the internet, and 500 new ones added every day. Pornography unashamedly exposes the very depths of human depravity, and people pay good money to participate in it. It is exploitive, addictive and despicable. It is a world-wide phenomenon. Participants are from every country, race and age. Preteens, teenagers, mature adults, men and women are participants.

Those who surf the internet are liable to come upon it unexpectedly while searching for legitimate material. One person said he was surfing the internet on horses and came upon bestiality! This is not an unusual occurrence. Pornography is largely degrading to womanhood, though men also participate. To be a porn star one must divest himself/herself of all self respect and accept the role as simply a piece of human flesh to be purchased like a piece of beef, or gazed upon or otherwise exploited by other depraved human beings. That is a sad state of affairs!

Morally depraved adults make arrangements on the internet to seduce minor children; wives and husbands make arrangements to meet with others which often winds up in fornication and divorce. The perpetrators defend their nefarious trade by the first amendment of the constitution, "freedom of speech," which has been wildly and wrongly interpreted by the Supreme Court as covering all forms of expression from pornography to burning the flag of the United States. But not all justices of the Supreme Court agree. For instance some justices of the Supreme Court had written:

"Although this is the first time the question has been squarely presented to the court...expressions found in numerous opinions indicated that this court has always assumed that obscenity is not protected by the freedoms of speech and press." (Justice Wm. Brennan, Roth vs. US, 354 US at 484)

"This much has been categorically settled by the court, that obscene material is unprotected by the First Amendment. The dissenting Justices sound the alarm

of repression. But in our view, to equate the free and robust exchange of ideas and political debate with commercial exploitation of obscene material demeans the grand conception of the First Amendment and its high purposes in the historic struggle for freedom." (Chief Justice Warren Burger, Miller vs. Cal.) It should be noted however, that a clear definition of obscenity has not been developed. All efforts to define it leave one twisting in the wind and wondering if there is anything on earth that is obscene legally! Warren Burger said, "I can't define pornography, but I'll know it when I see it!" Where does such a statement leave the public?

Freedom of speech is a sacred part of our constitution, but it is widely misinterpreted. Those who think one is at liberty to say anything he wants to say with impunity are dead wrong. For instance, the First Amendment does not protect 1) perjury, 2) slander, 3) libel, 4) false police and fire reports, 5) treason, 6) incitement to violence, 7) false advertising, 8) prayer in school, etc.

Statistics prove that pornography escalates sex crimes of all kinds. Where pornography has been outlawed in communities, sex crimes have decreased dramatically. For instance, Since 1984, over 150 sex-oriented businesses in Oklahoma City have been closed, including peep shows, adult bookstores and theaters. Rape in the county over that period has decreased 26%. During the same period, rapes increased 20.8% throughout the rest of the state. The figures demonstrate a direct connection between the prevalence of hard core pornography and sex crimes.

Rape is a common crime in most communities. In a congregation with which I worked, an 80-year old sister's house was broken into in the early morning hours. She was raped, and her money and her car were stolen. In the same community, another elderly sister's house was broken into and she was raped on two different occasions by the same person. Little children are molested and raped and killed by people who don't deserve to be called human and it is disrespectful to animals to call them animals! Such characters often get off with a slap on the wrist and are turned back on the streets to repeat their dastardly deeds. Certain psychologists and sociologists try to whitewash rape by saying it is not a sex crime, but a crime of violence against women. Nonsense! If it is not a sex crime, why does it always involve sex? If it is not a sex crime why is it often perpetrated on children of the same sex? When it is perpetrated on little girls, how is it a crime against women?

Let's face it, rape is a sex crime and it is one of the most horrible of crimes because it adversely affects the lives of its victims for as long as they live. It is

shameful that the state no longer considers it a crime worthy of death. Often in trials of rapists their victims are humiliated and trashed by defense attorneys until the victim looks worse than the rapist.

Gambling: Gambling is escalating in this country at a rapid pace. The country is rapidly becoming a giant Los Vegas, with all of the accompanying vices, the underworld, prostitution, gambling addiction, deprivation of families, divorce, etc. Los Vegas type gambling is now being legalized in many places. Riverboat gambling is now in vogue. Los Vegas type gambling is the main attraction of the popular ocean cruises of our time. Lotteries now are legal in many states, supposedly for the purpose of helping education. Nonsense! They all are promoted on that false claim, but it doesn't turn out that way. In Florida millions of dollars were supposed to flow into education from the lottery and solve all our education problems, but whatever it received from the lottery didn't increase the education budget, for what the lottery put in the politicians took out to spend on other things.

Judicial leniency: A great part of our problem finds its roots in the leniency and the lunacy of our judicial system. It is more concerned with the rights of the criminal than for the rights of his victims. Spineless judges and numskull legislatures pass laws that put career criminals back on the street to repeat their nefarious misdeeds. The situation will not get better until we put judges on the bench who have guts and brains! Nonsensical litigation litters the landscape. A convict warned authorities that if they put him on a work detail, he would escape. They put him on the work detail, he escaped, and then sued the county for placing him in a situation where he could escape! A burglar broke into a house. In the process he tripped on the stairs and broke a leg. He sued the owner of the house and won! A policeman said when he arrests drug dealers they often are back on the street before he gets the paper work done. Who said, "crime doesn't pay"? The tobacco companies are sued for hundreds of millions of dollars by people who willfully used their products knowing they were harmful to health even with a warning printed on every pack!

Racism: Our country is torn apart by racism. Integration was supposed to end all this, but it has only brought it to light in other forms. Reverse discrimination has exacerbated the situation; has fomented more racial tension, and the ugly situation shows no signs of improvement. Every common incident in the work place, every arrest involving the most hideous crimes is turned into a racial incident if it involves one of another race. In recent times we have seen the charge of racism free a murderer that just

about everyone knew was guilty of murdering the mother of his children and her friend. He was acquitted in the criminal trial, but found guilty in a civil trial. The label of "racist" is predominantly pasted on Anglo Saxons when there is enough guilt to go around to all races. Leaders in the so-called civil rights movement make good wages by exploiting and even promoting racial disharmony. It is to their financial benefit to keep the charge of racism before the eyes of the public. If the races were to come to a state of peace and harmony, these rabble-rousers would be out of a job. It is a shame that the good people of all races are all painted with the same brush and must live with a situation which they devoutly wish was otherwise.

Deterioration of the family: Cardinal Gibbon, in his famous work, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, gives as one reason for its demise, "The rapid increase of divorce; the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society." If, indeed, the home is the "basis of human society," the downfall of society is assured when that "basis" is corrupted. It is well said that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." It is a fact that neither the church nor the nation can have any better citizens than the homes produce. The so-called "nuclear family" consisting of husband, wife and children is becoming an endangered species. If you listen to Dr. Laura, a psychologist who has a national radio call-in show, you will notice that the majority of the calls are from people who are living together without marriage, or are single mothers, or who are divorced and living with someone to whom they are not married. The home as God would have it is probably under the greatest attack today than it has been in the history of the world, and it portends the destruction of the greatest nation in history. Humanism considers marriage a fabrication of human society, since they deny the existence of God. In their view, monogamous marriage has proven to be impractical.

The church: To what extent does all this affect the church? It would be naive indeed to deny that the trends and movements in society do not affect the church. A study of church history will show that the trends in society find similar trends in the church. This phenomenon goes all the way back to the first century. The church at Corinth had a loose attitude toward fornication because Corinthian society was rife with it in the pagan temples and therefore widely accepted by the public. Today divorce and remarriage are so prevalent in our society that it stifles progress in the church. So many times when we find a person who is interested in obeying the gospel, we discover that their married life is so mixed up that Solomon himself couldn't untangle it. So, what do we see? We see some

preachers who are performing all kinds of mental gymnastics in a vain a futile effort to find some way to justify such persons. (Isaiah 5:23) Woe unto them "Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!"

This has become a major problem, and it will, in time, fill the church with adulterers. One well-known preacher said, "I found that what I was preaching on marriage, divorce and remarriage was making people unhappy and the gospel is supposed to make them happy."

So, he changed his preaching to brother Hailey's position. In fact he said he would be reluctant to disagree with any position taken by brother Halley. He needs to realize that one should not "think of men above that which is written" (I Corinthians 4:5). This reminds me of a denominational preacher I heard say, "I don't preach against sin; sin is bad news, and the gospel is good news."

The churches which stand fast for the truth on marriage, divorce and remarriage will experience diminishing memberships, while those which take the liberal view will experience growth. People who don't have the courage necessary to obey the truth will seek out churches that will accept them in unscriptural marriages. To some degree, this trend already can be seen.

The prevailing religious thought in our society is Calvinistic; salvation by faith only, and unity in diversity. It doesn't matter what one believes as long as he believes in Christ and has accepted him as his "personal savior." Nothing else matters. Protestant thought is to "live and let live." Don't condemn anybody's religion. In the past brethren have fought this kind of thinking with the truth of the gospel. This has always been unpopular with some half-converted brethren, but today it is wide spread. Preachers are more and more are accommodating it. They preach a positive gospel and ignore soul-damning error. They stay away from controversial subjects and preach sermons that would have a better reception in denominational pulpits than in ours and many brethren love to have it so. (Jeremiah 5:31) "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" What many brethren today accept as good preaching is absolutely appalling.

Conclusion

Dangerous trends are detected today in the world and in the church. If something is not done our country will go the way of the world powers of the past whose ruins remind us of the fruit of wrongheaded policies and moral decadence. It stands to reason that if our country does not survive, neither will the church. To a large

degree, the church has taken on the characteristics condemned in the seven churches of Asia. Many have lost their first love, tolerate false doctrine, and are well to do and lukewarm. Older mature preachers who have the wisdom, experience and stamina to withstand the onslaught of Satan are put out to pasture while the younger preachers who couldn't fight themselves out of a paper sack and whose sermons would fit in a denominational pulpit better than ours are sought by the churches with vigor. Many churches are not looking for a sound, hard-hitting gospel preacher, but for a "youth minister."

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Writings From Yesteryear

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The Greatest Question

THE question of all questions is "What think ye of Christ?" What one thinks of Christ determines his thoughts and actions on every question. The correctness of faith depends on the correct answer to the superlative question—"What think ye of Christ?" The question of how and when one is saved by faith through Christ is answered when the first question is resolved. The value of faith in salvation is determined by the use that is made of faith. How faith is to be used must be decided by what the gospel of Christ says; for apart from the testimony of the divine records no one can settle any question as to salvation through Christ.

Before all men today there are two plans of salvation offered. One is of human origin, and contradicts the teaching of Christ and his apostles..

The other is Jesus Christ's own plan, and it was revealed through the apostles.

Since the time of Martin Luther the doctrine of justification by faith alone has been taught as a leading theological tenet. It is taught in opposition to the teaching of Christ through his apostles. We should and we do emphasize justification by faith, as the apostles of the Lord taught it, but we refuse to add the word "alone," and because we refuse to do that we are charged with teaching justification by worlds and water salvation. Paul and all of the apostles taught justification by faith, but never did they say faith alone.

Why? "There's a reason," as certain advertising reads, and quite a sufficient reason. First, they would have contradicted the commission of Mark 16:15-16 which gave them authority to preach. Second, they knew that faith is a continuing state of mind. Faith was to be ever present, hence a life of faith. Hence, Paul said "Christ liveth in me." Do you ask, how? "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." (Galatians 2:20) Thus Paul teaches that faith is ever present, all through life, and is directed all of the way by "the faith" of Christ.

All students of language know that we may employ transposition of clauses in a sentence without changing its meaning, but rather making its meaning clearer. Transposing Romans 1:16 it reads: "To everyone that believeth it (the gospel) is the power of God unto salvation." So here is the order: (1) There is a believer; (2) the believer is in possession of "the power" that is "unto" salvation; (3) when that "power" is used, the believer becomes saved. Power is necessary to the accomplishment of anything, physical or spiritual. The power must be used before there can be results. The power unto salvation is the gospel. That power and the use of it stands between the believer and salvation. Is the believer saved before and without the use of the power which is "unto"—in order to—his salvation? Who can imagine results without the use of the power necessary to the results? Thus it is that this passage, and every other passage quoted as a faith alone text, condemns the doctrine of salvation at the moment one believes.

What one thinks of Christ is determined by what he thinks of the gospel of Christ. ¶¶

**By Foy E. Wallace, Jr. taken from
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