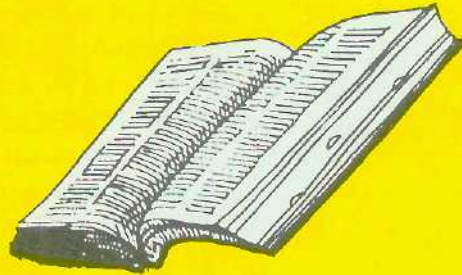


# Gospel Truths

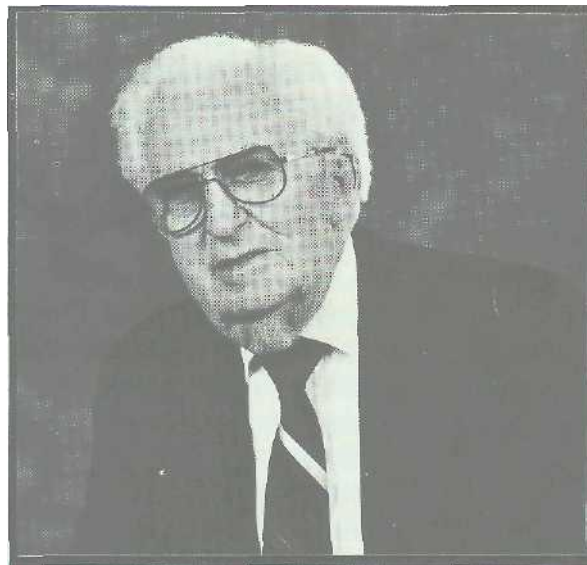


*"Love . . . rejoices in the truth"  
I Corinthians 13:6*

Volume I Number 11

November 1990

## A. C. Grider



January 15, 1912 - September 15, 1999

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### COMING SOON

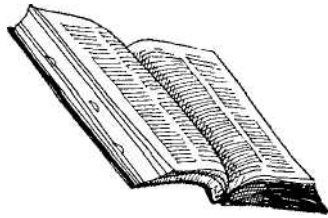
An exchange between Ed Harrell & Dudley Ross Spears on "The Bounds Of Christian Unity."  
Hopefully it will be ready for the January 1991 issue. Tell others about it. - Editor

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# Gospel Truths



*"Love... rejoices  
in the truth"<sup>1</sup> I  
Corinthians 13:6*

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VOLUME I  
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NOVEMBER 1990



## Editorial . . .

J.T. SMITH, EDITOR

P.O. Box 906087 • Tulsa, Oklahoma 74112

### An Old Friend Has Died

**O**N September 15, 1990 A. C. Grider departed this life. The funeral service was conducted on September 18th at the meeting place of the Expressway church of Christ in Louisville, Kentucky. He was buried in the Hebron Cemetery near Louisville, Kentucky. Even though it was one the most difficult things I have ever done, I counted it one of the greatest honors bestowed on me when Hallie Grider called and told me that A. C. requested that I preach at his funeral. Connie Adams assisted me with some remarks at the funeral with Donald Townsley conducted the graveside service. Brother Grider, perhaps as much as anyone else, influenced and encouraged me in the preaching of God's Word. Below are some of the things I said at the funeral service.

"And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" (II Samuel 3:38).

This was spoken by David of Abner. This is not just some cliché that is used because it sounds good. I use these words today for I truly believe the remains of a great man of God's Israel is before us this hour. We come to pay our respect to him and to his family for the great work he has done in the kingdom of God. I want to share with you some personal good that I received from him.

Though I had heard my family speak of him often (for he lived and attended high school in the same area, Clay County Tennessee, where I was reared), the first time I met him was 1949. He was in a gospel meeting near Cookeville, Tennessee. I still have in my files a copy of the chart from which he was preaching that night. It was the road sign chart. I am sure many of you have heard him preach that lesson. Later while he was living in Bowling Green, KY, my family and I spent the night with the Griders. We were on our way to Morgantown to speak for the church there. Brother Grider had made arrangements with the brethren there for me to speak as he tried to help me get started preaching the gospel of Christ. After that we were together many times - in meetings, and debates. Any time brother Grider's name was mentioned in our house my wife would always say, "and don't forget Hallie. She is a lady of the first class." Surely this is true. She has been the greatest help meet for him that any gospel preacher could desire - one who behaved herself as a faithful Christian, a good mother, and one who encouraged him when he was right and disagreed with him when she thought he was wrong. A lady indeed, of the first class.

But let me tell you some of the lessons I learned from him that makes me think he was "a great man in Israel."

**1. He Loved God And His Word.** You could not be around him very long without knowing that he had spent many hours with The Book. If you deviated from God's Word, not only would he know it, but he was neither afraid nor ashamed to tell you. I can just hear him say, "now Smith, I think you had better look that over again. I believed you missed that." He was also a man of great moral character.

2. He Was An Independent Thinker. It mattered not what the masses might believe, brother Grider did not believe anything simply because someone else believed it. He believed it because he had studied it for himself and had come to a conclusion based on his understanding of the Scriptures.

**3. A Fearless Defender Of The Faith.** Once he had determined what the Scriptures taught, he feared no man in his defense of the truth. He asked no quarters and he gave none. Yet he was kind to all who showed an interest in Truth. He feared no man - but many who met him on the polemic platform would meet him only once. He had the kind of analytical mind and wit, which suited him for such a task, that many of us wish we had.

I remember the first time I heard him in a debate. It was right here in Louisville. He was preaching for the Preston Highway congregation. I was not following his example in studying for myself on the institutional question but had listened to what others had said about it. We were living in Crothersville, Indiana. Brown and I came to hear him debate Guy N. Woods in the Iroquois school auditorium. As I remember that occasion I recall thinking that the things that had convinced me regarding orphan homes and the Herald of Truth sponsoring church arrangement were not the arguments presented by brother Woods. The unscriptural arrangement of the Herald of Truth was so clear that even I could see the truth. However I said to brother Grider after the debate, "I understand what you are saying about the Herald of Truth and I believe you are right. But there are some arguments brother Woods didn't use on you on the Orphan Home question that I believe were better than those he did use." Brother Grider said, "come on down whenever you can and we will discuss

them." I will not soon forget that day when I called and asked if I could come down. With questions in hand I came. I was confronted with not one but two brethren that afternoon. Jim Cope had just arrived to begin a gospel meeting at Preston Highway. I had, however, learned my lesson well. It was on that and other occasions that brother Grider said, "don't accept this because I believe it is true. Study it for yourself and accept it or reject it because you believe that is what the Bible teaches regardless of who else believes it"

I heard him debate many times after that. In fact I moderated for him in a number of them. I have often heard people say, "debates don't do any good." But how many of us are living proof of the good that has been done by A. C. Grider in his defense of The Truth?

**4. He Made People Happy.** As all of you who are here know, he always had some amusing story to tell. These were not off-color jokes but actual happenings in his life, or someone else's - or some funny story he could tell that you would know could not possibly have happened. Also, and more importantly, he taught people the gospel of Christ and told them how one, regardless of his station in this life - whether rich or poor - can be happy in Christ Jesus.

**5. He Made Some People Angry.** Yes, just as Jesus said in Matthew 10:34-36, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." And so it was with brother Grider. And so it should be with every faithful preacher and teacher of God's Word. As Jesus did not say these things in order to be ugly or hateful, neither did brother Grider. He taught people that if they

followed the doctrines and commandments of men they would be lost. He called the names of denominations - again not to be ugly or hateful - but so all who heard him would understand what he said. You might not agree with him, but you will not go to judgment saying you did not understand.

**6. He Loved And Helped People.** Yes he paid special attention to children and young people. He loved them and they loved him. We have four daughters. When they were at home they were always excited when brother Grider and Hallie were coming. I always thought it strange that we referred to them as brother Grider and Hallie. In all the years I have known him, I never called him A.C.

**7. He Kept His Appointments.** In that he kept his appointments, he has left us an example that we should follow his steps. He kept his appointments: By obeying the gospel; By attending every worship service; By studying God's Word so he could know it, teach it and defend it as Peter said in I Peter 3:15. And now, he has kept all except his final appointment. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). What about those of you who are here today? Have you kept all these appointment according to your abilities? I know that there are at least two that we all will keep. The two that I just read from Hebrews 9:27. Therefore it behoves us all to keep the others as well.

Does this mean that A. C. Grider never made any mistakes? I am sure he made his share. But he was the kind of man who when he made them - if they were against God or man - sought their forgiveness. In so doing he, as well as we, have a merciful and forgiving God who is willing to forgive those who repent and seek forgiveness according to His Will.

In Hebrews 11:4 Paul said, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." I say to you today, that brother Grider offered himself unto God as we are instructed to do in Romans 12:1-2. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Therefore, let's remember the godly life of this good man in harmony with what Paul said of himself in I Corinthians 11:1 "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

Brother Grider is survived by his wife Hallie, one daughter Jane and her husband Lee Ashbrook (who is an elder at the Manslick Road church in Louisville), and two grand daughters, Kelly and Melody. I thank God for this great man. I will miss him greatly. Our sympathy is extended to the Grider family. **GT**

## The Abdication of Jesus: A Reply

by Leo Rogol

**B**ACK in March 1990, John Welch preached a sermon at the Shively church in Louisville: "The Abdication of Jesus." The sermon was practically the same as an article which appeared in the April, 1987 issue of **Faith and Facts**. All quotations will be taken from the sermon and the April, 1987 issue, and also from an article which appeared in the January, 1990 issue. I have written for **Faith and Facts** since the mid 70's but due to serious health problems I've not written any articles for about five years. However, due to the gravity of this matter, John's unbiblical views which, to put it mildly, borders on blasphemy, I decided I must write in reply to John's statements.

### "Does Man Have To Sin?"

Both, the articles and the sermon dealt with, or were related to, the issue of Continual Cleansing. So the question was raised, "Does man have to sin?". John stated that brethren don't actually say that man has to sin, but "that's what it boils down to." Perhaps some may say man does have to sin but I am not aware of it. If someone does, then I don't agree with that position (to a certain point which will explain later). This appears to be a "loaded" question. In one sense, no one, including the devil, can force man to sin. Man is a free moral agent and thus if he sins, he does it by his own choice. In this case man does not have to sin by force or because he has no other choice. On the other hand, it may simply be an observation of a biblical **fact!** "For all have sinned..." (Romans 3:23); "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8).

So, if we say man does not have to sin, this may be taken as an admission

that man is infallible, sinless if he wants to be and that conflicts with these two passages. So, "Does man have to sin?" is a tricky question because if one says *no*, this admits the possibility of living an absolutely sinless life. No the other hand, if one says *yes*, immediately he is charged with saying he cannot choose not to sin, that for one reason or another man has no other choice but to sin.

For example, Paul spoke of himself in the Jewish religion: "touching the righteousness which is the law, *blameless*" (Philippians 3:6). If he was blameless, then he could not be charged with a single sin; he lived a life of sinless perfection. However, Paul said something quite the opposite in Romans 7:8: "But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." So, was he blameless or was he a sinner? Which statement is true and which is a lie?

So it is with the question of "has to sin." Being caught in a difficult circumstance, one may say something because of lack of knowing a better way to say what he meant, or it may be a matter of poor grammatical expression. For example: "I have to go to work." Because it cannot be otherwise, or because that is my daily schedule and I choose to do it as away of life? Not everyone has the infallible mind to say the exact thing in the exact words someone wants him to. Too many problems arise because someone does not say something in the exact words the other person says it or expects him to say it.

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For example, John Welch wrote, "...there is *some sense* in which he (Jesus, LR) remains a man" **Faith and Facts** April, 1990, page 16). Which way are we to interpret "some sense," John? So the crux of the issue is, in what sense does one mean, "has to sin?." Yet, let me repeat, I do *not* believe man has to sin because he has no choice to do otherwise. I do believe that everyone is going to sin in view of Romans 23:23 and I John 1:8.

### "Just A Man"

In his sermon (Shively, KY.) John said that Jesus "was just an ordinary man, an ordinary guy like you and I." Incidentally, I believe the word "guy" is slanderous. You don't use such a term speaking of any person in the Godhead. In **Faith and Facts**, April 1987, page 12, John wrote: "He *divested* himself of glory, honor *divinity*, *godhood* and became subject to the Father as a man. Whatever privileges, powers there might have been *were stripped from him*. He was *a man*." (All emphasis mine, LR). He ridicules the idea that Jesus was 100% deity and 100 % man while on earth. It is my conviction he was, even though John scoffs at the idea of being "200%."

John is going to run into difficulty with what Paul wrote in I Timothy 3:16: "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh..." The word manifest means: "to appear, to make visible, to be seen." How could God be seen, appear visibly in the flesh if he left his deity, or divinity in heaven? You can't show something you don't have. For example, if a policeman stopped me and asked *to see* my driver's license, how could I show it to him so he could see it if I left it at home. How could he *visibly see* what I left behind?

Jesus proved his deity because he could read the hearts of men (Mark 2:8; John 2:25; 6:61). He could not

do this if he was "just a man, an ordinary guy."

Next, Jesus could forgive sins (Mark 2:5). No man has the right or power. Jesus could not do it if he was "just an *ordinary* man..." And Jesus accepted worship from man while on this earth (Matthew 9:18; 20:20).

Furthermore, there would be no remission of sins if Jesus was merely a man. His sacrifice and death on the cross would be meaningless. If Jesus abdicated his deity, he came to this earth in vain and died in vain. You and I would be hopelessly lost in sin. Paul asked: "Was Paul crucified for you?" (I Corinthians 1:13. If Jesus was just a man like Paul *why* couldn't Paul be crucified for us to save us from sins? History tells us that Peter was crucified, but is there any saving merit in that for us? If Christ's crucifixion was that of only merely a man, it means no more to us than Peter's.

Of all these facts I've related, only one is enough to prove Jesus was divine or deity in the flesh. *He could forgive sins before He died*. Yes, we are to forgive one another, but release, freedom from condemnation of sin does not come by our forgiveness but by God through Christ. In fact, we may refuse to forgive, but God will forgive the offender even if we refuse to.

John Welch wrote (page 9) that Jesus feared death just as you and I. That is true. But John says, "Our fear of death is that question concerning the real existence of God and the life beyond." Was there any question in the mind of Christ "concerning the real existence of God and the life beyond?" Did Jesus not tell his disciples that he would die and be raised the third day (Matthew 16:21)? Did this express doubts about "the existence of God and the life beyond?"

When Jesus prayed, "nevertheless not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42), did Jesus not know what his Father's "*will*" was? Was it not in the

"will" of the Father that he would just as certainly be raised as he would die? Was Jesus not aware of this, or did he forget it or no longer believe it? Was there any doubt in his mind about "the life beyond?" Did he doubt his Father's existence?

Again, John quoted Hebrews 5:7-8: "...and was heard in that he feared." On page 9 John said this was fear in the sense of dread or being afraid. Many people fear (dread) but their prayers are not answered because of fear. Did not Felix fear when Paul preached to him? Felix trembled. Now that is fear! Of course, Felix did not pray, but I used this example to point out that one is not heard in prayer simply because he is afraid, or dreads something. The meaning of fear in Hebrews 5:7 is "piety, reverence." No, Christ's prayer was not answered because he was afraid or was filled with dread. His prayer was answered because of his piety and reverence toward the Father.

### His Continuing Priesthood

On Page 16 of **Faith and Facts**, April 1987, John said: "Jesus, mankind's advocate and *priest*, *remains a man*." (emphasis mine, LR). He stated this several times in this section. This is shocking, to say the least! John makes this assumption on the basis that since priests under the Old Testament were men, so Christ has to be man in His priestly service in heaven.

If Jesus is **still** a man, He is in heaven what He was on earth: not deity, divine, just a man in a *human body*. Paul said that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (I Corinthians 15:50). John tells us that "when he shall appear, then *we shall be like him*" (I John 3:2). If Jesus is a man (and man is in a fleshly body), then how are we to understand what Paul said in I Corinthians 15:50? Furthermore, with reference to what John stated, we don't have to wait till Jesus comes to know what we'll be like. We already know: in our fleshly

bodies. Did not Jesus say we shall be as the angels of God in heaven" (Matthew 22:20)?

John uses the wrong basis for his assumption. He is trying to establish *similarities* between priests on earth and Christ's heavenly priesthood. In Hebrews Paul shows there are not *similarities but contrasts*.

First, priests under the Old Testament law were of the tribe of Levi. Jesus came from the lineage of Judah. Paul said the priesthood had changed. Christ is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec (Hebrews 6:20). The earthly priests had to offer sacrifices continually: for themselves and for the people. Christ sacrificed Himself once: not for His sins, but for mankind's. None but the high priest could enter the Holy of Holies, *heaven* itself. John is, as I said, making an assumption on supposed similarities whereas Hebrews deals with contrasts.

### Jesus Was Deity, or Divine

In the January 1990 issue of **Faith and Facts** John completely reverses himself in what he wrote back in 1987 and what he preached in Louisville, March 1990. It makes me wonder if there are two John Welch's writing things opposite to each other. Here are some quotations: (January 1990).

Page 58: "The most obvious way to establish the divinity of Jesus is through the Old Testament references to the fact that the Messiah would be the Son of God... Prophecy can establish his deity."

"...Hebrews 1:8-9 as stating a clear reference to the divinity of Jesus..."

"This passage (Psalm 2:6-21) is quoted in Acts 4:25-30; Acts 13:33 and Hebrews 1:5 clearly established the deity of Jesus in each instance."

In 1987 John wrote that Jesus left His deity in heaven and was merely a man on earth. IN the January 1990 issue he reverses himself and states that Jesus was divine, indicating that he never gave it up or lost it when he

came to this earth. However, two months later (March) John preached in Louisville (again) what he wrote in 1987, reversing again what he wrote in January.

### Jesus' Sinlessness

In the same article (January 1990) John wrote the following on page 59: "As we will show later with the miracles, Jesus' sinlessness serves as indirect proof of his deity." "Only *one man* (emphasis is on the manhood) was able to be sinless, and that clearly points to Jesus' identity as the Son of God." "Jesus establishes through the temptation, his divinity by the superb nature of his humanity." "He defends himself and establishes his divinity, by once again referring to his sinlessness." All these quotations are taken from the same article.

It is quite clear that John repeatedly contradicts himself. First he says Jesus was not deity, or divine, while upon this earth and then he says his sinlessness, overcoming temptation is proof of his divinity. Which is it, John? You can't have it both ways!

John criticizes those who allegedly say that Jesus overcame temptations by his supernatural powers. No, I don't believe Jesus used supernatural powers to overcome the temptations of the devil. But I am not aware of any brethren that teach that he did. Perhaps some do, but I personally don't know of any who teach this.

I do not want to misrepresent John in anyway, but these statements give me the impression that John believes Jesus overcame temptations by his divine nature or supernatural powers. I may be wrong, but his statements are so contradictory and confusing that I simply don't understand what he meant any other way.

This poses a problem with his criticism of the issue, "Does man have to sin?". If Jesus' sinlessness was proof of his divinity, then in view


of John's own statement man has to sin because no man is divine; that it is impossible for a mortal human being to live a life of sinless perfection. How does John reconcile these statements with the issue, "Does man have to sin?" Remember, John said his overcoming temptation was proof of his divinity.

### Conclusion

I have been on **Faith and Facts** writing staff since the mid 70's and have written many articles for it through the years. I've known and loved his father, Robert, for many years. I've met John only once or twice and our meeting was most cordial. So I have no axe to grind. This is not a personal vendetta and I hope I've not expressed any sarcasm or ugliness in what I've written, for such is not in my heart. It is difficult for me to write this in reply to John's sermon and articles in view of my past association with the Welches, especially Robert. But as God is no respecter of persons, neither can I be. Some brethren defend a preacher, teacher who teaches error (as in the case of divorce and remarriage, for example) because he was distinguished among the brethren for so many years and has done so much good. But that is no excuse for failing to speak out against his false teachings. It does not matter who he was or is, if he preaches or teaches error, he should be dealt with as any other brother in error. I consider what John teaches the most serious error that has been taught. I trust John will take this with the proper attitude as I tried to write it with the proper attitude. **GT**

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 wish I could take credit for the title but I can't. It was the reaction of a friend toward a certain doctrine that some brethren have begun to espouse. Nonetheless, I thought it would make a good title for this article. I must admit that at times trying to understand, much less explain someone's false doctrine must somehow be like a blind man trying to understand my explanation of what it is I see at the end of a kaleidoscope and how it got there.

The familiar line of bygone days regarding the innovations in the Lord's church was "brethren we are drifting." I don't think drifting is as much the problem as it once was. I fear it is worse, some have finally arrived but don't know where they are (neither do I) when it comes to their understanding and application of the Bible.

#### Peripheral Speculations vs.

#### The Core Of Revealed Truth

Some of the strange doctrines being promoted today among brethren strike at the very core of the faith revealed in the New Testament. I have listened, read and discussed with some their views about things that were, in my personal judgment, based on the periphery of Biblical faith. Yet, they have wildly confused their speculations, regarding uncertain peripheral possibilities, for the actual core of facts revealed in the New Testament. Unfortunately, they are content to rest with their mistake. One could only wonder how long it would be before their dogmatism would lead to their demagoguery where such would ultimately land them.

Unfortunately, and most tragically, none of us have to wonder any longer - they have landed - they tell us, "Jesus could not be both man and God. He was just an ordinary guy like you and me." Extremism begets extremism. We could wish that such extremism was only self-destructive

## "Philosophical Ink-Spilling" - On The Deity Of Christ

by Bill Robinson, Jr.



but wishes are not fact. *The fact is it is a pernicious error that must be exposed.*

#### Making Controversy Positive

Controversy if it is going to be positive (and it *can* be!) demands honesty — in self-evaluation of motives and method. Such honesty forces us to recognize that unless we place our highest value on truth in controversy (regardless of *who* is right or wrong), the very real and inherent danger is that we are likely to become the very thing we oppose.

The above principle is illustrated in Romans 2:1, "Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practise the same things." The condemnation of the Jews is not for the act of judging but for their failure to judge honestly (methods and motives). Certainly, the Gentiles were guilty of sin but the Jews, in their hot pursuit of the Gentiles, did not stop

to consider their own guilt or accountability in relation to the law of God. The Jews placed a higher value on being right than they did on the truth. Their sole purpose in condemning the Gentiles for sin was to prove they were right.

#### Reconciling

#### Contradictory Revelations

In some of the events leading up to the resurrection of this ancient heresy regarding the Deity of Christ (cf. the Monarchianism heresy with its various spin-offs in the 2nd and 3rd Centuries) there is a certain logical evolution to its rebirth. Ironically, the comparable analogy is to the extremism found in the logical progression and subsequent development of the five points of Calvinism (i.e. the T.U.L.I.P.). The very thing these claim to be fighting, who have resurrected this baseless heresy relegating Christ to "an ordinary guy" like you and me. The doctrine of total hereditary depravity (namely, that at birth all men receive Adam's sinful nature) forms the seed bed for the other four points of Calvinism (unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and the perseverance of the elect). Thus, to expose the error of total hereditary depravity (Ezekiel 18:20-ff - proves that God never transfers or imputes either the guilt or righteousness of one individual to another) is to see the collapse of both the error and logic in Calvinistic theology.

We find the same is true regarding the evolution of today's thought which has rekindled, at least in part, the flames of this 2nd and 3rd Century heresy, which for all practical purposes ends up denying the Deity of Christ. Calvinism seeks to elevate the Sovereignty of God at the expense of man's free will. In like manner, those today seeking to elevate man's ability to live sinlessly do so at the expense of Christ's deity.

Regarding Calvinism we freely admit there are places in the Bible where the free-will of man is difficult to reconcile with the Sovereignty of God. Yet, we must also freely admit with equal, if not greater clarity, that God places both concepts side by side in the Bible. Thus, affirming their co-existence, which is tantamount to denying they are mutually exclusive concepts. However difficult the two concepts may be to reconcile in our thinking neither should impede our ability to know, nor interfere with our ability to comply with what, God has clearly revealed about Himself and commanded us to accept by faith.

The Hebrew writer's account of Abraham's obvious difficulty in reconciling the fact that Isaac was the child of promise with God's command to offer Isaac as a sacrifice — two seemingly contradictory revelations to the human mind -- is an illustration of the point at hand. Yet, whether or not Abraham could reconcile the two seemingly contradictory revelations in his thinking was not a critical issue to his faith. This is demonstrated by the fact that regardless of how difficult it may have been for him to reconcile the two revelations, there was one thing that he could do; namely, obey God by faith. The Hebrew writer further clarifies for us, what the details of Abraham's preparation for offering up his son already signify in Genesis 22:1-5; namely, that in Abraham's mind when God commanded the sacrifice of Isaac it was as good as done (Hebrews 11:17-19).

Though we may not be able to *fully* explain or understand Biblical concepts, especially those involving a paradox, we must not exaggerate one over the other. To do so, is to be guilty of denying, or at the very least deprecating, one of the concepts. Thus, ending up with a doctrine and/or practice in contradiction to

the plain and unmistakable truths contained in the Bible.

### **The Possibility vs. The Reality of Sin**

The present issue for those contending that "Jesus was just an ordinary guy" grows out of their exaggerated concept of man's ability to live sinlessly. Yet, even that is no doubt an over reaction to the other extreme which says that man has to sin. Whether man has to sin or whether or not he can live without sinning should not be made the crux of any doctrine. For on the one hand, has come the philosophical ink-spilling in journals and theological speculating in sermons exaggerating man's free-will at the expense of Christ's Deity. On the other hand, has come the anti-scriptural theorizing that man has a sin nature via either his birth or some such modification of total hereditary depravity. When one begins to speculate about peripheral possibilities taking it as their core of faith then the actual facts contained in the real core must be exaggerated in order to fit the speculations.

The Bible clearly affirms man is a free moral agent (II Timothy 2:20-21). Right along side this fact the Bible teaches all men have sinned (Romans 3:23). Man was created a free moral agent before sin polluted his environment. Thus, at that point, sin was only a possibility. Now by the exercise of man's free will sin entered and became a part of his environment (Psalms 51:5). Man still retains his free-will as at creation *but*, with one significant difference, *sin is no longer a possibility but a reality*<sup>1</sup>.

Regarding man's environment at creation (i.e. sin only as a possibility) it could be said that man could live without sinning. However, we are not living in the possibility of sin's non-existence. To the contrary, we are living in the reality of sin's actual presence. Hence, it is to this point

that the Bible speaks to every man. That is, to the realities of sin in man's existence! Thus, the reality of the Bible lays the two facts side by side, namely, man's free moral agency and the fact man has sinned and is going to sin (Romans 3:23; I John 1:10-2:1). *The biblical concepts dealt with in Scriptures are not mere possibilities but actual realities.*

### **The Probability vs. The Necessity of Sin**

If we are going to abide by the time-honored slogan "speak where the Bible speaks" (and we should for it is scriptural -1 Peter 4:11; Colossians 3:17) then let us speak to the realities. Can we not all say, "Therefore, I will not be too surprised at sin, for I am just human"? Is that a tacit admission that I have no choice in sin or is it not simply a recognition of the reality that I have sinned and probably am going to sin? Why should we deal with the possibility of man living above sin when that is not a reality for any of us? Saying one is *going* to sin is far different from saying one *has* to sin. The former makes man accountable for sin; the latter removes man from accountability.

Let's take Abraham again and the predicament of the two seemingly contradictory revelations. For Abraham to have refused to offer Isaac on the basis that God had made him the seed of promise would have constituted disobedience. Instead, the text tells us, "Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death" (Hebrews 11:19 NIV). Does the fact that Abraham reasoned God could raise up Isaac in some fashion demand that God *had* to raise him up? Certainly not. Not any more than the fact God acknowledges the presence of sin and recognized that man would sin forces us to the conclusion that man has to sin.

The fact God knows man is going to sin does *not* demand we take the position man has to sin; any more than because we know man has a free-will demands we take the position man can live above sin perfectly. Those are two extremes growing out of an exaggerated concept of two truisms which are made to appear mutually exclusive because of the exaggeration. Yet, in reality the Bible puts them forth side by side as co-existent facts (namely, man's free will and man is going to sin). One does not have to explain the co-existence of two Biblical facts he just has to accept it by faith.

When exaggeration forces our thinking and discussions to run two "seemingly contradictory" but indisputable facts to the periphery (i.e. either man *has* to sin or man can *live without* sin) such exaggeration may provide for interesting theological speculations. However, such speculating in journals and pulpits is little more than philosophical ink-spilling, "which minister questionings, rather than a dispensation of God which is in faith" (I Timothy 1:4).

### **Extremism Begets Extremism**

Yet, in light of these persistent peripheral discussions overestimating the ability of man's free-will to live without sin, makes it necessary to underestimate the Deity of Christ. As noted before, extremism begets extremism and that is precisely where these are who promote this doctrine. In their exaggerated concept of man's ability in free-will they must exaggerate Jesus' humanity at the expense of His Deity. For to say, "Jesus was just an ordinary guy like you and me and that he lived perfectly without sinning" is an obvious attempt to prove the innate ability of man's free-will to live perfect without sin. The best that can be said for the question whether man can live without or above sin is that it lies on the uncertain ground of the periphery of the facts we do know.

The answer to such a question, if we could know it, is not relative to the reality of our existence. The relevant issue and reality facing man's existence, regardless of how we theorize about the peripheral possibilities, is found on the certain ground of the core of Biblical facts which deal with that reality. Namely, *all have sinned and are going to sin*, this we know! Let us be content to leave our preaching and writing in the reality of these facts which the Bible has revealed.

### **God in the Flesh**

Now to the issue of Jesus' Deity while on earth. I do not profess to understand fully how Jesus could be God and man. However, I know sufficient evidence has been presented in the Bible to prove both claims. Thus, the Bible lays them down side by side affirming the reality of their co-existence in the being of Jesus. To deprecate either his humanity or deity is to strike at the very core of the credibility and doctrine of the gospel, which at its very best borders on blasphemy and at its worse *is* blasphemy.

One cannot double speak in this matter. Jesus was either God in the flesh or He was an ordinary guy like you and me. To say that Jesus was Deity before, during and after his earthly ministry cannot be harmonized with the statement that He was an ordinary guy like you and me.

Appealing to Philippians 2:3-11, especially verse 7, as evidence that Jesus gave up something pertaining to his deity is to miss the import of the passage. The passage reads, "but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men" (verse 7). The context of this statement must be seen against the backdrop of the exhortation to the Philippian church to not do anything based upon one's personal rights (which would constitute faction or vain glory - verse 3). But rather, they were to empty themselves of that

kind of thinking and "mindset," "in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others." (verse 4). As the supreme example of this "mindset" Paul appeals to Jesus by saying, "Have this *mind* in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (verse 5). That is to say, Christ did not insist on his rights as God to remain in Heaven (His equality with God was not something that could only be grasped in Heaven - verse 6) but used those rights emptying (pouring out) of himself in service to others in loyal submission to God, to become the very expression of God's purpose in creating man from the beginning. He did this not by laying aside His divine nature but by taking up the form of servant being made in the likeness of men. Hence, Christians are not to insist on their individual rights but rather use their rights, prerogatives and privileges to be of service to others (cf. also I Peter 2:14-15). There is nothing inherent within the Philippian passage which suggests Christ gave up anything with regard to His Deity when he came to this earth. To the contrary, He *added* something to it - the nature of man. Thus, the Bible affirms the reality of Jesus as God-man. Our difficulty in trying to explain and/or understand this concept is put in perspective by G. Campbell Morgan who wrote, "*Perfect analysis and explanation of His Person is impossible...This mystery and revelation uniting God and man in a Person is the centre of Christianity, and is without parallel, and without the possibility of explanation by analogy...The union in one Person of God and man is something undreamed of, unknown, until it broke upon the world as a fact in human history*" (**The Crises Of Christ**, pages 68,80 - emphasis mine b.r.).

### **Conclusion**

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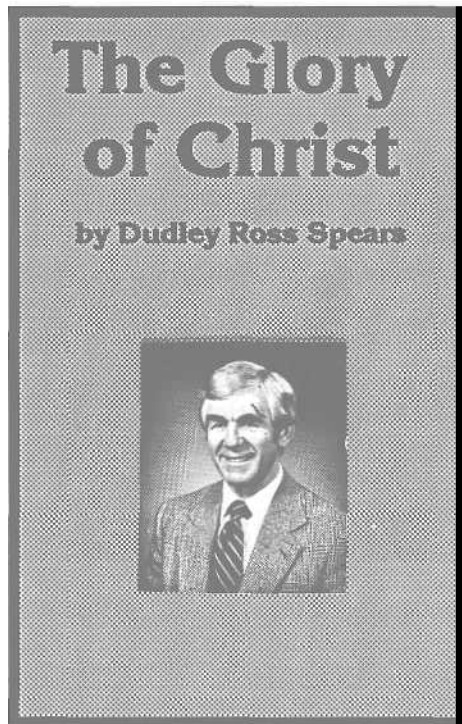
THE glory of our Lord Jesus Christ is vastly beyond the limits of human mental ability to fully comprehend. Should we have the power to do so our ability to express it would be inadequate. Glory associated with Christ Jesus is the honor and esteem in which He is held before, during, and after time is. Even when time ceases, Jesus Christ will ever be "the Lord of glory."

Glory signifies the honor bestowed upon someone or something that results from a good opinion. When it applies to deity it is a comprehensive term. Hermann Cremer wrote: "(It) signifies 'the august contents of God's own entire nature, embracing the aggregate of all His attributes according to their undivided yet revealed fullness.'" (Umbreit, *die Sunde*, page 99), or which embraces all that is excellent in the divine nature." **Biblio-Theological Lexicon of the New Testament Greek**, page 206.

The glory of deity can only be comprehended as it is manifested. God's glory has been manifested in different ways, but the fullness of His glory was manifested in Jesus Christ. The Hebrew writer said, "God, after He

**Continued From Page 9**

We must remain true to the teaching of God's Word. That is only possible through a reverent attitude toward the Scriptures. That reverence is characterized both positively and negatively. Positively by careful investigation and diligent study of the things (core of facts) which have been revealed. Negatively by resting content with the fact that the secret things (speculations) belong to God (Deuteronomy 29:29). Hence, we may boldly proclaim with Heaven, the indisputable fact revealed in Christ, "All of God lives in Christ fully, (even when Christ was on earth)" (Colossians 2:9 New Century Version). P. O. Box 666, Kemp, TX 75143



spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through also He made the world, and He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power" (Hebrews 1:1-3, NASB). Not only has God spoken through the Son; God has been manifested as the glory of God in the Son.

John's prolog to his gospel record of Christ begins by revealing, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God" (John 1:1-2). "The Word," John continues, "became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (verse 14). John's reference to the glory beheld is done in such a manner as to recognize this glory as unique to the Word that became flesh. No other being ever became flesh like the Word. No other being could possess the glory beheld in the Word who became flesh.

This Word is Jesus Christ who entered into all that pertains to humanity and mortality. And much later the same apostle wrote, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of Life - the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us --that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:1-3). Here again the uniqueness of our Lord Jesus Christ is highlighted. No other could be so described.

But His glory was partially laid aside when He became flesh. If you consider the entire existence of Jesus, the only Son of God, His earthly tour was the lowest point of His entire being. For as Paul wrote, "who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation (*emptied Himself*, marginal note), taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death on the cross" (Philippians 2:6-8). Of no other being in the flesh could it be truthfully said, "He was equal with God." Only the only Son of the Father could fit such a reverent expression.

The glory which the Son enjoyed as equal with God was partially laid aside briefly as He became a flesh and blood man. Once more from Hermann Cremer it is good to note: "Christ *declined* by His own perfect power to give effect to, or by force to demonstrate, that *Einai Is a Theo* (equality with God) that belonged to Him in virtue of His *Morphe Theou* (form of God)." (page 353). This is a

reverent way of describing what Christ did when He "emptied Himself." He did not lose His basic essence -- deity, for He simply could not. He could, as deity, decline in His own perfect power the glory of God for a brief time. Like the eclipse of the sun, Jesus glory went briefly from view, but remained as remarkably glorious as ever. The innkeeper saw nothing unusual in a baby that was being born in his stables. The People of Nazareth were not conscious of His innate deity. The Doctors at Jerusalem may have thought of Him as a rather bright lad, but likely not much more.

Even though the human form of Christ was not something to be admired, for He was "as a root out of dry ground" with no (stately) form or splendor." Rather, "He was despised and rejected by men..." (Isaiah 53:2-3). But all the time He lived among men, He was their Lord and Savior. He was among them and like them, but He was always more. He was the promised Messiah, the Christ, their King, Prophet, and Priest. They refused Him. He came to His very own and they rejected Him (John 1:11). They crucified Him simply because they did not recognize Him as "the Lord of glory" (I Corinthians 2:8). Jesus was, is, and ever shall be the very same Lord of glory.

He demonstrated repeatedly His uniqueness even when His glory was temporarily obscured by His human form. He demonstrated power over nature in turning water to wine (John 2:7-11). His power over the unseen world of departed spirits was manifested when with just a word He summoned Lazareth back to the land of the living (John 11:43). He demonstrated His power over all ordinary men by His ability to accurately read deep into the recesses of men's hearts (Matthew 9:4). He needed not that any should inform Him of man, for "He (and He alone among ordinary men) knew what was in man" (John 2:25). He repeatedly accepted worship from mere men (Matthew 2:2; 8:2; 9:18; 20:20). Even ordinary men who were recipients of the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit shunned worship from other ordinary men — but not the Lord of Glory. This forever sets Him apart from all other beings who ever appeared in the flesh.

The greatest eclipse of His glory was seen in His association with sinful mortals. He lived His entire life from the cradle to the resurrection with not a single blemish on His record. But this cannot be said of any other being in the flesh. It was humiliation of the deepest dye to submit to the cruelty and brutality of sinful men, yet "He was numbered with transgressors" (Matthew 27:54).

The glory of Christ was covered only briefly and then restored. His prayer to the Father expressed His single desire. "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was" (John 17:5). This glory is the ultimate expres-

sion of God's essential Being. Again, the glory of God is the grand substance of God's own entire nature, and embodies "the aggregate of all His attributes according to their undivided yet revealed fullness." How fitting it is for Paul to write of the mystery of godliness as, "God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the gentiles, believed on in the world, *received up in glory*" (I Timothy 3:16).

The mystery of godliness has been revealed, but there is still a bit of mystery about what has been revealed, for it is beyond our ability to fully comprehend, much less describe, the ineffable glory of Christ. It is enough for us to be impressed so deeply with it that we follow His steps obediently, reverently, and completely.

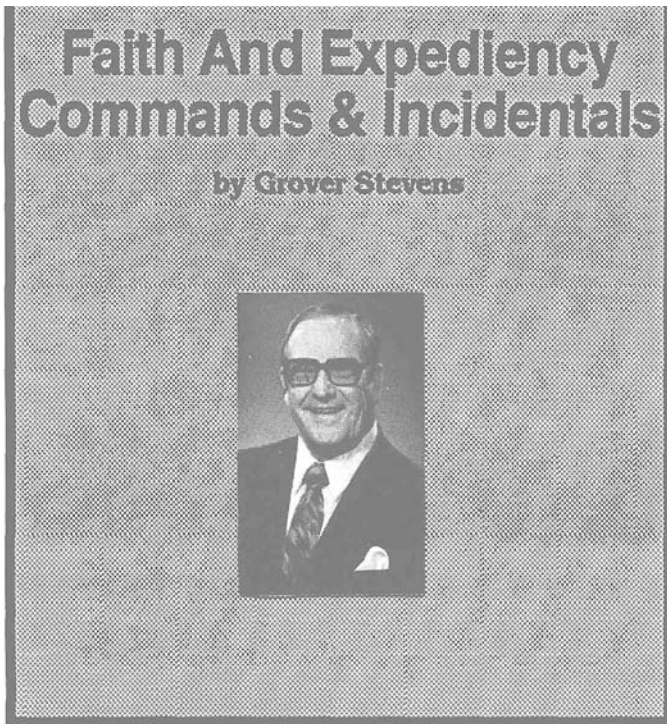
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### Faith

II Corinthians 5:7 declares that "we walk by faith, not by sight." Romans 10:17 teaches that "faith comes by hearing ...the Word of God." We can only do by faith that which the Word of God teaches. Jude 3 teaches us that we should "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," that is the Bible. The apostle John said, "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God" (II John 9-11). From Galatians 1:6-12 we learn that the gospel may be perverted by doing or teaching things "from men," thus *not* from God. Anything taught or practiced religiously that cannot be found in the Bible, the Word of God, is therefore "from men." In Matthew 15:9 our Lord, Jesus Christ, taught that such rendered our worship "vain" (empty), or unacceptable to God (see verses 13-14).

### Incidentals

Those subordinate items which are necessary to carrying out the commands of God are things which are incidental to the commands. They are the "how" or "manner" of carrying out the command — the details involved.

### Indifference

Of the several ways in which a command may be obeyed, it is a matter of indifference as to which way is used.

### Expediency

Whatever method of executing a command that would be the most "advantageous" or "advisable" would therefore be the most expedient.

### Test

It is easy for people to suppose that what they are doing is merely a matter of expediency, when in fact, it is a matter of their adjusting God's instructions to suit themselves. This, of course, would be disobedience. Before a thing can be expedient, it must first be incidental, and incidentals are always "subordinate items" necessary to carrying out a command and are *never* anything *more, or less, or different from*, the command itself. So, anything that: adds to, or takes from, or in anyway alters or changes the command could not be an incidental subordinate to the command, and therefore could *not* be an expedient. Such would be an addition to, or perversion of the command.

### Illustration

God commands us to "give" on the 1st day of the week (I Corinthians 16:2, II Corinthians 9:7). Just how we obey this command is incidental — it would be a subordinate item, for giving must be done in some way. Giving might be done by everyone passing by a table and laying their contribution on it; or by dropping it in a box in the vestibule; or by passing a collection tray. Any one of these ways would be a subordinate item necessary to obeying the command to give. It would be a matter of indifference as to just which one was used. Passing the collection tray seems to be more advantageous and efficient and therefore expedient. When we give by passing a collection tray, we do not add to the command to give, nor do we take from it, nor alter it in any way. We just give.

### Opinion

Opinion is human conjecture -- a guess, and is no part of faith. It is *not* an incidental nor expedient.

### Assemble

Incidentals to the command to assemble are such things as: a place (building), time of assembly, seats, lights, heat, etc. The church building may also be incidental to God's command to preach, teach, and do benevolence. Social, secular, and recreational activities are *not* subordinate items to any commandment God gave to the church and are therefore a misuse of the church building — the church's facilities.

### Preach And Teach

The church is commanded to teach the Word of God (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 6:4). Some incidentals to carrying out the command to preach and teach are: black board, charts, public address speakers, tracts, papers, classes, visual aids, daily meetings (gospel meetings), midweek meetings, classes, radio, special courses, house to house, etc. Women are also commanded to teach (Titus 2:3-4, Colossians 3:16, Romans 10:9-13). Women are

forbidden to teach or exercise authority over the man (I Timothy 2:11-15, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35). Thus God's Word forbids women preachers, elders (pastors or bishops), or teaching in any way that would usurp authority over man. Women may teach women or children.

### Lord's Supper

God's Word teaches us that there are 2 elements in the Lord's Supper - unleavened bread and fruit of the vine, and that it is to be observed when the saints come together in the church on the first day of the week. Incidentals include the time of day, plates for the bread, cups for the fruit of the vine, etc. There is no authority for the Masonic Lodge, or any organization other than the Lord's church, to observe the Lord's Supper, nor for observing it on any occasion other than the Lord's Day.

### Sing

God's command in the New Testament is to "sing" spiritual songs. Incidentals & expedients include songs, song books, a leader, etc. *Mechanical music* is not incidental to singing, but is an addition - something other than singing. It is therefore *not* "of faith," but is "of men" and renders our worship "vain" (Matthew 15:9).

### Missionary Society

Christ built the *church*. He is the head of the church. He purchased the church with His blood. We glorify God in the church. Our worship and service to God is acceptable in the church. The local church is God's functional organization to do His work, and is all sufficient to do the work that God gave it to do -- preach, teach, worship, and do benevolent work. God set officers in the local church -- preachers to preach, Elders to teach, oversee and guide the worship and work of the church, and Deacons to tend to the benevolent work. The *Missionary Society* is *not* the church. It is another organization — separate and apart from the church — designed and built by men, not God, to do the work of churches in general, for the churches, with money contributed from the churches, thus ignoring and violating the independence and autonomy of the local churches. It is *not* the church. Christ is *not* the head of it. Christ did not give Himself for it. It is an additional organization. It is *not* merely "a method" of the church doing its work. It is not a subordinate item necessary to carrying out the commands of God. It is *not* "of faith", and is a "plant" that God did not plant and will be "rooted up" in the Judgment day, together with those who advocate and support it (Matthew 15:9-14, Matthew 7:21-23).

### Sponsoring Church

The word "catholic" is from the Greek word "*katholikos*" which means, "universal, general." The word "*katholikos*" is from two Greek words, "*kata*" - by, plus

"*holos*" - whole. It is defined by Webster: general, universal, comprehensive, broad. With a capital "C" it becomes a proper noun and refers to the Roman Catholic Church. It is a good description of that church, which has the Bishop of the church in Rome (local church) overseeing the work of churches in general (catholic); thus a local "eldership" with a general oversight. This departure in organization was (and is) the dominant error of the Roman Catholic Church.

Today, many churches of Christ are following in the footsteps of the Roman Catholic apostasy. One church "assumes" the "oversight" of a general (catholic) work -- a work of all the churches in general — and asks all the churches to send them money so that they can perform and oversee this general work for them and churches in general. They call this "cooperation," and all who object to this "catholic" arrangement are branded as "anti-cooperation," as if they did not believe in cooperation at all, when in reality they only object to the catholicity of this arrangement. Such an arrangement is a violation of the autonomy (independent function) of the local churches. The Scriptures teach that the apostles established churches in various localities — Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, Rome, etc. And that each church had its own elders, deacons, and evangelists, and that the elders' oversight was limited to the congregation of which they were a part ("among you"). (See I Peter 5:2, Acts 14:23, Philippians 1:1, Acts 20:28).

Now we are told that the Bible says "do it" and doesn't say "how," so we are left at liberty to do it any way we see best. That is all well and good, *except* we are *not* left at liberty to "do it" (any work of the church) in any way that violates the Scriptural organization of the church, or violates any other Scriptural teaching. The Christian Church argues that their *Missionary Society* is just a "method" of cooperation to accomplish a work of the church. Yet, Churches of Christ, broke off fellowship with them because it violated the organization of the church. Now, Churches of Christ are doing the same thing by supporting "Orphan Homes" that are organizations separate and apart from the church, just like the *Missionary Society*! And some other "Orphan Homes" are organized under a "sponsoring church" arrangement which is just like the "Catholic" Church organization.

These are *not* just "methods" of the church doing its work. Neither of these operations is a "method" of work, but are unscriptural organizations that are performing and overseeing the work of churches in general for the churches. In the Bible each church itself did its own work. Acts 4:34-35 tells us that the local church itself "made distribution according to need," and Acts 6:1-6 tells us "how" they did it - by the service of their deacons.

These human organizations are not "subordinate items" to any command of God to the church, and therefore cannot be expedients. Rather they are additions to the commands. They usurp to themselves the command of God to the church and the churches capitulate and relinquish the work that God gave them to do, to these humanly devised organizations. This is an affront to the Lord's divinely established and blood bought institution, the *church*.

This is the way the Caprock church has always done its work of caring for widows and orphans (and others). This is the way the New Testament church did its work of caring for widows and orphans, and it is the way Churches of Christ have done this work all thru the ages until 1910 when the first institutional orphan home was founded to do this work for the churches. It was 1953 before the Lubbock Children's Home was established to do this work for churches in general (catholic). The Caprock church has had as many as 3 widows and 7 fatherless children at one time to whom this church "made distribution—according to need." We did not send money to the Red Cross, or the Salvation Army, or the Missionary Society, or an "Orphan Home" organization (all separate organizations from the church), or some "sponsoring church" for them to do this work for churches in general, but we did it just like the church did in Acts 4:34-35.

The apostle Peter said, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies...and many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of<sup>1</sup> (II Peter 2:1-2). These folks find it easier to make a smoke screen to blind the eyes of the uninformed by screaming "anti-Orphan Home" than to find Scripture that authorizes their human, not Divine, arrangements. Christ said, "In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men" (Matthew 5:9). (See also Matthew 7:21-23). And the Holy Spirit said, "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean (unscriptural) thing" (II Corinthians 6:17).

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## Our Schoolmaster

by Olen Holderby



**W**herefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). My observation tells me that there has been a very limited application made of this verse; and, maybe a lack of understanding of it. Common use appears to make this verse refer to the time element from the introduction of the Mosaic law to the birth of Christ (or to His completed work on earth). In a sense this idea may be true; but, in my judgment, far too limited. There is a truth about this verse that seems to me to be far more important than the time element; and, the need to grasp this truth ought to be apparent.

### The Text

The King James Version renders the word *Paidagogos* as "schoolmaster;" while the New American Standard offers "tutor" (with "child-conductor" in the margin); and adds, "The law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ." The New King James Version says, "The law was our tutor to bring us to Christ." The New International Version reads, "The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ." Marshall gives a literal translation as, "The law has become a trainer of us (up) to Christ." These variations may be called minor differences in rendering the word *Paidagogos*; but, with the definition, may help us to see some new truth.

WE. Vine says that *Paidagogos* is "a guide, or guardian or trainer of boys, literally a child-leader, a tutor," then he adds the comment, The *Paidagogos* was not the instructor of the child; he exercised a general supervision over him and was responsible for his moral and physical well-being." **Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words**, Page 605). The Bible Knowledge Commentary, in commenting on Galatians 3:24, offers this explanation. "The *Paidagogos* is difficult to render into English since there is no exact parallel to this position in modern society." Such was responsible with protecting children "from the evils of society and giving them moral training." These comments would not make such an one the "teacher," but merely the one responsible. Normally, a trusted slave would be the *Paidagogos*, and was said to be a strict disciplinarian — about which much might be said, but that is not our aim in this article.

Accepting the above definition, as I do, I believe it would be a mistake to equate "schoolmaster" with "teacher." In Galatians 4:2, where we find the only use of the word "tutors" in the Bible, the context appears to bear out the same thought — there is a far greater meaning to this word "schoolmaster" than merely a teacher.

In what sense, then, was the law a schoolmaster, tutor, or trainer?

### The Design Of The Law

Let us briefly enumerate some thoughts about the design of the law. In doing so we cite a few statements from Paul's epistle to the Romans. The law entered that the offense might abound (5:20) to open the door - for the grace of God. The law itself, was not the cause of sin (7:12; but, it was by the law that Paul knew **sin** to be **sin** (7:7). From these we may conclude that the law was a revealer of sin; i.e., what it is, the power of it, the true nature of it, and the deceitfulness of it (Hebrews 3:13. While sin produced all manner of evil desires in Paul; it was the law (commandment) that made Paul aware of sin's sinfulness (7:8). The law made him fully aware of his plight in sin - separated from God (Isaiah 59:1 -2; Romans 6:23a). Again, that which was good (the law) did not produce death for Paul; but, that law made Paul see just how sinful sin really was (Romans 7:13). In addition, let us keep in mind that the law condemned sin, and spelled out the punishment for sin (Romans 8:3; Ezekiel 18:20). Nor should we forget the fact that the law could not save from sin (Galatians 3:11). Having taken note of the above facts, let us go back to —

### The Law As A Schoolmaster

From the design of the law, I conclude that the law was to cause those who lived under it to become fully aware of their need for a Savior. They were in a lost and undone

condition; and their law could not save them. This, I believe, is the main point of Galatians 2:24. Is not this the focus of almost all the law, if not all of it? The very difficulty of keeping the law (Acts 15:10) seems to suggest the same thought.

There is a law of Christ (I Corinthians 9:21). This law does for us (and more) what the Mosaic law did for the Jews. It identifies sin for us (I John 3:4; 5:17; James 4:178); it condemns and spells out the punishment for sin (Romans 6:23; II Thessalonians 1:7-9). Law does not, indeed cannot, save from sin; thus, we can see our own great need for a Savior. Obviously, we have the advantage of knowing that this Savior has already come, suffered and died for us, and ascended back to heaven; but, it is His law that makes known to us our need for Him. We are in sin! We are lost! Our righteousness is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6; Romans 10:3; Titus 3:5). The remedy is to be found in the relationship between the gospel and His life-giving blood (Matthew 26:28; I Peter 1:18-23). This is the "good news" part of God's revelation to man (Romans 5:8; I Peter 2:21-25. And, this is why both Peter and Paul could speak of our obedience of the gospel (the truth) as saving our souls (Romans 1:16; I Peter 2:22,23). We have obeyed the Savior (Hebrews 5:9). **GT**

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 &  
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## "Unto Them and Unto All"

by James E. Cooper



*"Does the expression, 'the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all' in II Corinthians 9:13 mean that non-saints received a part of the funds sent by the Gentile churches to Jerusalem?"*

No. Some of our brethren, in an attempt to find a passage where church funds were bestowed upon someone other than *saints* have imagined that this passage contains a direct statement to that effect. However, their conclusion is based upon a very simple assumption: that the "them" means saints, and the "all" means non-saints.

The argument offered by these brethren is that the word *pantas* ["all"] is found in Acts 5:11; Galatians 6:10;

I Thessalonians 3:12 and 5:12 where a dichotomy between saints and non-saints is observed. They then assume that the same dichotomy is meant in II Corinthians 9:13. However, this conclusion is not necessary.

### The Text in Context

The meaning of the "all" must be determined from the context in which it is found. Those referred to as "saints" in I Corinthians 16:1-2; II Corinthians 8:4 and 9:1,12, are more specifically identified as "the poor saints in Jerusalem" in Acts 15:25-26. Hence, the word "them" in II Corinthians 9:13 refers not merely to "saints," but to the "poor saints in Jerusalem." A distinction is not made between saints and non-saints, but between poor saints in Jerusalem and in other places.

On his third missionary journey Paul instructed Gentile Christians in Galatia, Macedonia and Achaia to raise funds to relieve the needs of poor saints in Jerusalem. As he spent more than three years on this journey (Acts 20:7), the poor saints in Jerusalem had to wait a long time for relief. [However, remember, the Lord said: "Ye have

the poor with you always," Matthew 26:11]. In raising these funds there was the additional purpose of cementing the bonds of fellowship between Jewish and Gentile Christians. This is spelled out in II Corinthians 9:12-15.

In II Corinthians 9:12, in anticipation of its effect, Paul said the "ministration of this service" does two things: (1) It not only "filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints," but it also (2) "aboundeth also through many thanksgiving unto God." The reason many [Jewish Christians] abound in thanksgiving to God is that this ministration serves as a test to "prove" [demonstrate] the genuineness of the conversion of the Gentiles (verse 13a). They glorify God for two reasons: "for the obedience of your confession unto the gospel of Christ" and "for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all" (verse 13b, ASV). The saints in Jerusalem would then pray for Gentile Christians and "long after you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you" (verse 14).

### An Exhibition of Fellowship

Another factor in the context which must be taken into consideration is the word translated "distribution." It is the Greek word *koinonia*, defined by Thayer as: "fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, intercourse." He says it is used in II Corinthians 8:4; 9:13 and Romans 15:26 in the sense of "a benefaction jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship" (Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, page 352). W. E. Vine says it is used in these passages in the sense of "that which is the outcome of fellowship" (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, Volume II, Page 90). Arndt & Gingrich state that the word is used in Romans 15:26 in the sense of a "sign of fellowship" (A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament). Did Gentile Christians have "fellowship" with *unconverted* Jews in Jerusalem, or was their fellowship with the "saints in Jerusalem"?

David Lipscomb wrote his commentary long before the debate over II Corinthians 9:13 surfaced among our brethren. He said of this verse: "Seeing their obedience and fidelity to the gospel of Christ, and their liberality to the poor saints in Jerusalem in the offerings they made, prompted them to glorify God for their professed subjection to the gospel of Christ, and their beneficence to all men, for their liberality showed that they excluded no Christian from their fellowship" (Gospel Advocate Commentary, page 125).

J. W. McGarvey said that Paul "certainly seems to have been well received by the Christians at Jerusalem when he came as the representative of these Gentile churches. If the attitude of the unchristian Jewish mind toward him was still relentlessly bitter, it must be borne in mind that he took no collection for them, and that they were in no

manner in his thought in this connection" (**Standard Bible Commentary**, page 219).

R. C. H. Lenski argues that the word *haplotes* "does not mean 'liberality' or 'liberal' (our versions) but, as already explained, 'single-mindedness.' And *koinonia* means 'fellowship' or 'communion' as it did in 8:4 and not 'contribution' (RV) or 'distribution' (AV). Every thought of 'contribution' is excluded by the phrase 'with them and with all.' When we translate 'liberality' of the contribution 'for them (the saints) and for all,' the meaning is misleading, for the collection was taken up only for the saints in Jerusalem and not for all saints everywhere" (**The Interpretation of First and Second Corinthians**, page 1185).

R. V G. Tasker observes that this interpretation "is preferable, as it explains better the addition of the words 'and unto all men.' The Corinthians' contribution is for the poor saints in Jerusalem only; but the fellowship which was expressed in it was, the apostle assumes, felt for all other Christians" (**Tyndale New Testament Commentary**, 129).

Ralph P. Martin says of this passage: "The collection, which may have seemed at face value simply a charitable deed, had deeper levels of meaning. It is a vindication of Paul's authority and then as a consequence a demonstration to the Jerusalem church of the Corinthian... confession that there is one Gospel, including both Jews and non-Jews (Romans 1:16-17)... Then, the generous giving is a visible token of *koinonia* a common sharing in divine grace ... that unites the two factions of Christendom in Paul's day... Strangely, Paul rounds off the phrase after *koinonia eis autous* with the supplementary phrase *kai eis pantas*, 'and with everyone.' This should strictly mean that the Gentile congregations raised money gifts for other churches and worthy causes other than the needs of the people in Jerusalem. But we have no knowledge of these actions. So we must take the phrase to be a general one in praise of the generous spirit that moves the readers, and would move them wherever there may be need..." (**Word Biblical Commentary**, 294).

We have long contended that for a thing to be authorized in the Scriptures, it must be found in [1] a direct statement, [2] an approved apostolic example, or [3] be necessarily implied by one of the former. From the above discussion it is abundantly clear that *church contributions to non-saints is not necessarily implied in II Corinthians 9:13*. Even if our interpretation of the passage should be faulty, church contributions to non-saints is still unsupported by this passage. *It must be necessarily implied to be authorized!* **GT**

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## Truth and Freedom Radio?

by Ken McLemore

**H**AVING recently moved to Arkansas, I was immediately interested to see that Charles Holt's **Truth and Freedom Ministry, Inc.**, is going into the radio business in this state. In the September, 1990, edition of **The Examiner**, Holt writes of a new "...fifteen minute **Truth And Freedom** radio program..." for which Charles Holt will be the speaker. He continues by soliciting funds for such programs, and says, "It would be *your* work", and then concludes, "How about a **Truth and Freedom Radio Program** in your area?"

Some observations and parallels immediately spring to mind concerning this effort. First, let me observe that Holt launches this project under the auspices of **Truth and Freedom Ministry, Inc.**, and claims it as a part of this particular human institution in the same respect as he claims **The Examiner** as part of that institution. Secondly, observe that the purpose of this program is to allow Charles Holt, president of Truth and Freedom Ministry, Inc., to evangelize. Thirdly, observe that the effort is to be financed by contributions solicited in behalf of Truth and Freedom Radio.

The parallels between **Truth And Freedom Ministry, Inc.**, and the **Herald Of Truth** are fascinating. First, both are human institutions established under the auspices of a governing directorate. Secondly, both institutions claim not only the right but the responsibility to evangelize in the name of Jesus Christ, yet neither can produce Bible authority for either the right or responsibility. Thirdly, both institutions solicit funds specifically for the purpose of evangelism, and claim to have no direct authority over their expenditure, while all the time having absolute control over the final result. Fourth, both institutions operate a magazine and a radio "ministry" as part of the general purpose of the institution.

The points of comparison raised were for years points of controversy which Charles Holt himself raised in opposing the Herald of Truth. His writing and preaching of years past on this subject is known.

The center of Holt's teaching is that the New Testament church has no collective responsibility of any degree. The dilemma of this doctrine is that it makes the New Testament church insufficient to function beyond the level of the individual; yet Holt's practice is one which seeks to

Continued Bottom Next Page



## Pride Of Preachers Cause Problems

by H. E. Phillips

**F**OR I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but -' to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Romans 12:3).

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Galatians 6:3).

"He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings" (I Timothy 6:4).

"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6).

What preacher of minimal experience has not read and preached from these verses? Yet some of them have never learned how to be humble in preaching, and even

in personal conversation they can not hide their pride and arrogance. It shows in their countenance and language. Their preaching reflects pomposity that hinders reception of the gospel by the hearers.

I have heard some preachers in general conversation boast and brag about their expertise as a preacher. These could not resist telling how "churches continually call them for counsel and wisdom," and "many friends and brethren" constantly urged them to publish a sermon or series which were "the best they had ever heard." They eagerly tell of their prowess in meeting the strongest and bravest false teachers and how they totally crushed them with their ability and strength.

The spirit of pride is sure to set preachers against one another. Since "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble," those who want to walk with God must also resist pride. Conceit must protect itself against every challenge. A conceited man is self deceived: "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Galatians 6:3). A self deceived preacher is an envious man, and envy is the main root to the problems between preachers. "He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings" (I Timothy 6:4). The fires of hate and alienation begin right here.

If young preachers could learn that they are not powerful in themselves. If they could know that all the

### Continued From Page 17

activate the church universally through a human institution known as Truth and Freedom Ministry, Inc. Holt's constant appeals for money in The Examiner betray his adoption of the old liberal argument that individual congregations are insufficient to meet the demands of the great commission, therefore, other congregations must contribute to the sponsorship of an institution specifically suited for the task. Truth and Freedom Ministry, Inc., is *not* a private business enterprise, as are some publishing houses operated as such by brethren; rather it is an organized evangelical arm of Holt's concept of the New Testament church. Notice the points from Holt's own appeals that, "We started with the belief and hope that the readers who understand and believe

in what we are trying to do will provide the necessary money for it to continue...We need your help financially to ensure that we can continue—If you are willing and able please help us financially with the work that we are doing," (**Examiner**, September, 1990, page 30). *Whose work* is involved, *what* is that work, and what *authorizes* it to be carried out in this manner? He answers part of the question in another appeal, when he says, "This paper is published by-monthly by **Truth and Freedom Ministry, Inc.**, a non-profit organization—Contributions to help this endeavor may be sent to..." (page 24).

Holt averages between two to four appeals for money in each issue of The Examiner, and it is reasonable to conceive that his radio broadcast

will ultimately benefit from such appeals as well. Consequently, we have Holt teaching that the church has no collective responsibility and, at the same time, teaching that it may act collectively through Truth and Freedom Ministry, Inc.

Every teaching has a resulting consequence in its practice, as Christ pointed out most clearly in Matthew 7:15-23. Holt has become a case study in that principle, having recognized that his "individualism" doctrine, taken to its consequence, does not allow him a sufficient mechanism to find the audience he seeks. He is forced to embrace in Truth and Freedom Ministry, Inc., what he denied for years in the Herald of **Truth** for the sake of keeping his doctrine alive in the face of its own consequences. **GT**

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education they could get in America will not make them one wit greater in the pulpit, they would be more successful in eliminating pride and envy from their hearts. They would be much more effective as gospel preachers. If they could always remember that the *power* to convert men and women to Christ is in the *gospel* (Romans 1:16), not in their personalities, articulate speeches or college degrees. They should preach only the gospel, plain and simple! Do not seek to preach anything new in order to build a reputation. If it is new, it is not true; if it is true, it is not new. The revelation of the New Testament began on Pentecost following the Ascension of Christ into heaven, nearly two thousand years ago. The truth is at least that old. Young men, do not let your egotism drive you to preach "another gospel" (Galatians 1:6-7).

Pride and envy seek a glorious personal reputation. It is the spirit of covetousness that pursues every advantage to promote self and selfish interests. Whatever formula that can achieve these goals will be used by the conceited preacher, young or old.

*Reputation* is what the public thinks of the character of the person. His *character* is what he really is: what God knows him to be. Since one who is interested largely in his personal reputation for job security, money and power, he will proceed to preach and promote that which will enhance the people's estimation of himself. Of course, the people will look at different standards by which to measure the preacher. Some are impressed by wealth, some by education, some by his promotional ability, some by looks, some by youth, and others by his speaking ability. If the people to whom he preaches want these qualities, he will have the personal reputation he wants if he succumbs to their demands, but it will not be good. In the course of time,

and in the final analysis of his reputation, it will not be what God wants.

Look at the reputation of the apostle Paul: he was in prison, nearly always in controversy with the Jews, scribes and Pharisees who challenged him every where he went. Some indicated that his speech was contemptible. They said he was a law breaker and a blasphemer. But what do people now think of him? He has the reputation of a godly man who reached the pinnacle of preaching power. He probably converted more people to Christ in his lifetime and by his writing than any other man. Of course, Peter, James and John rank with him.

There have been great men of God, in my judgment, who now sleep with their fathers, who have fought the battles of faith in years gone by. These men earned the reputation as giants in the faith; "Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 15:26); men of humble spirits, who walked close to God day by day. They are not remembered as wealthy men, great promoters, educated men, pleasers of men, who built great institutions. They are remembered for one thing: they preached Christ and him crucified year after year, sometimes without the abundance of life's comforts; sometimes in extreme adversity. They did not compromise truth for any consideration. They walked humbly before God in righteousness. They have fought a good fight, have finished their course, and have kept the faith. That is their reputation. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8). And so did they.

There are great old preachers of the gospel now living who have the same reputation, and if they maintain their course, there is laid up for them that crown of righteousness, which

the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give them at that day; and unto all them also that love his appearing (II Timothy 4:8).

There are many great, dedicated young preachers, whose reputation as Christians and proclaimers of the gospel of Christ is impeccable. They are humble, industrious, kind and honorable workers in the kingdom of Christ. They know and love the truth, and are not afraid nor ashamed to declare it at every opportunity. I love and hold in high esteem every young preacher of the gospel who humbly yet boldly preaches the truth in love. May God increase their number in this day when the harvest is plenteous but the laborers are few.

### Love, Truth And Peace

Love is absolutely essential to successfully preach the gospel. That is firmly established by the inspired Paul. He said: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing" (I Corinthians 13:1-3) ASV.

The love spoken of in these verses is described in these inspired words: "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (I Corinthians 13:4-7) ASV.

A preacher who does not possess in his heart this love, cannot successfully preach the gospel of Christ. He must love God with all his heart, love

Christ and His Word, love the church, love the souls of lost men and women. He must love preaching Christ; his heart must be filled with the burning desire to tell people the greatest story ever told. He must be honest and sincere with himself. One must have "an honest and good heart" to "bring forth fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15). He must be absolutely honest with himself in all things. He must examine his motives for preaching God's Word. He must patiently analyze his attitude toward lost people, the church, sin, money, himself and the book of God. He must search for any jealousy and envy that might reside deep in some corner of his heart, and eliminate it completely. He must be propelled in preaching by love and a desire to please God at all cost.

I would urge every man who does not have this motive for preaching Christ to turn to something else for a livelihood and leave the preaching to men who are motivated by the attitudes and goals we have just discussed.

Preachers and brethren ought to "be at peace among yourselves" (I Thessalonians 5:13). "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful" (Colossians 3:15). To be a disciple of Christ, one must continue in His Word, and he must know the truth to be free (John 8:31-32). This certainly applies to all preachers.

To the rest I say: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you" (II Corinthians 13:11) ASV. "Grace, mercy, peace shall be with us, from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love" (II John 3) ASV. "Mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied" (Jude 2) ASV

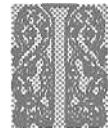
**GT**

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## The Christian Experience

by B. Clint Price

### (Introduction)



IN Philippians 4:6-7 the apostle Paul says "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus"(ASV).

Few conditions' plague the Christian spirit more than the loss, or the inability to secure, an elusive specter called peace. I believe this (often unknowing) deeply troubles God's People. Not from a congregational level but on a personal day by day level that finally reflects itself in a congregational setting.

But, it is not just the inability to find peace that is troublesome, it is also the elusiveness of its' definition or description. How, we might ask, can someone know they have lost, or found, something if they do not know what that thing is, or describe it well enough to know it when they see it? I Believe many troubled lives grimly testify to this conclusion (James 1:8).

Why, we ask, are personal lives, families, and sometimes congregations, ravished, plundered and torn apart? Why, we ask, have so many of our children rebelled against the very system and philosophy that should have prevented or corrected the problem. There is, of course, no single nor simple answer. It is simply inadequate, and ruinous, to dismiss every troubled life as embodying disbelief in Christ. It is also inadequate to dismiss every case of rebellion as an act of contempt for Christ's authority. Sometimes we must look beyond the obvious to understand (but not excuse) ungodly conduct. Guilt, despair, depression, failure (perceived or real), illness and other external and internal pressures may lead one to react in a self-destructive (and sometimes congregational divisiveness) manner. We cannot consign every error, division or departure to life's troublesome way, but, on the other hand many can if we look through the eyes of wisdom and righteousness (Galatians 6:1-2).

Where then do we begin to look for answers? Look to God's peace! (Philippians 4:7). Not peace opposed to civil strife. Not peace opposed to military conflict. But peace, as God defines and gives, as a state of the heart right in the very midst chaos. In Paul's indictment of a lost generation he says "And the way of peace have they not known" (Romans 3:17 ASV). Strong's Concordance gives a very simple definition for peace "set at one again." This is of course a very simple definition of a complex issue, yet it does offer some insight into the nature of peace. James 1:8 seems to sustain the conclusion when he said "a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." To be "set at one again" in its' infant stage is to be at one with God, in its' maturity it is to be "set at one again" not only with God but with self, and others. But can one truly be at peace with others in view of what Jesus said in Matthew 10:34 Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." Two other statements of Jesus' help clarify this seeming difficulty. "Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and asketh

*conditions of peace*" (Luke 14:9 emphasis mine B.C.P.). Peace cannot be realized unless the conditions that produce it is met. "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye have tribulation" (John 16:33). There is a where peace is found, and where it is not. I believe we can correctly conclude that the "peace of God..." is a state of the heart produced by conditions sought after and met (I Peter 3:11 "And let him turn away from evil, and do good; Let him seek peace, and pursue it" ASV). The Bible, after all, is a problem solving book, or better, a life changing book. Not merely a book of historical facts and doctrinal issues, but a living, life giving book, a paradigm of life (I Timothy 2:1-2).

As we explore its pages in search of principles of truth we also rehearse the lives of those who lived and died by its precepts, who sought to embrace the peace of God; and by a common faith we too must be moved by a spiritual passion (within the borders of authorized faith and practice) too likewise "seek peace and pursue it." (I Peter 3:11).

To struggle within the Gospel, to bring into life the practical principles of everyday living, is an urgent and pressing need. To say "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13) is more than a virtuous statement, indeed it is the breath of life to those who pursue the strength that comes only through an unabridged relationship with Christ (James 4:10).

This article is then the first in a series I choose to call **The Christian Experience**. In it I hope to challenge our thinking on such subjects as worry, depression, anger, hope, guilt and similar infirmities of the spirit, concluding with a synopsis on spiritual maturity. My single goal will be to focus the light of the Gospel on the dark habitats of human frailty, and perhaps in measure, "(12) ... lift up the hands that hang down, and the palsied knees; (13) and make straight paths for your feet, that that which is lame be not turned out of the way, but rather be healed" (Hebrews 12:12-13). **GT**

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## News & Notes About Brethren

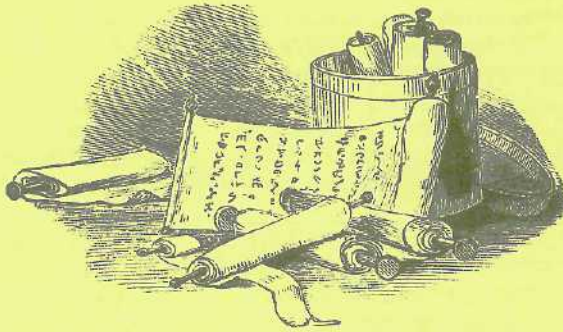
**Don Martin -1995 South Holly Street - Denver, CO 80222** - We are pleased to announce the commencement of a new work in Greeley, Colorado. The work began June 1, 1990, with five members. The new work is designated as: Westside church of Christ. They are meeting in the Westview Shopping Center, 2422 West 10th (highway 34).

We, the elders at Holly Street church in Denver, CO, have been concerned about the sparsity of faithful churches in the state of Colorado. We, therefore, decided to take in most of our outside support (other states) and concentrate on Colorado. We researched the state and found Greeley to have potential. Greeley is a city of about 70,000, with an established university. Greeley is located about 70 miles northeast of Denver off 125 (highway 87) and about 70 miles southeast of Cheyenne, Wyoming. Even though Greeley is situated near a tourist area (Rocky Mountain National Park is about 60 miles west of Greeley) it has a sound economic base. We secured Leonard Wright to preach the gospel in Greeley.

While the new work is close enough to Denver that we are able to assist, we are determined not to exert any oversight over the work - our part is supporting the preacher (cf. I Peter 5:1-3). If you know of any individuals whom the brethren in Greeley could contact or if you need additional information, please call: Leonard Wright, 303-339-3221 or Al Mitchell, 303-482-5257. Sharing a mutual interest with you in the gospel: Glen Demaree, "Virgil Gooslaw, Don Martin, and Jack Mitchell.

**Craig Meyer -1910 Shelley Lane - Madison, WI53704** - Last year (in the August 1989 issue of **TORCH**) I gave a report of my wife's physical condition. Here is an update: For the benefit of those readers who are unaware of my wife's *current* health status, after receiving chemotherapy treatments in the latter half of 1989 and the radiation treatment in the first third of 1990, I am *very pleased* to report that all indicators point to 100% remission of the Hodgkin's Disease (lymphatic cancer)! If the persistent pestering of just one widow toward a pagan judge could have such a positive impact on the course of events, then how much more will the fervent and frequent supplications of many Christians influence the decisions of an Almighty, righteous, and ever-loving Judge of heaven and earth? (See Genesis 18:25, Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" cf. Luke 18:1-8). Prayer changes things, beloved (James 5:16-18; I Peter 3:12). We should always pray and never give up.

**Richard Boone - R # 1 Box 794 - Hayden, AL 35079** - I am trying to complete my set of Pulpit Commentaries on the Old Testament. I have the Eerdman's edition. After checking with several bookstores, this edition is no longer in print. The New publisher is only selling the complete set. However, I only need Volumes 1,2, and/or 9. I realize that one would not want to break a complete set, but if you have these individuals available for sale, I would like to talk with you. You can write to me at the above address. Also, please state the condition of the books and your selling price.



## *Writings From Yesteryear*

### **We Are The Only Christians**

**R**ECENTLY we've seen a statement from a West Coast teacher and preacher which gave his approval to and expressed complete agreement with the old T. B. Larimore declaration that "we do not claim to be the only Christians, but we do claim to be Christians only."

Now if Larimore meant by that statement what the face of the statement seems to imply, and if he meant by it what many preachers today use it to mean, then we emphatically declare ourselves to be in total and absolute disagreement. For with all our heart we do believe that "we are the **only** Christians."

By the "we" in that expression is meant those of us who have (1) believed in Christ, (2) repented of our sins, (3) been buried with Christ in baptism "unto" the remission of sins. We believe that is no accountable human being on earth who has not done this who can rightfully wear the name "Christian." This is the old old "plan of salvation"; those who obey it are the "**only**" Christians - brother Larimore and anybody else to the contrary notwithstanding.

We conceive it to be possible, of course, that some members of the church of Christ may apostatize and join some Methodist, Baptist, or Catholic church. In fact, we know some who have. But they were Christians before they were Baptists, Methodists, or Catholics. No Baptist preacher following Baptist usage, can ever baptize a man into Christ. For Baptist doctrine and Baptist practice require the man to confess a false belief as a prerequisite to his baptism - this his sins are already forgiven. No man confessing that, **and believing it**, can be baptized into Christ, no matter how many time he may be immersed.

by Fanning Yater Tant, taken from  
The Gospel Guardian, May 26, 1949