DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT CONDEMN INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE CHURCH?

W. CURTIS PORTER

Advocates of instrumental music in Christian worship often present such questions as these: Does the New Testament condemn instrumental music in worship? Did Christ and the apostles ever condemn the use of instruments as an aid to singing? Did they ever refuse to have fellowship with followers of Christ who could not sing without the aid of a musical instrument? And they ask for chapter and verse where such things are condemned in the New Testament. If chapter and verse cannot be found that expressly condemns instruments of music by naming them, they insist that those who condemn such are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.

It seems to me, however, that they should be able to see that they are working from the wrong end of the matter. Instead of asking if the New Testament condemns instrumental music in worship, they should be asking if the New Testament authorizes the use of such. Instead of trying to find where Christ and the apostles condemned instruments as an aid to singing, they should be making an effort to find if they ever sanctioned the use of instruments as such an aid. It would be much better to search for the chapter and verse that commands men to sing with an instrument of music. After all, our worship is not to be gauged by what the New Testament does not condemn by name, but rather by what it authorizes to be done. If we were to do everything in worship that it does not strictly forbid in so many words, there would be no end to which we would go. But we should endeavor to do what the New Testament authorizes as worship to God.

Suppose the advocates of other practices in religion would confront members of the Christian Church with the same argument they make in favor of the instrument, what would Christian Church members do? The Catholic makes an effort to justify his practice of burning incense in worship and of praying to the Virgin Mary. He wants to know where the New Testament condemns the burning of incense in worship. He calls for the passage that forbids-praying to the Virgin Mary. What would the instrumental music advocate do in a case of this kind? Would he give to the Catholic the chapter and verse that names these practices and condemns them? And the Mormon contends for his use of light bread and water as elements of the Lord’s supper, and he calls for the verse of Scripture that says we must not use them. Where did Christ or the apostles ever condemn light bread and water as elements on the Lord’s table? The Methodist could defend his practice of infant baptism upon the same ground. With the same degree of confidence manifested by the musical instrument advocate he would say: Where did Christ and the apostles ever say you should not baptize babies? What would the Christian Church member do with all these problems? By what method would he show the Catholic that it is wrong to burn incense in worship or to pray to the Virgin Mary? How would he prove to the Mormon that he should not use light bread and water on the Lord’s table? And how could he show the Methodist that he should not baptize babies? Certainly he could not read the passages that name these things and say “thou shalt not” do them. I know exactly the course he would pursue. He would show the Catholic that he was laboring from the wrong end of the matter; that he should be asking where the Lord ever authorized men to burn incense in Christian worship or to pray to the Virgin Mary. And he would inform the Mormon that he should find the verse of Scripture that sanctions the use of light bread and water for the Lord’s supper. Furthermore he would tell the Methodist to find authority for his infant baptism in the word of God instead of asking for the verse that condemns it. In all of this he would certainly be right. But he is just as wrong as they are when he contends for his instrumental music in Christian worship.

Does the New Testament condemn these practices? Certainly so. Keep in mind, however, that a thing does not have to be mentioned by name in order for it to be condemned. If so, then none of these practices stand condemned, and we are at liberty to practice them all, with a hundred other things that might suit our fancy. But many religious practices are condemned by the New Testament by virtue of the fact that they were left out. As to prayer the Bible is specific as to the one to whom prayer should be offered. In Phil. 4:6, Paul says, “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” This is divine authority for prayer-it tells men to pray to God. Many other Scriptures might be added to this that affirm the same thing. And when the Bible tells us to make our prayer unto God, that eliminates other beings as persons to whom we should pray. This verse is a condemnation of the practice of praying to the Virgin Mary, for Paul says to pray to God, and that leaves Mary out. As nowhere does the Bible authorize us to pray to the Virgin (Turn to Back Page)
AVOIDING EXTREMES

It is difficult for even a well-balanced man, and all of us preachers think we belong to that category, to go down the middle of the road and always do and say the right thing and avoid extremes. In our efforts to avoid compromise there is the temptation to swing to the side of unnecessary and unreasonable harshness. In efforts to avoid the evil effects of such a course some have become so soft and compromising they can hardly tell a sinner what to do to be saved without great pain and embarrassment. And so we have “hard” and “soft” preachers and some are classified as both depending on the complexion of the spiritual, if that is the right word, surveyor who starts from some sort of corner to run his lines on him.

I have at times been alarmed and all but disgusted over the soft, compromising attitude some brethren have displayed toward religious error and unscriptural set-ups that support it. I must have expressed myself rather vigorously along that line with scripture citations that suggest the duty of sharp rebukes on occasion, for at least one prominent brother, who is aware that he is, has called my name right out in print and accused me of perverting the scriptures to endorse abuse. Now of course if I did a thing like that I didn’t go to do it, wouldn’t even think of defending myself in doing such a thing, and he should be more charitable with me, lest he become guilty of abusing me. Think preachers, along with others, are obligated to do what the New Testament teaches them to do. I was not seriously upset by the brother’s outburst, for I knew at the time that he was still stinging over some printed remarks from me that jogged somewhat closer than his general direction. Besides, I am not much mad at him anyhow and blew some of the froth off of what he had to say about me to examine it more closely and see if there might be some truth in it. It could be possible for even me to go to an extreme.

At the moment I am tempted to go soft, that is toward some honest outsiders and some more or less innocent sectarians who venture out to hear some of “our preachers” go through what they call preaching. Some of these visitors did not come expecting to find an echo of their own opinions or peculiar views. Indeed, they entertained some misgivings as to what they might hear because they had heard something of “this sect” and knew that, if not everywhere, it was widely “spoken against.” When they heard Brother Skin’em, who is sometimes young and sometimes old, they went home mad through and through, voweled they would never go back, and they didn’t. Now, if plain Bible preaching and earnestly contending for the faith soured in them and turned to the vinegar of wrath, nothing can be done about it, and nothing need be done about it. The truth must be preached, even if there are many who cannot endure sound doctrine. But in these instances I have in mind, which brethren who do not even think I am hard tell me about, such was not the case. The preachers were coarse, boorish, insulting. They did not show as much grace as a bull in a china-closet. They threshed about without any regard for personal courtesies, properties or the common decencies which are universally expected of a man when he enters the pulpit. Abuse is not preaching.

People generally are entitled to courtesy and respect even if they are wrong and many of them are honestly, or ignorantly, so. They need teaching and have a right to expect a preacher of the gospel to act like a gentleman, not a barbarian. I’d hate to have to tell which I like less, a compromiser or a bull-dozer. I sometimes think that one of them is about as bad as the other, if not worse. The funny thing is that both of them think they are the spit-image of the Lord and can quote scripture to prove it.—C. E. W.

A BETTER PLAN

The word “plan” seems to have a great fascination for the common run of people. This is especially true in religion. All sorts of schemes, some of them fantastic and impractical, some of them good as measured by human standards, are acceptable and given currency if they are christened “the better plan.” Lack of a plan suggests chaos and even some of the Lord’s requirements are subjected to human alterations to fit into some plan or scheme devised by man. Sometimes the “simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ” that Paul feared the minds of the brethren would be “corrupted from” is rejected because it does not fit into the ideas that some entertain of what a “plan” should be.

A case in point came to my attention as I listened to a religious broadcast. The speaker was earnestly insisting that all Christians should tithe and read extensively from the Old Testament in support of that view. When the Jews robbed God in withholding their tithes, he concluded that Christians also rob God when they withhold the tithe. He declared that there is nor has there ever been any “better plan” than tithing. If God requires that his people give the tithe, then it becomes obvious that those who do not do so are in rebellion against him as the Jews were who robbed him in this particular. There are some sects that make tithing a test of fellowship, require it on penalty of excommunication in which case the tithe is paid as a form of taxation and cannot be classed as a voluntary gift or offering. Since there is evidence of confusion as to what tithing means, the man who pays the tithe, pays a tenth of his gross income. A church therefore in which all the members pay in that much, either has a very small membership, or else it has a considerable amount of money to carry on its “plan.” A large religious denomination organized that a central authority has control over its funds would be something to reckon with, at least financially, should its members all tithe.

This system was evidently good for the Jews or God would not have given it to them. It does not follow that Christians should borrow it from the Jews and call it the “better plan.” I have noted some confusion even among gospel preachers when it comes to comparing Christian’s liberality with Jewish taxation. We are gravely told that a Christian ought to be ashamed, in view of our greater blessings to give less than the Jews were taxed. In most cases if not every case, the latter had a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose. It has been estimated that the Jews parted a small part of it and that for a special purpose.

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theocracy, a nation whose law was the law of God. The law required a tax, called the tithe, for the support of the priesthood. The support of the government, also a part of the religious scheme, had to be supplied by additional taxation.

Surely, Christians should be liberal in the use of their money in carrying on the work which is peculiar to the church. Saints must be edified, the poor must be remembered and the gospel must be supported. Is tithing “the better plan” to get the money for this necessary work? If the Bible teaches it, then of course it is. If the Bible does not teach it or any other “plan,” then expediency might suggest it as better. It happens that there is considerable teaching in the New Testament on the matter of liberality among Christians. Covetousness is classified with idolatry and stinginess is downright sin. Opposition to tithing as a “plan” promoted by a covetous spirit must of course be ruled out as wicked. Plan or no plan, Christians should give as the Lord directs. It is significant that there is no direct command, or necessary inference, in the New Testament binding the tithe on the disciples of Christ. This is in vivid contrast to the binding obligations of the law, often repeated, which bound the Jews in this respect. Paul made a widespread appeal to the churches to give sums of money for a much needed work. He went directly to the churches in these words: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.” (1 Cor. 16:1, 2) “As he may prosper” does not sound like a command to pay the tithe. The curious might pry into the question of the amount, whether equal to, more or less than the tithe. Such curiosity is not satisfied. It might be more; It was to “be ready as a matter of bounty, and not of extortion.” (2 Cor. 9:5) “But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” (2 Cor. 9:6, 7) Why did not Paul just come out and say plainly for these disciples to follow “the better plan” and pay tithes as God required then they would always have plenty of money on hand to take care of all the calls that came to the church. There is not as much “plan” about God’s requirements as some brethren and others seem to think we need. If “each man” does “according as he hath purposed in his heart” and “each man” loves the Lord as he ought to, then sufficient money will be forthcoming to take care of the work of the Lord. If the money is not forthcoming somebody is evidently falling down on a responsibility. We may resort to corkscrew methods to twist it out of them, or try to scare them into submitting to the legalistic system of tithing, but it does not occur to twist it out of them, or try to scare them into submitting to the legalistic system of tithing, but it does not occur to me that either is “the better plan.” “Because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us” should be a greater incentive to liberal giving and the discharge of duties related thereto than any of the constraints of legalism. Properly led and properly taught, the Lord’s people should and will respond voluntarily and generously. This is the better plan because it is found in the New Testament—C. E. W.

In a recent issue of the Christian Standard, James DeForrest Murch writes at length under the caption, “Straws In The Wind” to bolster up the ill-fated Witty-Murch Unity Movement. Mr. Murch sees (?) great progress “toward unity” as a result of these so-called “Unity Meetings.” He says there are many definite signs of progress and enumerates them as “straws in the wind.”

Of the fifteen “straws” he lists, I shall only notice two or three of them, as others may wish to notice in detail Murch’s “straws.” His “straws” are baseless fabrications.

His first “straw” is a wholesale misrepresentation of the ugly affair at Horse Cave. He says:

The Church of Christ at Horse Cave! Ky., although excluding the use of instrumental music in worship, is now in full fellowship with our churches in Kentucky. The same thing is true of a dozen or more “no-instrument” churches in this state. Word of similar developments has come from Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Thus James DeForrest Murch deceives his readers by making it appear that “the Church of Christ at Horse Cave” is in full fellowship with digressive churches, and yet excludes the use of instrumental music in worship. The truth is, and Murch should know it, this digressive church cannot use the mechanical instrument, because a “clause” happened to be in the deed. So it is the clause in the deed that “excludes” the instrument, and not the church! Kenneth Spaulding, the Pastor, with the aid of a large digressive element in the church literally stole the property, repudiated the appellation “Church of Christ,” and assumed the name “Christian Church.” They drove out the few who were unwilling to “bow the knee to Baal.” This rank digressive church, though it cannot have an organ, is going all the gates, however they have to depend upon the Baptist and Methodist churches of Horse Cave to bolster them up! Spaulding is not much in accord with the Murch and Standard element in the Christian Church, because he has sought refuge with the ultra digressive Christian-Evangelist group! Murch should inform his readers that Spaulding has made desperate efforts to “Pastorate” other Christian Churches in this section, but they have given him no encouragement. Spaulding knows this, even if Murch is in the dark.

Mr. Murch’s second straw discloses that “union meetings of ministers of both groups are being held in Louisville, Ky.” But he did not tell his readers that the “group” conviving with the digressives in Louisville were the followers of R. H. Boll, who have long since gone out from us because they were not all of us (1 Jno. 2: 19). In his fifth straw he tells us that Jorgenson, Friend and Rutherford have engaged in “exchange” meetings, with the digressives. But who are these men? They are rank Bollites, and are no more regarded as safe teachers that James DeForrest Murch. The Bollites and digressives are about like peas in the same pod. Claud Witty is more a digressive church, though it cannot have an organ, is going in full fellowship with our churches in Kentucky. The same thing is true of a dozen or more “no-instrument” churches in this state. Word of similar developments has come from Pennsylvania and Virginia.

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Murch’s twelfth straw explains how “Fred L. Rowe, editor of the Christian Ledger” made a tour of the Big Sandy country with J. W. West, “Mountain Evangelist” of the Christian Church. We are not surprised at any move F. L. Rowe may make these days. He has, in a very definite way, proved that he cannot be relied upon as a safe leader.
SECTARIAN INCONSISTENCIES
W. CURTIS PORTER

On every hand it becomes more and more apparent that sectarian preachers cannot preach or write without revealing their inconsistencies. Their statements are full of self-contradictions; what they say on one point contradicts some other point of their theology. The following is another example of such sectarian inconsistencies.

James MacKrell, writing in Orthodox Baptist Searchlight of March 10, 1942, on the subject, "The Bible Way Of Justification," makes the following statement:

'This great blessing of justification brings us into a daily life before God where nothing ruffles our peace nor anything can cause us to lose our favor in God's sight, and because we get this first blessing from God, it guarantees that we shall receive all other blessings we shall ever need as long as we live on this earth and through all the years of eternity.'

This statement is in perfect harmony with the Baptist doctrine of "once ingrace, always in grace." This writer declares that if we are justified before God there is not anything that "can cause us to lose our favor in God's sight." We can just commit any crime beneath the stars and God will still hold us in his favor. And furthermore, this first blessing of justification, Mr. MacKrell claims, "guarantees that we shall receive all other blessings we shall ever need." That doesn't leave a single thing out; every blessing we shall ever need-for how long? Through all time and throughout all eternity. "This first blessing" certainly carries a high-powered guarantee, according to this. But this guarantee seems to fail when we read another article from the pen of the same writer. In the same issue of the paper the same Mr. MacKrell, under the title, "Billy Goat Religion Is The Damnation Of Baptists," says:

"When Satan can't stop he resorts to hindering and un-jess Baptist preachers are awakened to the danger of this hour and the peril that confronts. Baptists everywhere, we are doomed and damned in the sight of God and Man."

I am curious to know, if Baptists cannot do anything "to cause them to lose favor in God's sight," how in the world they could become "doomed and damned in the sight of God and man." And MacKrell actually emphasized this last statement by putting it in large capitals. It seems to me if Baptists can become "doomed and damned in the sight of God," they can "lose favor in God's sight." But maybe they can be "doomed and damned" and have divine favor at the same time. And if "this first blessing" guarantees to Baptists that they "shall receive all other blessings" they "shall ever need," how on earth could "the danger of this hour" and "the peril that confronts Baptists everywhere" exist? How could such danger and peril exist in the face of such a lasting guarantee? Here is where some Baptists, afflicted with what MacKrell calls "Billy Goat Religion," could so some more butting. In fact, I think MacKrell has strong symptoms of the religion he talks about, and he might have a spell of butting, somewhat after this fashion: "Nothing can cause us to lose our favor in God's sight" but "we are doomed and damned in the sight of God and man." "Justification guarantees that we shall receive all other blessings we shall ever need" but "we should awaken to the danger of this hour and the peril that confronts Baptists everywhere."

A further addition to this inconsistency is made by the following statement in the same article:

"If a Baptist preacher commits a theft, gets drunk, commits adultery or is guilty of some immoral conduct he ought to be called by name, exposed and kicked out. But until a charge has been proven against him, spiritually, physically or mentally in writing, before the church in the manner prescribed by the New Testament, it must make angels weep and all hell shout in fiendish glee to see the way Baptist preachers tear at one another by insinuation or outright defamation."

I ask: When Baptist preachers commit these immoral practices they should be kicked out of what? Surely not out of the favor of God, for Mr. MacKrell said the blessing of justification puts them where nothing can happen that would take them out of God's favor. So, according to this, they can commit a theft, get drunk, commit adultery and all other immoral acts of conduct, and still be in the favor of God. So why should they be kicked out? And what should they be kicked out of? Does he mean they should be, kicked out of the Baptist Church? If God is willing for them to live in heaven with him, despite all their immoral conduct, surely they would be good enough for membership in the Baptist Church. Or is the Baptist Church purer, holier and better than heaven? And since the "first blessing of justification" guarantees to them all other blessings they will ever need, not only in time but in all eternity, I am wondering why such conduct would make "angels weep" and why "all hell" would "shout in fiendish glee." One of the other blessings that will be needed is eternal life in heaven, and if such is unconditionally guaranteed to them, I can see no reason for the angels to weep. And if hell shouts in fiendish glee, it is all a hollow, empty shout; these men are already out of the reach of hell, and they can do all the wickedness that might be committed by the devil himself and still go to heaven. Would that make all the inhabitants of hell shout? Can't you see the inconsistency of Baptist preachers?

GAG RULE NEEDED

I'm about to say something on a delicate subject in a not very delicate way. There ought to be some way to put a limit on the time some brethren use in leading an audience in prayer. Personally, after I find out that a brother prays more than half as long as I preach, I call 'on somebody else, but others are not as considerate of the feelings of the audience as I am, and if we get on our knees we stay there till they ache, and if we are on our feet we stand there till our ankles hurt. He may lead us for the first few minutes but after that we drop out and get lost and hope for the best. Public prayer is not an endurance contest and it is yet to be discovered why any brother should feel that, when he is called on to lead a public prayer, he should ask the Lord all at once for everything he has ever heard and thought of, and then wind up by preaching awhile. It is certainly not a time for showmanship and the least such a course can show is bad taste, and it usually shows more than that, and none of its complimentarity to the man who does it. If a brother feels that he needs to pray all night on a meeting night he should do most of it after he goes home and in the privacy of his own closet where it will do him the most good, and not tempt some others to forget the Lord entirely. I was told seriously of a case where a brother with a big voice publicly wrestled with the Lord for fifteen minutes by the clock. Of course the individual who kept time on him did not do much praying, but I can understand how, he felt the need for a diversion of some kind. There ought to be some way to attach a stop-clock to a brother who will thus impose on an audience, under the pretense of leading them in prayer. 'It might be well to study the sample prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray, as to style, content and length. It can be read in half a minute.'-C. E. W.
PULPIT PROPAGANDA

G. K. WALLACE

Propaganda is a means to mislead people today. Our pulpiteers are not exempt from such means.

The dictators have used propaganda to further their ends in Europe and America. It is hard for us to tell what is news and what is propaganda. Often what the foreign power hopes to do is announced as a fact or as the desire of the people concerned. Germany has constantly boasted about how they were welcomed by the people of the occupied countries. By this they hoped to destroy resistance in other nations. Sad to say, but true, that we have been subjected to methods of the propagandist in the past year or so.

We can recognize “pulpit propaganda” if we are familiar with the “devices” used by the speaker or writer. The following means are frequently used by the propagandist:

1. The impression is created that the wish of the propagandist is the desire of every one.

It has been but a short time ago that a “Moses” from the East arose to deliver us out of the wilderness of “fanatic journalism.” A man who was one of all the preachers as to the type of paper desired. The “Band Wagon” was rolled out and all urged to climb aboard. “Every one desires it.” Several fine and otherwise loyal preachers were led astray by this cry. “The majority desire a change, everyone desires it” was the campaign slogan. The cry that the “people desire it and the ‘rich Moses’ from the East will furnish the money,” scared almost every editor except the editor of The Bible Banner. If this was not propaganda, why is it that until this day the census was not published? Why did the Christian Leader die if everyone wanted such a paper?

2. Another device used by the propagandist is that which is known as “Glittering Generalities.”

The propagandist identifies his program with “virtue” by use of “virtue words.” By the use of these words our emotions are stirred. Some worthy cause is used as a “leader” for the propagandist. Maybe he pretends to be a great “missionary” worker. He is so unselfish. He loves everybody. He says “good things” about those who teach premillennialism and condemns “the way” we oppose it. He extolls the virtues of Boll and circulates anonymous letters about those who expose Boll’s theories. R. H. Boll is by “good words” personified into a great god of grace and truth. Brethren like N. B. Hardeman and Foy E. Wallace, Jr. are classed as “maniacs.” Who would want to listen to a crazy man when he could hear the voice of the “god of peace, love and great missionary deed?” Thus the propagandist hopes by condemning Wallace and praising Boll that the influence of Wallace will be destroyed while the “sweet and loving Boll” goes about his devisive work.

3. The “transfer” method of propaganda is the way the pulpiteer carries over authority, sanction and prestige from someone that is generally loved and respected. Note the “transfer method coming out of Arkansas. “Brother Bents taught this, so ______, Brother Harding taught this so ______.” So, what? We inquire? Thus the prestige of these men is carried over to the present day program. Let them try this “transfer” method on Peter, Paul or Jesus Christ our Lord. Suppose one proves that Bents, Harding and et. al., taught the same theories that he teaches what would they prove? That would not prove that such was taught in the Bible.

4. Name calling has ever been employed by the Propagandist.

Issues before the church are avoided by crying “Dictator,” “Lunatic Journalists,” “trouble makers,” “maniacs.” Thus people are made to be prejudiced before. they ever study the question at all.

5. The Propagandist will change the issue. He will raise another question of keep the minds of the people away from the facts involved.

We often debate the question of apostacy with the Bag List people. Let one of our brethren affirm that a child of God can fall from grace and the Baptist preacher will jump, up and say that the child of God will not fall away. Thus the issue is changed from can to will before the debate is well under way. By changing the issue the minds of the audience are befogged. When people are confused they generally become Baptists.

During the last, “Hardeman Tabernacle Meeting” in Nashville, Tennessee we saw a demonstration of the above rule of the propagandist. Hardeman went to Nashville to fight Premillennialism. Brethren in Nashville who did not want the issued discussed and exposed, immediately raised another question. The question was N. B. Hardeman. They tried to change the question from premillennialism to Hardeman. However, Brother Hardeman has held too many debates to be led astray by such methods. He let them talk Hardeman while he exposed the theories of R. H. Boll. Had the propagandist been able to shift the subject the mission of Hardeman would have failed. In this fight on Premillennialism from first to last the propagandist has tried to make Wallace, Hardeman, John T. Lewis and others the issue. The Bible Banner is set for the defense of the truth and does not intend to be deterred by side issues.

Brethren, we should not be discouraged in our fight for the purity of New Testament worship and doctrine. Remember that in early days they said that John the Baptist was crazy (hath a demon) and that Jesus Christ was a “winebibber and a glutton.” Let us balance our emotions and intelligence and find out the facts about the issues before the church regardless of what the propagandists have to say.

SIGHTING-IN SHOTS

The story goes that two brethren were in an argument over their favorite preachers. Which is the greatest preacher? One brother averred that Brother Plesium made Brother Sockum fade out like a star when the sun comes up. “Why he often baptizes four or five every night during a meeting” he declared. His antagonist arose to the occasion. “That is nothing to get excited about. Brother Sockum wouldn’t even get his pants wet for less than ten.” Not even funny? Anyhow, it is about as intelligent as the comparisons brethren are often heard to make. Any man who is humble, knows and loves the gospel and can tell it, is a good preacher, even if some worldly or partisan-minded church members do not recognize it. “For that which is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.” Maybe that goes for some preachers, too.

Anything as big and important as the church is has to be run,” meaning that it must have oversight and direction. The Lord ordained that the church, each congregation, should have its bishops. It is their business to oversee the congregation and direct the work. Their qualifications and duties are clearly outlined in the scriptures. These bishops are qualified men. As indispensable as women are, Lord bless ‘em, he did not build a church that women can run. Ever think of that? A few women I know and others I have heard of, ought to do some thinking along that line. This is not overlooking the fact that some unqualified men have made a pretty bad mess of things in spots.—C. E. W.
AN INTERVIEW WITH A CATHOLIC PRIEST

FANNING YATER TANT

Time: December 31, 1941
Place: A doctor's office

The doctor is saying, "Mr. Smith, I must warn you that your blood-pressure is dangerously high. You may suffer a fatal stroke at any minute. You must stop at once any eating of meats or smoking of tobacco."

"But, doctor," remonstrated Mr. Smith, "can't I possibly wait until February 18th to stop meats and tobacco?"

"You run a very grave risk in delaying a single day," the doctor replied. "You should stop at once. Why do you want to put it off until February 18th?"

"I am a Catholic," Mr. Smith said. "And February 18th is Ash Wednesday—the beginning of Lent. By waiting until then to give up meat and tobacco I will gain merit in heaven for my sacrifices. Whereas, if I give them up now, merely as a matter of preserving my health, I have no special credit for my action."

The above conversation is an accurate representation of the feeling of the devout Catholic about "Lent." Inasmuch as the whole Catholic world at the time of this writing is in the midst of their observance of Lent, I thought it might be interesting to get some first-hand information from an authoritative source on just what Lent means to the average Catholic. Accordingly, I called at the nearest Catholic church, and talked for over an hour with the priest of the parish. This was St. Edward's Catholic Church, corner Kostner and Sunnyside, here in Chicago, and the priest was introduced to me as "Father O'Reilly."

From the conversation with him I took down these following notes on the Catholic teaching concerning Lent:

1. Lent was not observed in the early days of the church, but was instituted many years later by the church councils.

2. It is a copy or duplication of the forty days fast of Christ before his temptation, and extends from Ash Wednesday over a period of forty days (exclusive of Sundays) to Easter Sunday.

3. The principle idea of Lent is that it is a "mortification of the flesh," a punishment of the physical body for the sins that have been committed during the past year in the over-indulgence of fleshly appetites. It is a way of saying to the Lord, "I'm sorry."

4. In Lenten fasting only one "heavy" meal a day is to be eaten. Usually a very light breakfast is followed by a luncheon of not over six or eight ounces, then at night comes the one big meal of the day. There is a very great latitude permitted however in the degree to which these rules are observed. All those who are sick, as well as nursing mothers, school-teachers, and others whose efficiency might be impaired by hunger are given "dispensations" which enable them to continue a normal diet right on through Lent.

5. No meat may be eaten. Fish and eggs are permitted.

6. Any voluntary sacrifice of a pleasure or a luxury during Lent is a way of piling up "merit" in heaven to the credit of the one making the sacrifice. This merit will appreliably shorten his suffering in purgatory after death. (The story of the patient giving up tobacco and meat during the priest himself as an illustration of how this principle works out in actual practice."

7. Lent is a time of special consecration, and should be marked by more than usual devotion to the church. From a little booklet given me by the priest, and which is given to Catholics to use in their observance of Lent, I find this quotation from the Catechism: "I believe that it is very helpful in purifying the life to have special devotion to my Guardian Angel, reverencing him and calling on him, especially in time of temptation; following his suggestions, thanking him for his help and never vexing his presence by sin.

Why the Christian Does Not Observe Lent

There are many reasons why we, as Christians, do not observe the Catholic season of Lent.

1. It is admittedly not the law of Christ, but merely the rule of the Catholic Church. In this it occupies exactly the same position as sprinkling, celibacy of the clergy, etc. In the last decade or so many Protestant churches are giving much more emphasis than before to Lent. Even the Disciples church is found among those giving strong emphasis to this season.

2. It would be difficult to imagine, or produce, a practice which more completely fulfills the requirements of the practice with Christ condemned in Matthew 6:18-19, "When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may be seen of men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face; that thou be not seen of men to fast, but of thy Father who is in secret; and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall recompense thee."

It is true that the Catholics do not "disfigure their faces" to be seen of men to fast. They don't need to. Such an antiquated method of advertising would gain little notice in this modern age of high-pressure, stream-lined publicity. So the modern Catholics simply advertise their "fasting" in all the world's leading newspapers, usher it in with magnificent ceremonies so that all the news-reels can get pictures to run in every theater in the land, have huge billboard displays that tell the world "Lent has Begun," give radio programs which stress the importance of Lent, have all Catholic restaurant owners throughout the world advertise "Lenten Specials" on their menus, etc. etc. No, the "disfigured face" is definitely out. It simply can't keep up as a means of advertising with the ingenuity of the twentieth century!

3. It is a fulfillment of I Tim. 4:1, "But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth." The Catholic observance of Lent is as perfect a fulfillment of this prediction as could be conceived.

Notice that the passage does not condemn the idea of fasting. Any Christian may fast—indeed, may even single out meat as the particular food which he will forego, if he desires. But the mark of apostacy lies in the commanding to abstain from meats. No Christian has the right to command another to abstain from meats, regardless of what he, himself, may do about it. And it is precisely in the point of commanding abstinence that Catholicism has fulfilled the prophecy.

4. This practice is in violation of Col. 2:18, "Let no man rob you of your price by a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels." The whole Catholic procedure in Lent is a "voluntary humility." Competent Bible students agree for the most part that the "voluntary humility" of this passage is no true humility at all, but rather a show or display of piety "to be seen of men." And the "worshipping of angels" is an integral part of the whole Catholic system, receiving particular emphasis in Lent.

The Other Side

But we would render a poor service, indeed, if we merely pointed out the errors of Catholicism without at the same time showing the "more excellent way" of truth. If we, as Christians, are not to have special seasons of renewal and devotion, what can we do to keep our spiritual lives vigorous and true?
The church today has what she has always had for this purpose. Every needed thing is there. If the "means of grace," which have been here through all the ages, are used, no Christian will need the stimulus of a special "Lenten Season" to renew his love toward God.

For one thing, there is the Lord's Supper. Faithful attendance upon the worship of God is God's way of keeping the Christian's spiritual life in tone. Can there be any sin more serious than that committed by a Christian who responds to Christ's, "Do this in memory of me" with a rebellious "I won't?" A voluntary absence from the Lord's table will condemn a man to hell as certainly as will a refusal to be baptized or to lead an honest life.

Again, there is the Bible, the source of all spiritual life, the one who has been hobnobbing with Brother Murch. And if the Bible? Words have lost their meaning if Pharisaism "literally drips." Do we need to search longer for the "straws in the wind," that the evidence of "progress toward unity" between "Churches of Christ" and "Disciples of Christ" is nothing more than 'straws in the wind.'

The Christian who uses the Bible and upon it "doth meditate das and night" will have slight need in his life for a "renewal of devotion" which Lent is supposed to accomplish.

Finally, prayer is not to be neglected in the maintenance of Christian devotion. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." And not the least of such things is the finely balanced, truly successful Christian life.

Lent presupposes a period of indulgence and sin followed by a period of penitence and contrition. Christianity presupposes no such thing. Its ideal of life is that of a steadily developing devotion, year in and year out, so long as a man's life shall last. And so long as a Christian is actively engaged in the doing of good, and couples that active, "doing" life with the quieter, meditative aspects of Christianity—the Lord's Supper, Bible Study, and prayer—will he have little need for the "voluntary humility" of Lent.

**WHICH WAY-BROTHER, WITTY?**

G. B. DOUTHITT

In an article in the Christian Standard of Feb. 14 James DeForest Murch writes on the "progress toward unity" which he and Brother Witty have made in their annual "Unity Developing Devotion," year in and year out, so long as a man's life shall last. And so long as a Christian is actively engaged in the doing of good, and couples that active, "doing" life with the quieter, meditative aspects of Christianity—his Lord's Supper, Bible Study, and prayer—he will have little need for the "voluntary humility" of Lent.

**MUSINGS FROM MOTOR CITY**

A. B. KEENAN

I am indebted to a Chicago seer for an insight into the nature of the unholy alliance between the Bible Banner and loyal brethren the country over. According to this writer, in a recent number of Word and Work (Whose word and whose work?), it is characterized by "whims of the people," dominated by "screams and doings," little more than "playing the game," ridden with "big, influential preachers," possessive of "soft seats with big congregations" that pay excellent salaries," boasts of "dogmatic preachers," principally, is cold to "one of the greatest song directors in the brotherhood," brands its opponents "premillennialists," guilty of a super-duper caution "for fear of what the people will say," is guardian of a "black list" of proscribed preachers, has adherents who seize upon articles written by others and who are the guardians of the "orthodox opinions of the brotherhood," etc., etc.

According to the same "lock sit," unity meetings are "nobles, Christian efforts." Those who write against them are, in plain words, ignorant and gullible. Besides, we don't have the truth anyway. So why invite people to come to us?" From anti-unity meeting articles Pharisaism "literally drips." Do we need to search longer for the reason why so many who look for the "Rapture" are among the new breed of "stirrers," who have bawled up on what is literal and what is figurative in the Bible? Words have lost their meaning if Pharisaism "literally drips" from anything. But more: Anybody who opposes error and marks those who cause divisions has quite forgotten the prayer of Christ that His disciples might, be one. Those who contend for the old paths are, axiomatically, self-righteous. Bible Banner articles are motivated by a mad scramble to "get on the bandwagon." A few big preachers crack the whips, while the little fellows submissively hop through the hoops.

It is refreshing to notice that Ralph Wilburn, as one of the voices crying in the material-kingdom wilderness, admits the impossibility of reconciliation of the divergent views. Still, I am sure, he will no positive stand against Bollism, but will continue their pirouetting. Their antics would be amusing, if the implications weren't so somber.

Finally, those who believe the Bible Banner should be encouraged in its fight are as "those led about with a fishhook in their mouths," they are "time-servers and mere pleasers," they are "cynically-minded and unstable," their "whole bodies" are filled with darkness," they are "in- pure in heart," they are "political racketeers," "dictators," "political gamblers." I wouldn't have believed such thoughts could have emanated from the stronghold of "brotherly love," the good old Word & Work itself, if I hadn't read them with my own eyes. Tsk! Tsk! Indeed our heads are bloody—after this!

But still unbowed.
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE CHURCH—Cont. From Page 1

Mary, then that practice stands condemned by New Testament teaching. The person who condemns such practice is not the one who is teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, but it is the person who adheres to such practice without any divine authority to do so. In Matt. 26:26-28 we have given divine authority for the Lord's supper. The record reads like this: "And as they were eating, Jesus took the cup, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Other passages give us similar information. They specify bread and the fruit of the vine as the elements to be used to picture to us the body and blood of the Lord. And when Jesus authorized his disciples to use bread and the fruit of the vine for the Lord's supper, he left out light bread (leavened) and water. And the very fact that he left them out is a condemnation of them. The Lord specified the elements to be used, and nothing else can be added or substituted. The same is true regarding baptism. In Mark 16:16 Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." This shows that belief must precede baptism, and no one can be baptized till he first believes. Such excludes infant baptism, for infants cannot believe. So excludes infant baptism, for infants cannot believe. So ing such practice out of divine legislation. This applies with equal force to the subject of instrumental music. In Eph. 5:19 Paul declared: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." This tells us definitely the kind of music to make in worship to God. It is not playing but singing. And this excludes instrumental music from the divine arrangement. Instrumental music is thus condemned; God authorized singing and left out instrumental music. Had he wanted instrumental music in Christian worship, he certainly would have put it in. But he left it out, and that condemns it. So Phil. 4:6 condemns praying to the Virgin Mary by specifying God as the one to whom prayers are to be addressed; Matt. 26:26-28 condemns light bread, water, cake and ice cream or any other elements by specifying bread and the fruit of the vine as the elements of the Lord's supper; Mark 16:16 condemns the practice of baptizing babies by specifying believers as proper subjects of baptism; and Eph. 5:19 just as definitely condemns instrumental music in Christian worship by specifying singing as the kind of music to be made in worship to God.

The statement of Paul in Gal. 1:8 is also a condemnation of all of these practices. He said: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." This limits us to divine legislation in our worship to God; No man can read where the apostles ever preached that men should burn incense, pray to the Virgin Mary, use light bread and water for the Lord's supper or baptize babies. And neither can any one read where they ever taught that men should worship God with musical instruments. All of these things belong to a gospel they did not preach. Those who use or practice such things place themselves under the curse of heaven. There is not even any principle that was preached by the apostles that could be must include these things even in a general way. They are distinctly another gospel and belong to the doctrine and commandments of men.

There are many other passages of Scripture in the New Testament that condemn all of these things, not by naming them in so many words, but by presenting certain principles that exclude the wisdom and the will of man. Jesus told his apostles to teach men to observe all things he had commanded. Matt. 28:20. But they never taught men to observe any of these practices. Peter said that God had given us all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3), and Paul said the Scriptures furnish a man completely unto every good work. 2 Tim. 3:16, 17. But they contain no authority for instrumental music and give no sanction to other religious practices I have mentioned. And on and on we might go with many passages. The fact stands that men who introduce things into worship that God has not authorized are guilty of setting aside the wisdom of God and of following human wisdom. If men want to follow the example of Jesus and his apostles... they can do it by leaving instrumental music out of their worship, for Jesus and the apostles left it out. Those who put it into their service are going contrary to the example left by inspired men. They are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, and their worship is vain. Mat 15:9.

PREACHERS

Peculiar men, we know, abound in every walk and station. Each has its brave, it's proud, and each it's groveling creature.

But scarcely is there one so apt at spreading consternation, as the wild, explosive, covetous, and social climbing preacher.

So little he is, he really thinks that he has reached the top. If he can just get into print with any new-born notion, It's birth pangs proving only that he is a selfish flop. Who's blithly unconcerned, though fires of hell are set in motion.

Because some preachers have become a sort of begging friar.

Reprouch is brought upon the church, it's holy Head and name;
The One who said 'I'll ne'er forsake thee,' thus is made a liar,
And such a man could scarce do less than hang his head in shame.

For if this one had godly lived in all his former life, In times of stress, true Christian friends would urgent needs supply.

Nor do I pass that preacher by who steals his neighbor's wife;

He's neither blind, nor dumb, but knows he daily lives a lie.
The man who's small, weak, puny, and meaner than the rest Is he who thinks of his own rights, and lets the Church divide.

Because he finds it hard to leave his nicely feathered nest, And thus is left a gaping wound in Christ's own spiritual side.

This man is often heard to whine about the preachers share Of hardships, trials, and such like—but hasn't every one? Most all the time the host provides his very best of fare. And, after all, the preacher's life is balanced well with work and fund.

To be projected on life's screen a man will never yearn. Because of poise he can accept with smiling charm and grace

Degrees of honor, names of merit, his conscious efforts earn. Because of strength, he can if needs, walk with a slower pace;

Because his nature is not small, or easy to disturb. Endurance keeps him on the job, no matter what is said. As when the Fist attacks the Dane, he seems to not have heard, —

Such greatness is a jeweled crown that fits no other head. Willard Hedge. (Mrs. John W. Hedge)