First of all a correction. The title of the article on the back page of the August issue of the Bible Banner, by Cled E. Wallace, should have been “The ‘Apostate’ and ‘Diabolical’ Bible Banner!” The printers by mistake set it up as follows: “The ‘Apostate’ and ‘Diabolical’ Bible Reader”-which, of course, destroys the sense of the title entirely. Those who preserve the Bible Banner for their files should make this correction with a pen to prevent such an error from becoming a matter of record. The Bible Banner in the eyes of some has become reprehensible. They are assuming to assert it should henceforth be anathema. But like the Jews “which came down for Jerusalem” to Caesarea “and laid down many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove,” they have over-played their hand. The truth of what Paul said to the court was so obvious, and the bitterness of his accusers so evident, that Festus afterward stated before the brilliant audience of the king and “chief men” of Caesarea that though Paul’s pursuers were “crying that he ought not to live any longer” he had nevertheless “found that he had committed nothing worthy of death.” The public will see through what is being done now and will be as fair in their judgment of the Bible Banner as Festus was with Paul, even though like Paul, it should become necessary for us “to appeal unto Caesar” to escape assassination!

A common mistake among men who become embittered and enraged is to over-play their hand. The Jews made Paul out such a bad fellow that neither Festus nor the people could believe that one man could be that bad. Likewise it will be difficult for those who are so enraged at the Bible Banner to convince very many people that we are quite so “apostate” and “diabolical” as they so intemperately aver. These brethren who were once such good friends of ours are over-doing it. It will cause many people to wonder how such good friends as they were could manifest such bitter enmity so quickly, merely over the question of an individual’s right to participate in the civil and military affairs of government. They will wonder if there is not something else back of it.

Attention is here called to the reprint of the March editorial on The Christian And The Government, and the article by Cled E. Wallace in the June issue under the same caption in quotes. Demands for these articles have come from all over the United States and Canada, thanks to our “friends” who have given it so much publicity. An insufficient number of these issues were printed, as it did not occur to us that such a statement of our views on the civil government question would be considered so important. We feel flattered. The demand- for the issue containing W. E. Brightwell’s article, For The Vindication Of The Cause, was met, by an ample printing of that issue. Since the March issue, the circulation of the Bible Banner has been doubled, in actual circulation. In order that all may have the articles in demand, they are reprinted on pages 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14, of this issue. This is our only way of accommodating such a large volume of requests.

THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES OVER THE ISSUE

From some quarters comes the warning of a great rift in our ranks precipitated by the publication of these articles. That is certainly not very complimentary to the good sense of our brethren. The simple fact is, such is not true. I have been about over the “brotherhood” extensively since these articles appeared and have found a deep interest but no excitement among the rank and file of the brethren. The excitement and the noise have come from some irate editors who are apparently attempting to do something that bears a striking resemblance to what Demetrius stirred up in Ephesus. The analogy holds good in one instance, at least, in that “some cried one thing and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together!” That describes the present situation. Some are all-out non-resisters and would not even protect a helpless wife and child against an invader of the home because “the Testament forbids it!” Others are not non-resisters but they are non-combatants, that is, they will load the gun if the other fellow will shoot it. Still others say that it is right to pay taxes, but wrong to buy war bonds. Then there are yet others who offer the opinion that it is wrong for a Christian to voluntarily do so for then he would not be responsible—but he is responsible even though he is drafted for military service! He is not responsible if drafted to do one thing that is wrong voluntarily, but he is responsible when drafted to do another thing that is wrong to enlist voluntarily to do! Still again some of them affirm that a Christian can participate in all phases of civil government, vote, campaign for office, stump the state for their candidate, root louder and longer during an election than a pep squad at a football game, and seek all sorts of political jobs and favors, but they cannot have anything to do with the military part of it. And finally there are those among them who are ready to take all of the rest of them on for an argument that the whole thing, both civil and military, belongs to the devil, and a Christian must not take a hand in any of it, not even to vote (except for prohibition), but just read the papers and wish for the right ones to get elected, and for the Germans and the Japs to lose. On the whole, and as a group, they do not know what they believe-some cry one thing and some another. They are in confusion among themselves and
cannot accept each others extremes. Yet they threaten us with a debate “when the war is over!” As a compromise on that challenge let us suggest that they debate it out among themselves and clarify the issues in their own ranks to decide which one of the many propositions they really want to debate. If they say that civil government is all right, but not the military, we will let one of their own number who affirms that civil government itself is of the devil do that debating. If on the other hand they choose the non-civil, no-voting end of the subject, then we will nominate one of their “non-combatant” voters to do that debating. So before they talk of a debate with some of us “when the war is over,” they had better agree among themselves, before the war is over, what issue needs debating. On the principle that a house divided against itself cannot stand, they are certainly in no shape to talk about debating with anybody. Any debate they hold now or “when the war is over” would turn into an Ephesian riot among themselves. But if they are going to have one, there is no particular reason to wait until the “war is over,” for if they can say the things about the government that they have already said, and get by with it, they can say everything else they want to say without restraint.

One of the noisiest ones among them has broadcast a list of eminents that he proposes to challenge to debate “when the war is over.” But he himself did join and belong to a sectarian organization in Dallis known as The Pastor’s Association alias The Ministerial Alliance, an out-and-out sectarian affiliation. Yet he decorates himself the knight of sound doctrine and a sponsor of gospel broadcasting! Moreover, he has made caustic criticisms, too, of softness in Abilene Christian College, and demanded the removal of certain men from the faculty because of their sectarian tendencies. But he himself joins a sectarian organization, one which I venture to say none of the men he criticized in Abilene Christian College, with all of their weaknesses, belongs to or would join. This brave brother, however, not only joined this sectarian organization but hob-nobbed with them so successfully that he was tendered the presidency of the sectarian thing. It is not the government question that he needs to debate with us, nor sectarian influences in Abilene Christian College with someone else. Somebody in Dallas needs to look after him instead.

That is withal a fair picture of the group, one way and another, that would now anathematize the Bible Banner. Why? Because we have expressed a conviction on the government question contrary to their own views-their many, divergent, contradictory, conflicting, inconsistent and incongruous views. It is not the time for them to talk about debating with anybody except themselves. If they will just keep on talking long enough through their papers they will win the debate for us and save all the trouble and annoyance of having one. The plain fact is, when the bluff and bluster in what they are saying and writing has been extracted there is little left for comment.

THE CHARGE OF FICKLENESS

All along we have been accused of impugning the motives of “the conscientious objectors.” Recently the editor of the Gospel Advocate spoke out in their defense on this point and insisted that they should “be respected” and “not ridiculed, as some seem to think.” I do not know who the “some” are who “seem to think” that sincere conscientious objectors should be ridiculed. I am certain that I do not think so. But we have learned who the “some” are that ridicule and impugn the motives of those who have changed or altered their views on the questions involved.

In the Gospel Advocate of September 10, in an article entitled “The Fickleness of Man,” Brother H. Leo Boles charges that “some of our brethren” and “some of our editors” have changed their views on the war issues because “it is very popular now to be found on the side they have espoused.” He allows only two reasons for “changing their minds” i.e. hasty decisions, and fickleness, or lack of conviction, a seeking of popularity. He then makes the application to “some of our brethren” and “some of our editors” in the following passage from his article:

“What has caused some of our brethren to change? Why have some of our editors changed? It is very popular now to be found on the side they have espoused. No one has discovered any new principle in the New Testament; neither has he found a new application of New Testament teaching. Again, why have some changed?” This charge, of course, impugns the motives of the “brethren” and the “editors” referred to. Who are those brethren and who are those editors who have “changed” because “it is very popular to be found on the side they have espoused?”

In making this charge of insincerity the Gospel Advocate has violated it own recent editorial dictum in which the editor strenuously objected to such implications against those who are conscientious objectors. Brother Boles has turned right around and done the very thing that the Gospel Advocate has condemned others for doing. They demand respect for their own consciences, but they not only do not respect our convictions, they do not hesitate to impugn our motives.

Has Brother Boles ever “changed” his views on anything? Let us see. Several years ago he engaged in a written discussion with R. H. Boll on the issue of millenialism. In the beginning of this discussion Brother Boles said:

“Brethren should study and investigate any question revealed in the word of God for their own mutual benefit and for the public welfare without impugning each other’s motives or breaking the fellowship between the Lord’s servants.”

At the conclusion of the discussion Brother Boles further said:

“Brethren Boll and I hold many things in common-enough to fellowship each other as brethren in the Lord,” and, “my regard for him has increased because of the discussion,” and, “we differ, as the reader knows; but our differences do not keep me from esteeming him very highly as a brother in Christ Jesus.”

Does Brother Boles hold this view now that he can and does “fellowship” R. H. Boll as “brethren in the Lord”? No; he has changed his mind and has decided that the doctrine taught by R. H. Boll is a sufficient ground of disfellowship, and has repudiated the statements he made at the close of the discussion.

When the sympathizers of R. H. Boll pressed Brother Boles on the statements he had made in that discussion he wrote an article explaining why he had changed his attitude on that subject. Here is what he said:

“The New Testament teaches clearly and emphatically how to regard those who have departed from the faith or those who have corrupted the teachings of Christ. ‘Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and turn away from them. For they are such as serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech, they beguile the hearts of the innocent’ (Rom. 16:17-18). This is not difficult to understand. It belongs to every child of God and every Christian should help to carry out this injunction.”

Personally, I believe that Brother Boles did the commendable thing in repudiating his former statements that there was nothing in the “differences” between the Boll party and the church to break fellowship over. His later statement, as quoted above, is undoubtedly right. But why did Brother Boles change? He says that the view set forth in his later statement is not “difficult to understand.” He also says that “no one has discovered any new principle in the New Testament; neither has he found a new application of New Testament teaching.” R. H. Boll does not teach anything now that he did not teach then and he does not practice anything now that he did not practice then. The issue of fellowship over the teaching and practice of R. H. Boll in Louisville existed then
just as it does now. Brother M. C. Kurfees was living and preaching in Louisville at that very time and was a prominent editor and writer on the staff of the Gospel Advocate. He had led the fight against the Boll movement in Louisville. The Gospel Advocate had dismissed Boll from their editorial staff, because of these “differences” which Brother Boles then said were not important enough to break fellowship over. But he knew all of these things. R. H. Boll has not changed, he is the same now as then. His doctrine has not changed, it is the same now as then. His practice has not changed, it is the same now as then. But Brother Boles has changed. Why has he changed? He has allowed only two reasons: 1. Making a hasty decision; 2. Lack of conviction, or fickleness, seeking popularity. Did Brother Boles make “a hasty decision” when he wrote the statement at the conclusion of a long discussion, that R. H. Boll should be fellowshipped? or, is it “very popular now to be found on the side” that he has “espoused” since he changed? Since “no one has discovered any new principle in the New Testament; neither has he found a new application of New Testament teaching” and since Rom. 16:17-18 was in the New Testament then as now, and R. H. Boll was just as guilty then as now. Let Brother Boles answer his question in the light of his accusation against us-why did he change? Shall we say, as he did, “Oh, the fickleness of man”?

Brother Boles’ attitude toward us on the government question does not harmonize with his own advice to “study and investigate any question revealed in the word of God for mutual benefit without impugning each other’s motives.” For why “investigate” any question “for mutual benefit” if no change can be made in one’s views without the censure that Brother Boles has given for such a change? Since Brother Boles has himself done that very thing why should he accuse others of changing because “it is very popular now to be found on the side they have espoused.” Is that why he changed his attitude toward R. H. Boll? Personally, I can say that I was not only debating the millennial issues with the Boll party but was also declaring against fellowshipping them in their heresies, from the head man down, while it was very unpopular to be found on the side I had espoused. It was some time later than this that Brother Boles changed his attitude on that subject. But the New Testament taught the same thing on Romans 16:17 during the Boles-Boll Discussion that it teaches now.

Brother Boles further says that in time of peace the “preachers of the gospel preached peace, which is opposed to war” and that “preachers quoted the New Testament as condemning war.” I still do that. The New Testament condemns war just as it condemns depreations and murder—but it does not teach that we cannot defend ourselves against depredators and murderers, nor that a nation of people cannot defend themselves against outlaws that attack and make war upon them. The same principle is applied in time of peace on a small scale that is applied in time of war on a large-scale. Society must have peace officers, county state and national, and they do precisely for the people in time of peace what the army does for the nation in time of war.

I have been told that while Brother Boles was president of David Lipscomb College a policeman, or an armed watchman, was engaged to protect the premises and the students in the dormitories. I know of my own information that the McQuiddy Printing Company and Gospel Advocate Company employed an armed watchman to protect their property. What New Testament principle makes it right for David Lipscomb College and the Gospel Advocate Company to employ armed officers for their protection against local criminals and outlaws but makes it wrong for the government to enlist its armed forces to protect the citizens of an entire nation against international criminals and outlaws? While “in time of peace” Brother Boles was “quoting the New Testament as condemning” the bearing of arms—was an officer bearing arms to protect the teachers and students while they slept in their homes and dormitories? I know that such an officer was employed to protect the equipment of the Gospel Advocate Company which is used to print his articles.

Certainly “the New Testament taught the same thing in time of peace as it teaches in time of war” but that would not justify preaching war in time of peace. Because a man is justified in defending his property and his person is no reason why he should appear belligerent all of the time. This peaceful nation does not believe in war. It went so far as to preach disarmament in promoting peace. Just as our nation in time of peace was promoting disarmament, gospel preachers, as they should have been doing, were preaching peace, not war. Brother Boles’ remarks along this line do not show the discrimination that a man of his usual discernment should manifest.

What my critics can get out of the capital they are trying so hard to make over some modifications in my views they are wholly welcome to. It only shows that they are hard pressed for argument. My personal views on the Christian’s relation to military government have changed in some particulars but they did not change suddenly nor hastily. I never did subscribe to the views of David Lipscomb on civil government any more than I did to his views on sectarian baptism. Any changes that I have made in my own views have been in the application of principles rather than in the actual principles. I registered in the other world war, but not as a conscientious objector. I do not believe now and I did not believe then that this is the light in which any Christian should be placed before the world, nor does it represent the correct attitude toward and relation to government. In his booklet on “Law of God On Capital Punishment” the late M. C. Kurfees established the right of the government to use the sword in the administration of the law for the protection of society against criminals and outlaws. He pointed out the numerous scriptures supporting his contention that it is the duty of all citizens, including Christians, to cooperate with the “powers that be” in the performance of that divine mission through the exercise of the prerogatives of government. He further stated that objections to it were either “a mere misguided sympathy or a sophomoric sentimentality.” If that described my case earlier years, I can at least claim the credit in Brother Kurfees estimation for advancing from the “sophomoric” class to a higher and better understanding and application of the scriptures involved.

Some Misapplications of Argument

The attempts at argument that some are making on the issue are perfectly puerile. For instance, Jesus drove the money-changers out of the temple with a whip, therefore one may use a whip but not a gun! And that has been played up as a real argument. I wonder if any one seriously thinks that Jesus used that “scourge of small cords” to actually whip the members of the temple? If so, since it was to cleanse His “Father’s House,” and pertained to the religious services of the temple, would it not rather furnish an example for whipping disorderly members of the church? If Jesus made a literal use of the whip, then it not only admits the premise of force, but puts it in the very place it should not be exercised-in the church. In either case their argument for non-resistance is swept away by their own admission.

Another objection to our contention is that it causes a Christian to conduct himself by one set of principles as an individual or citizen, and another set of principles as a Christian. No more so than the fact that the same man must be governed by one course of action as a father in his home and another course of action as an elder in the church. The father must employ physical force to discipline his children in the home, but he is refrained from the exercise of force as an elder.
ruling the church. In a weak effort made to offset the force of this illustration, we are told that a father may administer physical punishment to a child, but cannot kill the child! But that is not the point of comparison. Can an elder administer physical punishment to the members of the church, just so he does not kill them? If not, then the same man finds himself operating in two realms, one in which force is required and the other in which force is prohibited. Once the principle of force in the material realm is established, the position of non-resistance collapses. This argument which was set forth in the March Bible Banner, reprinted in this issue, holds. It has been talked about, but nothing like answered.

Another example of confusion is found in this statement: “If the world is not under the rule and dominion of the devil, then, the mission of Christ unto the world is meaningless, for he came into the world to rescue it from the possession and rule of the devil.” That is as fine a premillennial argument as any premillennialist could wish for. I did not know that Jesus came into the world to rescue people from civil government. I have believed and preached that he came to save us from sin and fit us for heaven. Now we are told that his “mission” is “meaningless” unless he takes civil government away from the devil here in this world. Then what will the other half-chap? Why, the millennium, of course, when all human government, which now belongs to the devil, will have been destroyed and only the government of Christ will exist in the world. So says Brother J. N. Armstrong; so say all premillennialists; so says this bright young editor! Come and get him, Brother Armstrong; though he is really not a premillennialist, he is doing your work for you. But he just does not know what he is saying. His broad admission that the devil has not been bound, that the mission of Christ was not accomplished, is the very essence of premillennialism, and that in the name of sound doctrine!

We repeat therefore that the false theory of civil government is the very background of premillennialism. It is the doctrine of Russell and Rutherford, and Jehovah’s Witnesses cult, but it is not the doctrine of the New Testament. Certain brethren who are writing a series on “The Mistakes of Jehovah’s Witnesses” ought to include this colossal mistake of theirs and expose the mistakes of Jehovah’s Witnesses on civil government. Brother Roy Lanier should add this chapter to his series. Why not? It is Jehovah’s Witnesses doctrine, out-and-out, and they never made any bigger mistakes than this one. It is the foundation of most of their other errors. Take it away from them and their structure falls. No exposure of their mistakes can be complete until this one is made. And besides, it might enlighten some of our own brethren. Here is work for you, Brother Lanier.

COMBATANT AND NON-COMBATANT SERVICE

Next, we are told that it is all right for those not members of the church to participate in combatant service, but not right for Christians to do so. That can only mean that what is morally wrong for one would not be morally wrong for another. Was moral law given only to church members? If the act of adultery is morally wrong, if it not morally wrong for all alike, whether members of the church or not? If murder is morally wrong likewise it is morally wrong for all whether in the church or out of the church. If the performance of the duty of officers and soldiers is a violation of moral law then all such are in the sight of God murderers. If, then, soldiers are murderers, what should the church do with members that become soldiers? What should the church do with members that become adulterers? They should be governed by the same rule in both cases for both murder and adultery are violations of moral law. The conclusion is inevitable, if the attitude that some take toward combatant service is right, the church would be under the solemn duty to withdraw from every member who becomes a soldier. But their contention is not true—their attitude is wrong.

Since it is admitted that a member of the church can scripturally engage in non-combatant service, and still be a Christian, it follows, in their way of thinking, that a member of the church can make the ammunition and make the guns that shoot it, and still be a Christian. But the member of the church who takes up right where the other left off, cannot be a Christian. The first member is not responsible, they tell us, but the second member is responsible! It looks to me like it is the fellow who gets himself into that way of thinking who is not responsible.

Another slip on the subject was made in referring to the hypothetical case of the limb falling on a man before he is baptized. We are told that bringing up the subject of whether a soldier is a murderer or not is of that category. But it is not. This is not a hypothetical case, in the first place, but a question of fact. Soldiers are murderers or else they are not. If they are, either actually or potentially, then all of them are. If they are not, none of them are—actually or potentially—and a Christian can therefore be a soldier and a soldier can be a Christian.

A limb falling on a man before he is baptized might be comparable to a rafter falling on a mourner before he gets through, but it has nothing to do with what is or what is not murder.

When all is said, one general statement answers all: The scriptures that are used to prove that Christians cannot participate in the civil and military government are not on the subject. They apply to the nature of Christ’s spiritual kingdom, instead.

The fact stands out that non-combatant service is itself dependent upon combatant service, just as the civil government depends upon the military which enforces it. If one can engage in the non-combatant service, but cannot engage in combatant service, then one can do the thing which is dependent upon the thing which he cannot do! Doing the thing that depends on the thing he cannot do is right, but doing the thing upon which it depends is wrong. Therefore the good thing that one does depends upon the evil thing another does. That is nonsense.

THE EXAMPLE OF PAUL

When Paul accepted the armed forces of four hundred and seventy soldiers to protect his life, did he do wrong? If it is wrong to employ an armed force for protection, Paul did not have to yield—he could have refused and taken the consequences in death. But Paul did not merely accept this armed escort. He asked for it. And he did more than merely request it. The text says that he prayed the authorities, on the grounds of his Roman citizenship, to provide it (Acts 23:18-23). In answer to his petition the government assigned him two hundred soldiers, two hundred spear-men, and seventy horsemen—a total of four hundred and seventy armed men, to escort him to Caesarea in the night. In verse 27, the chief captain said that Paul would have been killed if he had not come “with an army” and “rescued him,” adding that he did it because Paul was a Roman citizen. Then in verse 7, of chapter 24, Luke puts the statement in the record that the army of Lysias used “great violence” on the Jews in order to give Paul safe passage. Paul not only accepted this armed force of four hundred and seventy soldiers with their spears and weapons, who used “great violence” to protect his life under the guarantee of law and government, but it was Paul who originated the plan, and prayed the authorities to arrange it. Yet we are told that it is all wrong and that a Christian cannot participate in such. That makes it hard on Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ.

To offset the force of Paul’s exercise of his Roman Citizen-
ship, reference is made to his statement in Phil. 2:20 that “Our citizenship is in heaven.” But that does not offset it. Paul had two citizenships and his Roman Citizenship was not in heaven.

What Paul did in this instance as a Roman Citizen does not contradict his teaching in Romans 12, nor the Sermon on the Mount, nor the action of Peter and John when they said “we will obey God rather than men.” The Sermon On The Mount does not discuss the functions of government but deals with personal retaliation. J. W. McGarvey and M. C. Kurfees very ably point out this fact in their treatises on the subject in hand. In “The Law Of God On Capital Punishment,” Bother Kurfees says: “It is a significant fact that when the Lord placed his own teaching in Matt. 5-38, against the ancient law recorded in Ex. 21:23-25, which required “life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe,” he confined his modification of that law to the point of personal resentment in returning evil for evil. Paul teaches the same thing when he says: ‘Render to no man evil for evil’ and ‘avenge not your- selves .... for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord.’ Rom. 12:17-19.”

Concerning the reply of Peter and John to the Romans who commanded them not to preach the name of Christ, it is not the prerogative of a government to command men to forbear preaching Christ. In so doing the government was not acting within its mission, not doing the thing that government is or- obedience to God, hence their answer. But in providing the armed force of soldiers for the protection of Paul, the govern- ment was performing functions of government and executing the due processes of law. It was right for Paul to ask for such, and if he could ask for it and receive it, then a Christian can grant it and perform it.

THE PERSONAL ELEMENT

It is being said by some that I have turned my back on the best friends that I have ever had. I have never know- ingly turned my back on any friend. I don’t even turn my back to an enemy. I face them, friend or foe. If stating my convictions on the government question is turning against a friend, it is a new definition of the relations and obligations of friendship. I know that some of my best friends do not feel that way about it. I certainly do not feel that way about it. There are some fine men who have conscientious scruples against participating in military service. Their feelings in that regard do not diminish my regard for them. Some of them are personal friends of mine, elegant men in every re- spect. Though I cannot see their viewpoint, it raises no bar- rier between us so far as I am concerned for I covet and cherish their friendship. No man needs friends more, no man esteems them higher, no man loves them better, than I do. If my belief that a Christian can participate in both civil and military government, one as consistently as the other, turns the attachment of some of my friends to antipathy, then the current of their affection though swift, for a time must have been shallow. It does not sound reasonable. There must be something else back of it. But in the words of Paul, “None of these things move me,” and I am still “set for the defense dained of God to do. To have yielded would have been dis-
"The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." The state of the world today proclaims it as still "lost." As a preliminary to its being saved, Jesus prayed that all who believe on him might be one. In His infinite love and wisdom, the Saviour provided the instruments to make Christian unity a reality and salvation of the world possible. As believers possessing and proclaiming an unadulterated gospel and teaching only the "faith once for all delivered to the saints," we have the Message. Reading the excellent expositions of that faith, the incontrovertible arguments written to defend it, and listening to the powerful proclamation of that gospel, one cannot but conclude that we have also the men required for the task to which the Lord has set us. But after thirty years observation of world conditions, and attempts to get at the causes of diminishing success in evangelism, the writer is compelled to consider whether there is not something seriously lacking in our methods. He does not try to change our methods, only is convinced there ought to be a very important, if not essential, addition made to them. Such addition might well be summed up in the word, Propaganda.

Propaganda is a word savouring more of politics than of religion. It is seldom used in connection with Christianity, except when applied to more or less subtle attempts to introduce unscriptural doctrines or practices. To many who recognize the New Testament as the sole and all-sufficient guide in church matters, the word may be quite objectionable, and any suggestion that we can use it, or need it, would probably be cause for suspicion. Nevertheless, it is just in this connection that the writer respectfully requests his brethren to seriously consider whether we now need it in our aggressive operations to win the world for Christ.

In its present general use, propaganda functions psychologically. It is designed to create an attitude of mind favorable to the reception of ideas and policies its users wish to propagate and establish. By itself, there is nothing specific in the word to determine the moral quality and worth of the ideas or policies it is used to advance. It may be applied to a process of really valuable education, or it may cover a system of deliberate misrepresentation. Like the words "propagation" or "development," it is used in connection with things good and bad. Hence politicians of opposing parties, rival manufacturers, sales agencies for soap, bread, booze, and prohibition—all use propaganda. As it is already being used to advance "disgression" (according to some who ought to know), may it not be profitably employed to some who ought to know), may it not be profitably employed to the cause of Christ for the wider acceptance and firmer establishment of His kingdom?

By the known attitude of some brethren, it is safe to conclude that the question: "Do we need it?" will be met by them with an emphatic: "No. We do not need propaganda. Preach the gospel. It is still God's power unto salvation to all them that believe. What it did on Pentecost and in apostolic days, it can do today. It has not changed. Preach the gospel." To all of which it has to be said that the gospel is being preached, and it is not doing what it did on Pentecost nor in apostolic days, not even when due recognition is given to all its wonderful modern successes.

It is not the worth of the article, but the conditions existing in the community in which it has to be sold, that makes propaganda necessary and decides what form it shall take. The lack of the article, has to be felt, A desire for it has to be created. A need for it has to be shown to, and appreciated by, the people to whom it is offered. In all this there is nothing original or really modern. Like everything else in psychological law, the need for propaganda for the successful introduction of Christianity was fully recognized and taken into account when, before the foundation of the world, God purposed to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

There never has been as great a propagandist as the Living God. For thousands of years He sought to create an attitude of mind favorable to the reception of Christ and His dominion over humankind. From the record of His first promise of a Deliverer in the garden of Eden to the last chapter in the Old Testament, God has given a history of his propaganda for the coming of the Saviour. Exclusion from the garden, the curse of death, the sorrows of sin, the deluge, dispersion, abandonment of the Gentiles, giving the law to Israel, national calamities—all were used in the divine propaganda to show man his need of a Saviour. Blessings, prosperity, promises of power to overcome temptation, of eternal life and happiness, were some of the means used in that propaganda to create a favorable attitude of mind toward the Messiah of the Jews and Saviour of the Gentiles. Such was the preparation of the race by which Divine love and wisdom sought to induce men to accept Him when He came to them as the Son of Man. And since our Creator for so long used propaganda to gain acceptance for his Christ, surely we cannot be doing wrong in using the same instrument for the same purpose!

There is no real use in citing Pentecost and the immediately subsequent apostolic period as proof that if we preach the same gospel the same results will follow. Facts show it to be otherwise. Our elementary science taught us that we had a right to expect the same results from the repetition of an experiment only when “like causes” operated on “like materials” under “like conditions.” In the gospel we have the like causes. In the sinners around us we have the like materials. But in present world conditions, meaning thereby the religious and intellectual attitudes of humanity, we have not like conditions to those of New Testament times.

No preacher today can have an audience in the same “conditions” as that gathering addressed by Peter on Pentecost. The culminating factor in the preparation of that crowd for the reception of the gospel was their experience at Calvary when, with darkened heaven and trembling earth, there was brought home to them the truth of the Roman soldier’s exclamation: “Truly this man was the Son of God!” We are told they returned to the city from that sight “smiting their breasts.” Utter hopelessness and an overwhelming sense of guilt against God created a new and very different attitude toward Him, whom by wicked hands, they had crucified and slain. With the visible and audible manifestations given in proof of his resurrection and exaltation to heaven confronting them and revealing anew and in magnified proportions their crime against High Heaven, it would have been a greater wonder if that three thousand had done otherwise than humbly, gladly and immediately accept the pardon so graciously offered.

In the years closely following, “conditions” were very unlike those of the present. The wide effectiveness of God’s propaganda is very evident in the records of conversions in the New Testament. It would have been difficult if not impossible for Paul to find a group of atheists. But today we read of schools and
institutions for training men and women in atheism. Many colleges have societies and clubs in which atheism is a condition of membership. We live and move and do our daily business among atheists. Where there was culture and education but no Bible, the philosophers of Paul's day were more thorough and straighter in their thinking than most of those in modern times. Based on a few well established scientific facts, they reared their ladder of thought and climbed to the limits of the "material," recognized its claims for and dependence on a Creator—and postulated God. Then coming down to earth again, in reverence and self-confessed ignorance, they reared their altar "to the unknown God."

In apostolic times everyone was a religionist. Calling Him by many names, holding many unworthy, grotesque, childish, even vile, conceptions of Him, humanity all in some one way or other tried to worship God. Where there was belief in anything that God was supposed to have said, there was reverence for His words. But today it is frequently scoffed at as childish, ignorant credulity to believe the Bible as the Word of God. And the scoffing is generally done by people who are considered to be "Christians!" The sophisticated religionist of our times has little use for the Bible and less respect for what it teaches. It would be hard-nay, we know it is hard to find among professing religionists the equal of the Bereans in their reverent attitude toward the scriptures. No further back than reformation times the Bible was respected as the Word of God. Its histories were accepted as correct, its miracles as works of God. No need to dilate on the changed attitude of today. And before preaching from the Book can be expected to have anything like the influence it once had, there must be generated in the minds of men the respect that it is worthy of. Wherever Paul preached there was action. His hearers generally either approved or disapproved what he said. They joined with him or opposed him. He was regarded as a divinely appointed messenger or branded as an impostor. Men listened to what was said. They thought of what was said. They judged what was said. They came to serious conclusions regarding what was said. Now, when the same things are said, and when non-Christians do listen, the results usually amount to a patronizing, if not exactly a pitying, smile; a shrug of the shoulders; or a meaningless word of appreciation-meaningless, or there would soon be some evidence of change in the lives of those paying the compliment.

Most of the regrettable errors of Denominationalism dividing the people of God were probably instituted by honest although ill-informed men trying to do good. And the destructive criticism may not all have been the outcome of intellectual pride and desire for pre-eminence among scholars. But surely the time has come when ignorance cannot longer be regarded as honest, nor the assured result of so-called Higher Criticism be respected as scholarly. But something more than simple preaching of the gospel is necessary to clear away the clouds of error and dispel the haze of doubt. Do we need propaganda? Atheism, agnosticism, disbelief of believers, deliberate perpetuation of known unauthorized practices, with some unblamable error and a little desire to know the truth, about sums up the prevailing conditions amid which most modern preachers have to carry on. So that with the same "cause" working on the same "materials," he cannot produce the same results as in primitive times because he performs his great experiment in the alchemy of the human soul under different "conditions." And as propaganda changes conditions, surely there is need for it.

Can anyone imagine a farmer sowing good wheat in the wild uncared bush? Or can it be supposed that a man would be counted wise if seen scattering precious seed on land trampled hard as cement and baked like brick? In agriculture, the equivalent of propaganda would be clearing the bush, plowing and harrowing the land. In the cultivation of the intellect, propaganda would uproot false ideas, overturn settled prejudices, pulverize blasphemous notions and prepare and dispose the mind to receive the seeds of divine truth.

To create this favorable attitude of mind is going to be a big and long job, and the sooner we get accustomed to that idea the better. God worked for millenniums preparing man's mind for the coming of Christ. And, while decay usually works much faster than growth, it should be recognized that it has taken centuries to bring the world to its present state of indifference and ungodliness. It seems that we shall have to take a much wider view and develop a longer vision than those embracing only our own congregation and the next generation. Propaganda is not "selling the goods." It is working to secure future sales. But we all like to sell. With most of us, "a bird in the hand's worth two in the bush." Yet we labor for eternity. And it is not the number of "sales" we make that measures the worth of our work and decides our reward; but the performance of duties, the discharge of responsibilities, the quality, not the size, of our achievements. In this service of Christ, fidelity is success.

Proper propaganda would create belief in God, destroy the faith-blasting influence of the so-called "assured results" of destructive criticism, establish respect for the New Testament by proving its authenticity, reliability, and authority. It would show the difference between what is entitled to be called science and the theories of scientific men, and it would convincingly point out the facts that science and religion are not opposed to each other, but that religion is a supplement to science.

Probably everything that is necessary for proper and effective Christian propaganda has already been written. But little of such valuable matter is circulated in a form and manner suitable for that work. Most such articles are in magazines and books which only church people read. And among churches of Christ there are many young brethren with all the educational advantages and scholarly abilities necessary for the creation of real business-like, attention-arresting literature, the production of which would be the most valuable service any man could render to the world for ages to come. Such a thought must have inspired Professor Dick Wilson when, as a young student, he planned forty-five years of his life for the study of everything literary connected with the Old Testament so that he might give the knowable truth about the Sacred Volume to his fellow-men. In the preparation and compiling of a proper propaganda campaign and ammunition lies a task that challenges the best abilities of the best men in Christendom.

Effectual propaganda will be costly. It will take a lot of money to distribute it over whole countries and continents. Financial sacrifices will have to be made for years and years, if it is to undo what has been accomplished by the persistent operations of anti-Christian forces and perverted ignorance. It calls for millions of pieces of literature and years of time to distribute them. But if this thought should daunt us, we may gain some courage and perhaps feel a justifiable shame, if we take stock of the labors, expenditures and persistence involved in the operations of worldly institutions, as they mould man's thought to their liking and purpose. Propaganda can arouse a peaceful nation to war. It can bring a warring people to seek peace. "Wet" propaganda brought about enough change in thought to gain repeal. Now the "Drys" are resolved on beginning all over again, and starting at the very beginning of their problem with a propaganda that will be long enough and strong enough to win a victory for prohibition and with the mind and will of the people establish it permanently as an American institution and law.

Surely it is not always to be said that the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light, or that the temporal welfare of humanity can arouse more interest, inspire to greater effort, and call forth more sacrifice and self-denial than the salvation and eternal destiny of their fellows can claim from members of the Church of Christ?
“These things hast thou done, and I kept silence.” (Psalm 50:21) Volumes have been written and numerous sermons preached about the words and commands of God, but in this age of religious controversy, it seems that little attention has been given to His silence. With slight reflection, we are aware that when God speaks, He speaks with power and authority. By His word, the things that now are, sprang into existence; the planets moved in their respective orbits, and even man became a living soul. Natural laws ceased to function as evidenced in the burning bush, the dividing of the waters of the Red Sea, the flowing stream from the smitten rock and the prolongation of the solar day while Joshua finished the battle. Thus the laws of nature apparently began instantaneously when He spake and as suddenly ceased by the same power. By such came life and by such life ends. With equal sudden rapidity, we are assured that the dead will appear, the transformation will take place and eternity will be ushered in for it will be in the twinkling of an eye at the sound of the voice of God. However, it is not the commands of God that men fear but God himself and His divine presence. When God speaks, man stands in awe. Israel, while waiting God’s commands, pleaded that such be given indirectly through Moses for they feared His presence. (Ex. 20:19.) It was then that Moses rebuked the people and said, “Fear not, for God has come to prove you and that His fear may be before your faces, that you sin not.” It is not during the moments of God’s presence that men are rebellious, contentious, neglectful, unthankful and fearless, but during the lapse of time between His appearings. It is not during the uttering of God’s holy and divine commands that man questions, rejects, or disobeys, but during the intervals of silence while the merciful God is longsuffering, waiting for man to repent.

Here the psalmist visualizes God as the Great Judge. “He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness for God is judge himself.” (Ps. 50:4, 5, 6.) Then in verses 1, 2 and 3: “The mighty God even the Lord hath spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof, out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence, a fire shall devour before him and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him.” Thus the prophet summons the court, presents the judge, produces the witnesses, cites those who are to answer and, having seated the judge upon the throne, he gives forth the charge. Then will be broken the deep silence that now penetrates the heart of every submissive child and disturbs the mind of every rebellious objector. Where will be the place? “Out of Zion.” Who are to be cited? “Those that have a covenant with Him,” which dates from the offering of Abel. What will be the charge? “I am God,” the only object or being of worship; “I am thy God,” which demands complete submission. “I will speak,” which forestalls any argument or anticipated deliberation.

It is during the long periods of silence between the successive appearings of God, that men have always permitted their spark of faith to grow dim, thus permitting their religions to become corrupted and suffering themselves to drift into a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. It is during such periods that men have forgotten God. Man, with the greatest of his ability and theological reasoning, has searched the Bible, striving to understand and to teach the commands of God, but in sorrow he has neglected to reflect upon the periods of God’s silence and the results of such intervals upon the eternal destiny of the soul.

I. The Silence of God is an expression of His infinite wisdom and a distinct proof of His divinity. God spake and the worlds were formed. Natural laws were postulated, material things sprang into existence and then the voice of God became silent in nature. From that day until the present, the natural laws have remained fixed. Men have denied, rejected, tried to refute and have even claimed to set such laws aside but God remains silent. It is this penetrating silence that alarms the Atheists, the Deists, and the Agnostics, until they demand aloud for an answer from God. They cry for supernatural evidence which, failing to get, they deceive their followers with religious superstitions. Their works are mysteries of deception. They profess to appear as medians and even promise to return after death, but God remains silent. Why should God speak? He spoke as one of authority. Such men of assumed intellect have never disproved this authority. This unbroken silence has forced the ablest of scientists to admit that “matter cannot be created nor destroyed.” “The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork,” all of which came by the voice of God. Why should there be repeated manifestations of such power to prove God’s divinity? Such power does not need to be verified. Scientists have not disproved evidence of such powers and until he is able to do so, God’s silence is indicative of His infinite wisdom. Wise men are men of few words and true science requires but little or no justification. The more explanation that a theory requires the less the possibility of its being true. Denying another’s statement does not prove one that we might make, neither does denying the infallibility of the Bible prove men’s theories of science. True scientists will not resort to such tactics. As men cannot disprove God’s statements, it is wise and just that God remains silent. Such silence is indicative of divine proof.

II. God’s silence is a proof of the Infallibility of the Bible and indicative of God’s Infinite wisdom in religion. In Hebrews 1:1 we read, “God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.” In the Mount of Transfiguration God spake. “This is my beloved Son, hear ye him.” Then the voice of God became silent. Christ, before His ascension, spake the commands of God by which Christians were to be directed and then after informing the disciples of the coming of the Holy Spirit to reveal these commands, the voice of Christ became silent. The Holy Spirit came as promised. The commands of Christ were revealed to the apostles as the Spirit gave them utterance. The Holy Spirit then became silent. In the New Testament we have these commands, given by Christ and revealed by the Holy Spirit each in their respective turn. It is a reflection on the infinite wisdom of the Godhead to request or to even contend for a direct revelation of guidance by either God, Christ or the Holy Spirit. Such revelation, should one be given, would cast doubt on the one already given. Some claim a special message from the Holy Spirit. Others contend that they are guided directly by the Lord. Others seemed inclined to believe that God puts such directly in their hearts while many seem possessed with the illusion that the guarding angel is ever near to direct them in right or wrong. All such conceptions are certainly without faith. Neither of them would be accepted by a court of justice nor recognized as evidence in any discussion. One would not think of accepting such as authority in a material transaction. To demand or even expect a direct revelation is to reject the one given in the New Testament. This intimates, at least, the incapacity of the New Testament to do what God, Christ and the Holy Spirit unitedly designed, advocated and fulfilled that it would do, hence, a reflection on the ‘wisdom of the Godhead. The Godhead is silent. Why?
cause He has spoken. Having spoken with authority, there is no need of repetition or explanation. A repetition would not add to the clearness, neither would additional information increase man’s possibilities, for that already given is thorough. (See Col.2:9; 2 Tim. 3:17.) The only reason left for such contentment is to escape what is written. It is the unbroken silence that causes man’s uneasiness. It is this unbroken silence that causes man to become careless and indifferent to toward that already spoken. The psalmist David foresaw this situation for we read in the sixteenth and seventeenth verses of this psalm: “But unto the wicked, God saith, what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in my mouth, seeing thou hast instruction and castest my words behind me.” Then in verse twenty-one, we read, “These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself, but I will reprove thee and set them in order before thine eyes, now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver.” God spake then. He is silent now. God warned, and even prophesied the situation as it now is; that man would take His words into his own mouth, that they would hate His instruction and cast it behind them, but through all this He would keep silent. When men ask God to speak, are they asking Him to break this promise? Would it not be advisable to meditate beforehand, to at least wonder what God might say, should He speak? Is it probable that He would say, “Well done,” when we have not done what He commanded or probably done differently from what He commanded, when we have requested a special guidance and thus questioned His infinite wisdom to thoroughly do what He designed to do? When men seriously reflect on what God might say, should He speak, they will pray for Him to remain silent until they can repent and accept what He said when He did speak, for this is the divine purpose of His silence.

III. God’s silence is indicative of His infinite compassion and divine mercy. He is exceedingly merciful, slow to anger and omniscient. Although nothing escapes the divine eye, yet He remains silent and continues to bestow blessings upon men. “The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord and He pondereth on all his goings.” (Prov. 5:21.) He endures the provocation of the ungodly and defers from day to day, from year to year, the deserved punishment. God is longsuffering to usward and in silence He manifests His divine mercy, while He waits for repentance. This present life is a season of prohibition, a period for reforming. It is not a silence in which God will suffer His way to be altered but a silence of waiting for men to conform to His way. Why do men fear the judgment? Because they know that then the days of probation will be ended. Why do men not fear the calm of His silence before the judgment? This question is answered in Ecclesiastes 8:11, which reads, “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” How long God will continue this compassionate silence is uncertain both to men and angels but it will terminate with incomprehensible speed. What shall He then say to those who have taken His covenant out of God’s mouth, who have discarded the New Testament because they hated instruction and who have changed the Word of God into deception? What faith or hope could a man have discarded the New Testament because they hated instruction and who have changed the Word of God into deception? What faith or hope could a man have if he said when He spake, “He will reprove the wicked and tear into pieces those that forget God and there will be none to deliver.” Is it any wonder that there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. When humble servants of the Most High God and disciples of His obedient Son realize that heartfelt religion is not New Testament religion and that a Christian is a follower of Christ and not an advisor nor even a counselor, then men will pray for God to prolong His merciful silence until they repent rather than pray for some visible manifestation of His divine presence. Is it God’s desire to remain silent? Why should we wish it otherwise. If men will not heed that which He has spoken, what assurance does God have that he will heed a direct revelation, should one be given? Did not the rich man plead that a direct messenger be sent to his erring brothers? Do we not remember the heavenly answer: “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rose from the dead.”

Alterations are not to be accepted. Thus it was with Pilate when he said, “What I have written, I have written.” Neither are alterations to be expected in the divine decisions. What God has written, he has written. What faith or hope could a believer have, if such were subject to alteration? With what certainty could one plan for eternity if it were not for the fact that “with Him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning”? There is no need for another revelation, It is then the silence of God that is indicative of His infinite compassion and divine mercy which inspires our faith and hope in the eternal promises.

IV. The silence of God is a judicial infliction. The wretched Saul, king of Israel, though leader of the people of God, rejected God’s warnings. In his misery and grief, he approached the prophet with the complaint, “God has departed from me and answereath me no more.” Herod was an eager listener of John. He had done many things but he had not surrendered his heart. The time came when rather than slay his lusts with a repentant heart, he consented to the slaying of the prophet. The blood of the saint was upon his hands and the guilt of the sin upon his conscience. The dreadful silence was eased by the thought of seeing Jesus, but Jesus answered him nothing, nothing to satisfy his curiosity, nothing to alarm his fears, nothing to enlighten his mind. “As a lamb he was led to the slaughter, as a sheep before the shearsers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.” This dreadful silence added pain to torture. Christ was silent before the mob, silent before the Jewish council and silent before the Roman governor. The silence increased the torture of a guilty conscience. Pilate, though he washed his hands in a pretense of innocence and denied the guilt, yet he marveled at his silence. When our present days of probation are over, the unbelieving cry in agony and the contentious worshiper will plead, “Lord in thy name I have done many wonderful works,” as he awakens to the dreadful realization that the merciful God “has departed and answereath no more.” Sorrow will be added to grief and torture to misery as they suffer the infliction of the eternal silence. “There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

The silence of God is an expression of His infinite wisdom, a proof of His divinity. It is indicative of His infinite wisdom in religion, of His infinite compassion and mercy and will be evidence of His judicial infliction. It is during the present silence of our earthly pilgrimage and not the eternal silence, that we are subjects of this divine mercy. The eternal silence will be a rendering of justice. God has spoken, all of which can be found in the New Testament. No further verification is necessary. If such were granted, it is reasonable to believe that He would speak to the uninformed heathen and not to people surrounded with innumerable copies of the Bible. His silence does not warrant man’s introduction of creeds, doctrines or opinions. God said, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you.’ Man says baptism is not essential. Because God remains silent is no indication that he will warrant man’s statement. Rather it is indicative of the fact that He will not alter the one that He has made. The same is true of every command in the New Testament.
The Christian who does not know how to deport himself in time of war, does not know how to deport himself in time of peace—the instructions are the same. The attitude that causes a Christian in time of war to appear as a freak specimen of humanity, and to be placed in a concentration camp, or in a federal prison, when the world is in distress and there is so much work to do, is no more practical in time of peace. A crisis merely brings it to light. The only problems raised by war are in the application of the principles and instructions to what may be to the individual unaccustomed conditions. These principles do not change with map-making.

Romans 13—The Christian’s Manual Of Personal Conduct

The twelfth chapter of Romans is the Christian’s manual. It contains the rules for the regulation of Christian conduct—instructions for operation of the Christian life. In the closing five verses Paul gives the rules for keeping peace with one’s neighbor. 1. Recompense to no man evil for evil. 2. As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 3. Avenge not yourselves. 4. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. In personal conduct the Christian must do these things all the time. Whether it will work or not is not our responsibility; Paul said, “as much as lieth in you.”

But what of discipline and law enforcement? These are in other realms of God’s authority. The New Testament recognizes these other realms and allows a Christian to operate in these realms of discipline and law enforcement, even though the methods used are not the same as those in the kingdom of Christ. If the offending party is a child, the parent, even though a Christian, must teach his child what is good and evil; and he must control him, although it may require physical force to do so, which cannot be employed under the rules of Christian conduct in Romans 12. The parent, nevertheless, is operating under God’s authority in another realm.

A case in point: Despite all your efforts under the rules of love and kindness, one of these grown-up undisciplined, children of somebody’s inflictions upon you a serious bodily injury. It is reported by you, or by someone else. You are called to testify. You tell the truth without coloring it by personal feeling. The guilty party is punished according to the law. Have you recompensed evil for evil? Have you broken the command to “be at peace” in Rom. 12? Have you disobeyed what “is written” that “vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord”? Have you been overcome of evil? The answer to these questions is, No. No evil has been perpetrated in the enforcement of the law. The employment of physical force in its proper sphere, and in the manner prescribed by God’s authority, is good and necessary. The methods employed in a material realm are not rendered null and void, because they are not to be used in a spiritual realm. Force has no place in Christ’s kingdom, because citizenship there is spiritual and voluntary. It would vitiate every act of worship and service. There is no virtue in doing what we are compelled to do. But a Christian can and is even commanded to operate in other realms than the church.

Another case in point: Of the qualifications of elders in the church Paul says, “one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?”). Now, a man cannot employ force as an elder in Christ’s kingdom, but the only way he can prepare and qualify himself for the eldership, according to Paul, is by the experience gained in the wise use of force and discipline in the home!

Paul was born a Roman citizen. When he became a Christian he did not repudiate his citizenship in a civil kingdom; he exercised it. If any Christian has repudiated his citizenship, he should in all honor and fairness register as an alien. The government is entitled to know the exact status of everyone living within its borders during an emergency. Paul’s conduct, when revealed with the implication of divine approval, constitutes a very good commentary upon his teaching. The Roman magistrates in Philippi sent word to the jailer to release Paul and Silas: “Let those men go.” Paul answered: “They have beaten us openly, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay vkrily: but, let them come themselves and fetch us out.” On other occasions Paul used his citizenship to escape scourging, to avert a plot against his life, to escape an injustice in the lower courts; but on this occasion it was for none of those reasons. The beating was past; his freedom was offered; there was no emergency. His motive, therefore, was tactical—to escape the presumption of guilt in the eyes of the world, not for personal reasons but for the sake of the gospel.

On still another occasion Paul permitted an armed force to escort him to his destination to protect him from his enemies who had sworn to kill him. Had they attempted to carry out their threat, Paul knew that the soldiers would have used the force of arms, and if necessary would have killed the attackers in protecting Paul’s life. Was Paul’s practice here, as a Roman citizen, inconsistent with and contradictory to his teaching in the Roman letter? The answer again is, No. Paul had other realms of God’s authority in mind when he penned the rules pertaining to peace in Romans 12, if the context proves anything.

Romans 13—The Christian’s Obligation To Civil Government

It should be remembered that Paul did not divide the Roman letter into chapters. Romans 12 and 13 were not disjointed when he wrote the letter—it was all one argument. In the closing verses of the twelfth chapter when he forbids a Christian taking personal vengeance, he declared that “vengeance belongeth” to the Lord. The first verses of Romans 13, which follow immediately, tell how the Lord exercises this vengeance on the evildoer. Romans 12 and 13 are all one argument. “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to evil...”
he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake."

The sword is an instrument of death. The officer of the law is the officer of God when he beareth not the sword in vain. Verse six says: "For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they (the officers) are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing." Administering death, or capital punishment, therefore, is divinely sanctioned as a prerogative of government in punishment of evildoers. The idea that some members of the church have in these matters would make every peace officer, sheriff or policeman, a murderer, whether he is ever actually forced to kill or not, for he beareth not the sword in vain, and he is sworn to do what his office would in case of necessity require, just as in case of the soldiers who furnished the armed escort for Paul. The administration of capital punishment in the prosecution of the evildoer by the government does not differ in principle from a defensive war which the government must prosecute to protect the lives and liberties of its citizens. The idea that some of the members of the church have in these matters would also make every soldier in the service of our country a murderer. It is undoubtedly a false idea.

But the Bible says "thou shalt not kill," we are told. Yes, that is the sixth commandment. The fourth commandment said: "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy"-so the same God that said "thou shalt not kill," in the sixth commandment provided the death penalty for violation of the fourth commandment to keep the sabbath holy! Did the sixth commandment contradict the penalty of the fourth? Not at all; somebody's reasoning is just lame. If capital punishment is murder, and if peace officers and soldiers are murderers, then one commandment prohibited what the other commandment required! But since both capital punishment and war, under certain conditions, were divinely required under the same law that said "thou shalt not kill," it follows that there is a difference between both of those things and murder. Some people need to look up the definition of murder.

Brother R. L. Whiteside recently made a brief but clear and scriptural distinction on this point in answer to a question in his query department of the Gospel Advocate, which may be profitably inserted here. Read it:

The command, "Thou shalt not kill," was one of the Ten Commandments, and was a prohibition against murder. It applied to individuals, and not to governments. And while the Ten Commandments were in force, the individual was allowed, under certain circumstances, to take human life. "If the thief be found breaking in, and be smitten so that he dieth, there shall be no blood guiness for him." (Ex. 22:2.) Such taking of human life is not a violation of the command, "Thou shalt not kill." God does not give a law and then license a man to violate it. The command, "Thou shalt not kill," has been used as an argument against capital punishment, and yet under that law the authorities were required to punish by death many sorts of criminals. And under that law, the Lord required his people to make war on certain nations. In doing so, they were not violating the command, "Thou shalt not kill. The way some preachers, and others argue, it would seem that they never read any of the Old Testament excepting the command, "Thou shalt not kill."

But we do not read anywhere that the Lord ever permitted any man to commit adultery for his own protection, or that a nation was required to commit adultery! It is plain that individuals are prohibited from doing the things that governments are required to do.

Brother Whiteside is right. The idea that men who are not Christians can be soldiers and officers to protect the Christian by doing that which a Christian himself could not do is about the most conveniently selfish and cowardly convenient doctrine ever pronounced by good men. There is just one thing wrong with it—it is not true.

The Two Realms—Civil and Spiritual

But again we are told that Christ said: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." According to the theory of some, the same things belong to the devil that belong to Caesar. Then it could just as well read: "Render unto the devil the things that are the devil's." It certainly would be wrong to render anything to the devil, yet we could not honestly withhold anything from the devil that belonged to him. But Satan never owned a foot of ground on this earth. He never possessed an abstract of title to anything. Obligations are based upon value received, and if any man ever received anything worthwhile from the devil, he is obligated to the devil. We are told that the devil is ordained of God in the same way that governments are. Satan is wrong, and there is nothing right about him. If that is true of governments, God could not be consistent with his divine attributes and command us to pay taxes to the government.

Some go to the temptation of Christ to show that the devil possessed the kingdoms of this world. It is said that if he did not possess them, his offer would have been no temptation to Christ. Very well, but did Christ want the kingdoms of this world? Were not, what did he want with them? He was building a spiritual kingdom in which force would have no place. He could not salvage one thing from the kingdoms of this world for his spiritual kingdom. If Satan offered him something he did not want and could not use, how could that have been a temptation to him? But Christ was tempted, therefore, Satan did not offer him the kingdoms of this world as such. The kingdoms of this world meant what Jesus meant when he commanded his disciples to go and teach "all nations." They did not go to the civil governments; they went to the people who composed them. Christ could use the people in his spiritual kingdom. The devil was in possession by voluntary sufferance. What the devil offered was a withdrawal of opposition to Christ's work. He could have done the thing that he offered, because he was in control of that opposition. Let us not pervert scripture to support wishful thinking on a Christian's obligations to civil government. The theory that God uses the devil and wicked men to do some necessary evil work, such as law enforcement and warfare, so that his spiritual children do not have to soil their holy hands makes God parties to criminous to evil. To support this theory they go back to the Old Dispensation when it is said that "the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he setteth up over it whomsoever he will." But under the same dispensation God commanded his own people, under certain conditions, to wage warfare. So it proves too much. If we go back there for an example of one, we get an example of the other!

Take the example of Samuel. Among the Old Testament characters there is none that excelleth Samuel for personal piety and saintly faithfulness. His consecration began before his birth. The last of the judges, and in a sense the first of the prophets, this venerable priest's last days were saddened by the clamor for a king and by the mistakes of Saul, the first king. Saul could not tell Samuel that he had obeyed the Lord when the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen were sounding in his ears, and when old king Agag stood there before him alive! God had commanded Saul to kill them all. Saul had not done it. Whom did God ordain as a minister to complete the obedience in which Saul had defaulted? An evil, wicked man, some confirmed old sinner that was going to hell anyway? No; he appointed Samuel, the preacher and priest, one of the best men that ever lived, for that task, and he called for Agag to be brought before him. "And Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag to pieces before the Lord in Gilgal,"
But that was in the Old Testament! To be sure, but that is where they go to prove that God used evil men to do some of God’s evil work that men could not do—and this example proves that their argument is wrong. Here their contention is reversed.

It seems to me that some of the brethren have dipped their pens in ink of speculation and propounded a Calvinistic theory of civil government—namely, that they are all born totally depraved! Had not man rebelled against God, they say, there would have been no civil governments. Neither would there have been any clothes worn! Neither would there have been any church—nobody lost, nobody to be saved, no gospel to save them. But man did rebel. As a result God has two institutions, operating under his authority. To civil government he has given the responsibility of discipline as it pertains to the physical life. To the church he has committed the spiritual resources, and given the responsibility of order and discipline as it pertains to the spiritual life within the spiritual kingdom. One of these ordained institutions employ physical force because the nature of its work demands it. The other uses love and persuasion, because the nature of its work demands it.

The Individual Responsibility

The government deals with the individual. The church cannot speak for its members; and if it did the government would not accept it, but would still examine each individual in the case. The government is fortunately very reasonable. There are many branches of non-combatant service in which a conscientious objector may enlist, but if he refuses to do anything in an emergency like this, he will be placed in a concentration camp. Appeals are being made partly on the basis of “denominational pride” for the churches of Christ not to let some other church support our members in these camps. If one’s convictions are so impractical as to force him to go to a concentration camp, we may respect them but we are certainly under no obligation to support them. Some are even glorifying these misguided young men, and making heroes out of them. But it is not a thing to be proud of that we have members of the church with such impractical convictions. The New Testament certainly teaches a different conception of the responsibilities of citizenship and service. If the New Testament teaches the course they pursue, then every Christian in the land must follow that course, and the church of Christ will go out of circulation into a concentration camp for duration! If the New Testament does not teach that course, then why should the church support those who follow it?

Let us be consistent. It is said that the president of a Christian school was opposed to Christians participating in civil government, but the school of which he was president employed an officer to carry a gun and guard the property of the school! Another preacher said that if his home and family were attacked, he would just shoot the attacker in the leg! No, not if his argument is right, he could not resist, he could not even push him off the porch! Nor could he consistently call for the sheriff, deputy or policeman to protect them from a killer, for it would make a murderer of them. It is a peculiar quirk of mind that argues that a Christian can work in perfect co-ordination with the other fellow up to the final and necessary act, but say to the officer or the soldier, you are going to hell anyway, so you pull the trigger! God is no such respecter of persons. “If the thief be found breaking in, and be smitten so that he dieth, there shall be no blood guiltiness for Him.”

Every passage used to prove that a Christian cannot participate in defensive warfare, under any conditions, applies to the spiritual realm and not the material. The conclusions are therefore based on a misapplication of the scriptures used.

In every congregation there are many parents who have noble sons in the service. Harrowing it must be to their hearts, indeed, to have to sit and listen to a misguided preacher harrangue against their participation in the defense of the life and liberty that he and all the rest of us enjoy. It is a serious mistake to make heroes of men with a dwarfed conscience in concentration camps and murderers out of noble sons in army camps who bravely give their all in the defense of not only the freedom of the nation, but the very virtue of our mothers, wives and sisters—and the sanctity of all our homes.

Bather let us, as Christians, bend every effort and stretch every resource in the all-out task to aid the government in its efforts to protect our homes and preserve our liberties. At the same time, let us augment our efforts in spreading the kingdom of Christ, knowing that the church has the only thing that will permanently improve and save the troubled world. In this way alone can the Christian discharge the duties of his dual relation in this world.

The Readers’ Digest,

Pleasantville, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

While I have been a subscriber of the Readers’ Digest but a short time, I have been a reader of its columns since its beginning. For those who have a desire to be informed I regard the facilities of the Readers’ Digest second to none. In my humble opinion it is in a field by itself as there is no other reading service that in any sense competes with it. Complete and yet brief and thoroughly furnished to all the needs of the reader with limited time, in a few words describes it.

Few subjects of reader interest are left untouched in the columns of the Readers’ Digest but one that has escaped my notice is covered in an editorial article of a little known monthly publication, “Bible Banner,” the March, 1942 edition of which I am enclosing. I have reference to the article entitled “The Christian and the Government” on page 6.

Keen interest has been manifested by a large section of the reading public in the subject with which this article treats. I have read many articles on the general subject but this editor’s treatment of the subject is a classic in that field and is the most sensible one it has been my good fortune to review.

It occurs to me that your columns could render a three-fold valuable service by a reprint of this article; first, by continuing to maintain a standard of excellence second to none in the dissemination of information of classical value; second, giving to the public through the tremendous circulation you have obtained and rightfully deserve the classical treatment of a subject of vital current interest to the large public which you serve; third, the treatment of the subject by its’ author is such that a real service to our government is being rendered in the morale building effect that the treatment of this subject could have when read on a large scale.

It is in all sincerity that I write these words of commendation and recommendation, both as to the quality of the Readers’ Digest and of the far reaching morale building effect which could be accomplished by the reprinting of this article, and I trust your editors will give this recommendation their serious consideration.

Sincerely yours,

J. Edward Meixner.
**THE CHRISTIAN AND THE GOVERNMENT**

Cled E. Wallace

(Reprint from June Bible Banner to meet requests.)

A correction will serve to exonerate me from the charge of accepting an honor that belongs to another. Some seem to be under the impression that I wrote a recent article in the Bible Banner which deals with the relations of Christians to the government. Thanks for the compliment, but that fine piece of work is to be charged up to the editor. Frankly, he beat me to it, for I had about all I could stand of the sort of talk that caused him to print the article, without saying something about it. It was a better job than I could have done. The position in that article is both scriptural and sensible and will stand up under the attacks that are sure to be made upon it.

The need for such an article is shown by a typical example of loose writing copied from a recent issue of a paper devoted to “sound doctrine.” Ponder this one carefully:

“A nation has as much right to command Christians to steal, commit adultery, net drunk or any other evil thing, as it does to command them to kill. Vengeance belongeth to God. (Rom. 12:19.) “Thou shalt not kill.” The nations or kingdoms of the world belong to Satan. (Matt. 4:1-11.) All murderers shall go into the lake of fire.”

Our nation does not command Christians, or anybody else, to steal, commit adultery, get drunk or commit murder. On the other hand, it has some rather severe laws relating to such evil practices. It is quite lenient toward “conscientious objectors” in time of war, and is so tolerant that it protects the life and liberties of misguided brethren who abuse that liberty by proclaiming from the house tops that the nation was fathered by the devil and that its armed forces are all actual or potential murderers and headed for “the lake of fire.” I suppose we should be quite thankful to the devil in this present crisis for standing between us and the totalitarian racketeers who would rob us of our right to worship God and say about anything we please about everything and everybody! He has really shown us a favor in raising up at this time a Winston Churchill, a Franklin Roosevelt and a Douglas MacArthur to command his armed forces of murder! If I felt as this brother does, which I am thankful I do not, I would be decent enough under the circumstances, to keep my mouth shut until the crisis is over. The government is good enough to respect his “conscientious objections” and he should be gracious enough to refrain from calling it a vassal of the devil and its armed forces a gang of murderers, at least while it is fighting for its life.

The brother declares that “the nations or kingdoms of the world belong to Satan.” Paul says: “Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God.” (Rom. 13:1-2.) Seriously, did Paul command Christians to “be in subjection to the” devil? “For they are ministers of God’s service, attending continually upon this very thing.” (Verse 6.) What thing? “For he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil.” No, we are not working for Satan, when we are supporting the government.

“Thou shalt not kill.” This command was given to the new-born nation of Israel. Did that nation “belong to Satan?” The laws of that nation came from God through Moses. They provided for law enforcement, capital punishment and the prosecution of war. And such activities were not murder, even if they did involve the taking of human life. But we are not under that law! True, and the brother went to the wrong place for his text. Under the circumstances it is revealing!

Humanly speaking, before me is the framed picture of my son, in a uniform of the armed forces of the United States. He is both Christian and a loyal citizen of his government, While he is defending my right to live as a free man, I can defend him against the charge of murder. While we respect the consciences of those who are unwilling to bear arms on religious grounds, we resent the recklessness with which some of them employ their tongues and their pens. Let them “be in subjection to the higher powers” more quietly, pay taxes, buy bonds, help sharpen the sword and stop yelling bloody murder at those who use it. The martyr complex shows up in much they say. Some of them seem to be yearning for prison, death and fiery furnaces.

The apostles resisted the powers of the world and went to prison and to death. Daniel and the Hebrew children resisted the powers of the world and went to the lion’s den and the fiery furnace. If we follow Christ, Paul and others, we will not have murder in our hearts.

This is a bad mixture of irrelevant orating and begging of the question. Who is advocating murder and hate? When a criminal moved by hate comits murder, it is a screwy philosophy that concludes that the judge who sentences him and the officer who executes him, also haters and murderers. Then when a free nation must go to war in its own defense against international marauders, then its armed forces, from the Comander-in-Chief on down, become criminals if they happen to hurt anybody! Ugh! Just count me out of such twisted reasoning. I can’t take it. And don’t come around telling me the Bible teaches it! It does not.

According to the idea some brethren have about govern-ment belonging to Satan, it would be a great thing for Hit-ler and the Nazis if the majority of our people and other free peoples were Christians of the “conscientious objector” kind. He could just come in and take charge without serious op-position. Some brethren who have been arguing that the days of miracles are over would probably contend that in such a case the Lord would take us all out of the fiery furnace like he did the Hebrew children. And if we could convert even one whole county, it would destroy all civil government unless we imported some friendly sinners to take charge. Civil government is the devil, you know, and Christians can have nothing to do with it! Otherwise some unfriendly sin-ners would invite themselves in to take charge and some agent of the devil would have to call out the National Guard to protect us. Come to think of it, maybe we had better not make too many Christians until this war has been won! Personally, I think our Uncle Sam is being pretty nice to Jehovah’s Witnesses and some of our brethren. Satan doesn’t seem to have as strong a hold on him as he does on some of the other “nations” that “belong to” him. Of course, it would not do for Uncle Sam to become a Christian, for then he would not be Uncle Sam! And it would be mighty hard to find anybody to take his place. I’d prefer that he remain as he is rather than go into a disappearing act that would give us Hitler and his yellow “aryans.”

Some entertain the idea that if all were Christians there would be no need for civil government. It has no basis in fact. There would still be the need of the state to be kept separate from the church. Functions of the state are not to be confused with those of the church. Both are ordained of God.

The Doctrine of Non-Resistance

The nation is at war against organized and militarized bandits who propose to conquer the world and enslave all free peoples. They would destroy our government and permanent-ly black out all our institutions of civil liberty. This crisis, the most serious that the nation has ever faced, challenges Christians to do some sober thinking and to act with becoming wisdom. Many are perplexed and dismayed and we
may expect some ill-advised things to be said and done. My friend and beloved brother, R. L. Whiteside, has expressed a timely warning in a late issue of the Gospel Advocate:

“In a time like this Christians, as well as others, are liable to become excited and say things that they may later regret. Some years ago I heard a prominent preacher say that it would be a great punishment to him to be compelled to sit and listen to someone read some sermon he himself preached during the other World War. You can save yourself such trial by maintaining a sober mind. Be sober-minded enough to realize that no one person, not even you, can lay claim to having all wisdom. Quoting a passage of Scripture is of no real value to a cause unless it is in point.”

Loyalty to the word of God must be the watch-word of a genuine Christian at all times. That principle cannot be interpreted for the duration because the most devastating war of all history is raging. There should be no compromise of the principle that a Christian’s loyalty to God comes before, and takes precedence of, his loyalty to his government even in time of war. “We must obey God, rather than men.” I take it that this is common ground among us.

Jesus taught that Christians should be humble, meek, lovers of peace, pure in heart, and be ready and willing to suffer persecution for righteousness’ sake. They must be willing to do good to all. Repenting of personal sins and injuries and entreat the disposition to even beyond certain limits to return good for evil. He strictly forbids revengeful retaliation for personal injuries. He set the example and demands that we follow His steps. It does violence to the teachings of Jesus in this regard if we conclude that there should be no law to function for the suppression and punishment of crime.

There are lawless men in society who must be controlled by force. Jesus was not delivering a discourse directed against the proper functions and due processes of law and government. Some years ago, I heard a prominent preacher among us say in a sermon that “patriotism is a crime.” It simply isn’t true and I felt ashamed of him. Another said: “All war is wrong and sinful, regardless of who wages it or why.” It is sinful then, for a police force to function in protecting our homes against robbery and insure protection in property and life. The officer of the law who intervenes to save a pure woman from a rapist and has to use physical force in so doing, is sinning against God! I do not believe it and Jesus did not teach it. Jesus Christ never taught anything to aid a criminal... The government is ordained of God and bears the sword for this very purpose, to enforce law for the common good, suppress and punish crime, and assuredly has the right to defend itself against invasion and pillage by rapacious marauders. Such function of government is an “ordinance of God.” What good would law be without its penalties and what could a government do, civil government, without police and military forces to back it up and enforce it? We need, to do a little clear thinking along here, sober, humble thinking. And it ought to be done with the desire to determine in perilous times how to be loyal to God and perform our duties as citizens, not to act smart and try to down somebody in an argument. This is no time for childishness. There may be criminals in the offices and armed forces of our government, but the performance of their sworn duties does not make them such. I thank God that we have an Army and Navy at this time.

Quoting the Sermon on the Mount would not stop Hitler at a time like this, and I say reverently that it was not given for that purpose. There is another way ordained of God to get that job done: Horrible as the fact is, tanks and guns and airplanes are part of that plan and the men who build them and the ones who use them are using physical force directed at the same end. That fact is obvious. The industrial power of the whole nation is geared for war. Combatants and non-combatants alike are working for the same thing, straining their efforts to win the war and win the peace, We are all mixed up in it one way or another. The man in uniform who fires the guns is not the only fighter in this fracas. Our most belligerent “conscientious objectors” who stand off at a safe distance and quote scriptures that do not apply to this situation, are hoping and praying that the current threat to our liberties may be crushed by our armed forces. The Axis powers would greatly appreciate it, if our government would adopt their theory of all-out non-resistance.

But Jesus said: “Resist not him that is evil.” Take a look at the context and scope of Jesus’ teaching. It is a law against the individual seeking and taking personal vengeance for the wrongs done him. It is not designed to allow a hoodlum to kidnap a child, or outrage a woman without interference by anybody who can stop it, even if he has to use a club or a gun. I take it that even most preachers would act better in an emergency than some of them talk and write.

“Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.” Is it to be taken literally and without restriction? Keep the context in mind. I asked an all-out non-resister, a friend of mine, about this giving and lending to just anybody who wanted to take him for a “touch” and he said: “It is conditional.” Exactly. A stranger, or a transient, would have about as good a chance of getting a loan from a soldier as he would from a “conscientious objector.” As a matter of fact this part of the teaching of Jesus is not likely to be overdone by anybody. Even “conscientious objectors” know how to properly qualify it.

“And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” Should a devout unlimited non-resister return to his home and find that in his absence an intruder had unlawfully taken possession, he must not appeal to the law, he must just bow out and let the intruder keep it because he has it, or just kneel in prayer. Did Jesus teach it? No, and it isn’t the way “non-resisters” act either. They are more practical than their doctrine. Christianity does not antagonize proper law enforcement. Remember that law enforcement involves the use of physical resistance to the lawless. Paul asked for military interference to rescue him from a plot of assassination and got it. He appealed to Caesar and that appeal was to all the power of the government of which he was a citizen, both civil and military. He did not violate the teaching of Jesus on the question of non-resistance.

Some have simply carried that doctrine a lot farther than Jesus did. J. W. McGarvey made some cogent observations along this line.

“This command which enjoins non-resistance, like most of the other precepts of this sermon, does not demand of us absolute, unqualified passivity at all times and under all circumstances. In fact, we may say generally of the whole sermon on the mount that it is not a code for slaves, but an assertion of principles which are to be interpreted and applied by the children of freedom. We are to submit to evil for principle’s sake and to accomplish spiritual victories, and not in the abject, servile spirit as blind followers of a harsh and exacting law. On the contrary, taking the principle, we judge when and how to apply it as best we can.”

Self-preservation is a law of God giving right which under most circumstances, a Christian can claim. He may resist the robber, the assassin and all men of that ilk, and may protect his person and his possessions against the assault of the violent and lawless. But when the honor of Christ and the salvation of man demands it, he should obey this commandment even unto the very letter. A man may strive for self-protection when life is threatened without any spirit of revenge.

The law of Moses said “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.” The new law says, “Resist not him that is evil.” “Vengeance is mine, I will repay.” It is a law against the individual wreaking personal vengeance for the wrongs done him. Even our own government has some laws to that effect.
In Second Samuel, the sixth chapter, there is the interesting story of the return of the ark of the covenant from the country of the Philistines, by king David. "And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in the hill: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart." (v 3). Every Bible student is familiar with the course of events that followed: how that Uzzah touched the ark of God as they neared the threshing-floor of Nacon, and was struck dead. This is the old story of humanity's tendency to do God's work, man's way; his weakness of substituting for the divine provision and plan. When God commanded that the ark should be built, He provided for its transportation from place to place. "And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four feet thereof; and two rings shall be on the one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it. And thou shalt make staves of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, And thou shalt put the staves into the rings on the sides of ark wherewith to bear the ark." (Ex. 25:12-14) But "unto the sons of Kohath he gave none, because the service of the sanctuary belonged unto them; they bare it upon the shoulders." (Num. 7:9) Here was the divine provision for transporting the ark of the covenant; the penalty for touching it was death. (Num. 4:15) Had those bringing the ark home followed the divine instructions, there would have been no occasion for Uzzah to have touched the ark, for there would have been no oxen to stumble. Something sacred is always touched when man undertakes to do God's work his way.

When God revealed the gospel system, He provided for everything necessary to its working and end; in doctrine, worship, and good works. However, with the passing years, the "ark of the new covenant" was carried away into spiritual Babylon, where it remained until men arose who sought to bring it back. The restoration movement of the past century was an effort to return the truth to its proper place in the hearts of men. But as in the case of Uzzah, men soon began building "new carts" on which to carry these truths, new methods by which to do the Lord's work. When they began doing this, they touched something that was sacred, and death followed. This is inevitable, it has ever been so, and shall ever be so.

One point needs to be noted: there was nothing wrong with carts within themselves. They had their place in the life of ancient Israel, a service to perform. It was only when they were used to do a work God had specifically commanded to be done another way that they became the means of death. When God commands a thing to be done one way, and man does it another, disaster follows.

In the great commission God has commanded the evangelizing of the world. The responsibility to do this has been laid upon the church. In discharging this obligation, cooperation of congregations is sanctioned by divine precept, as congregations and individuals are seen to have assisted Paul and his co-laborers in their work. This plan was followed, and found to work, by the pioneer preachers of the gospel. In the midst of progress, such as had not been witnessed since the early church, somewhere the idea of a "missionary society" was conceived, and in 1842 the first one among the disciplines was born. This developed into the "American Missionary Society" in 1849, culminating in the "United Christian Missionary Society" in the fall of 1919. A "new cart" was made, whereby God's work could be done man's way. Something sacred was touched: the authority of Christ, and evangelization of the New Testament order. Instrumental music followed, then innovations of every kind, and back into Babylon went a big company of the brethren.

Has the weakness to build "new carts" been overcome today? Or can tendencies to continue the manufacture of them be detected here and there? How about the preacher who becomes "the pastor" of the congregation, "taking charge" of it, and becoming "the overseer" of all the work? It may be argued that his work is a good work, and he may be doing the work that God has commanded someone to do; but is it not true that when the preacher does the work of the elders and deacons that this is the manifest weakness of doing God's work man's way? If it is, it will bring to a harmful end, for something sacred is touched by profane hands thereby.

There is another "new cart" one sees showing up here and there lately, which does not speak too well of respect for the divine order, and separateness of God's people; that is, the disposition of gospel preachers to line themselves up with sectarian preachers in campaigns to outlaw alcoholic beverages. Now certainly every Christian should hate alcohol as a beverage in every form. He should fight it with all that he has. But which is the divine mission of the church, to outlaw a thing by legislation, or by changing the hearts of men through the gospel. When gospel preachers begin trying to ride a thing out by the ballot and legislation, instead of by the gospel, does not that have a rather faint appearance of a "new cart"? If one has to resort to this, and sit with sectarian preachers on the platform of "dry" rallies, and share radio time with them in order to accomplish a thing, maybe it isn't quite time for it to be done yet, anyway. It was good to get the ark back where it belonged, but the "new cart" was the wrong way to do it, and failed in its mission.

One more thing appearing recently that might move us to ask "what next?" is a couple of announcements seen recently in two of our papers. One was important enough that it was boxed in for special notice, with large black headline, "Youngest Preacher in the Church of Christ." It then read, "******** eleven years old, is, so far as we know, the youngest preacher in the Church of Christ."

Now surely there could be no objection to training young boys in the way of the Lord, and in preparing them to preach the gospel; this should be done. But is it becoming the dignity of the church and the gospel to advertise one as "the youngest preacher in the Church of Christ?" In the past I have done a little preaching in which I ("sort of" on the side) ridiculed the "Digressives" for their infant churches, with child elders, deacons, and such. Will we now have to stop that, and instead tell them that although we do not have any "elders" and "deacons" as young as theirs, but we have some preachers that can vie with them? Maybe the "youngest" elders and deacons will follow.

For a long time we have preached against women as preachers; but could one defend the position of an eleven year old boy as a scriptural preacher? In the Old Covenant we find God using men in the priesthood, from thirty years up. In the New Testament we find the Lord selecting mature men as the vessels through which the gospel should be conveyed to others. One of the things from which the church has suffered as much during the past decade or two, as any other, has been the glorified "boy preacher." This is no reflection upon the zeal of the youth to do the will of the Lord, but simply is a reflection upon the wisdom of the thing done. The introduction of "new carts" of this type is going to lead inevitably to trouble.
“THE LOST IS FOUND”

W. Curtis Porter

In a recent issue of the Orthodox Baptist Searchlight, over the name of J. W. Abney, Stratford, Oklahoma, occurs the following:

Lost, Strayed or Stolen

Where does the Bible record the instance where Jesus ordained a woman to preach the gospel?

Where does the Bible say that anybody should pray for the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost? Chapter and verse, please.

If it is not recorded in the Bible, Christ did not authorize it, if Christ did not authorize it, the devil did, then, John 8:44, “Ye are, of your father the devil and his works (dusts) ye will do.”

Who is it that calls for justified people to come to the altar and seek sanctification? Who is it that calls for the sanctified people to come to the altar and seek the baptism of the Holy Ghost? Where can this teaching be found in the Bible? If it cannot be found in the Bible, then somebody is adding to the Bible.

Is it not strange what reckless statements Baptist preachers can make? In their zeal to condemn the teaching of some other denomination they will make declarations that put themselves in the same condemnation, without ever seeming to be conscious of it at all. Take the statement in the third paragraph of the preceding quotation: “It is is not recorded in the Bible, Christ did not authorize it; if Christ did not authorize it, the devil did.” Is there anything wrong with this statement? Oh no, it certainly states the truth. But how daring and reckless a Baptist preacher has to be in order to deliver himself after such a fashion. With this statement in mind take a look at its results to the Baptist cause. Where is the Missionary Baptist Church, or even the Baptist Church, recorded in the Bible? “Chapter and verse, please.” Can you think of any record of it? You may search every statement in the Bible and you will find no mention made of the Baptist Church. It just is not there. No Baptist preacher has ever been able to find it, though many of them have “sought it diligently with tears.” They would give anything on earth to be able to read of “the Baptist Church in Jerusalem”, or of “the Baptist Churches in Judae.” Or what joy it would bring to their hearts if the Bible said: “The Baptist Churches salute you.” In a public debate with one of them one time I pressed him to read publicly the statement of Paul in Rom. 16:16. And under pressure he actually read it: “The Baptist Churches salute you.” But with further pressure put on him he read it correctly: “The churches of Christ salute you.” In his eagerness to find some authority for the Baptist Church, or to make his hearers think he had found such authority he deliberately misread the passage. This proved to be a very serious blunder for him, for when he was forced to read it correctly, his designs became clear to the audience. How desperate Baptist preachers become when they start looking for the Baptist Church in the Bible. But the effort will have to be given up—it is not mentioned a single time in all the word of God. Well, what about it? Mr. Abney says: “If it is not recorded in the Bible, Christ did not authorize it.” So that settles the matter, even according to this Baptist preacher, that Christ did not authorize the Baptist Church. Who did, then? He says: “If Christ did not authorize it, the devil did.” That is a pretty hard statement, is it not? Yet that is what a Baptist preacher said. It makes the devil the founder of the Baptist Church. It is not in the Bible; and if not in the Bible, the devil is the author of it, says Abney. I couldn’t make it any stronger than that. But I wonder how this preacher failed to see the consequences of his statement. But perhaps I am wrong after all, for if the devil is the author of it, and he must be according to Mr. Abney’s statement, then it would be the “synagogue of Satan.” And I do find that mentioned in the Bible. You will read of it in Rev. 3:9. So it is not mentioned with divine sanction, but with divine condemnation.

Look at the question that constitutes the first paragraph of Mr. Abney’s article: “Where does the Bible record the instance where Jesus ordained a woman to preach the gospel?” He is fighting the groups of people who have women preachers and who claim the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The question implies that the record of the “ordaining of women to preach the gospel” has been “lost, strayed or stolen” from the Bible. But I think I can help him find this lost record. Does he, or any of his brethren, remember where Jesus ordained a man to preach Baptist doctrine? If he can find the record in the Bible where Jesus ever “ordained any man to preach Baptist doctrine,” in the very next verse he will find where he “ordained a woman to preach the gospel.” This little clue ought to help him a lot. Surely he knows where to find the record of a man being ordained to preach Baptist doctrine. And if he knows that, he will have no trouble in locating the other, for it is found in the very next verse. No, it cannot be found in the records of Matthew, Mark and Luke where they record the ordaining of the twelve apostles. They were not ordained to “preach Baptist doctrine,” for when Jesus ordained them he told them to preach: “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” That is not Baptist doctrine. According to Baptist doctrine, “the kingdom had already come” at the time these men were sent out to preach. But they were not told to preach that “the kingdom of God has already come” but “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” So these men were not ordained to preach Baptist doctrine. You will have to look somewhere else for it, but when you find it, read the following verse, and you will find where he “ordained a woman to preach the gospel.”

This Baptist writer also asks for Bible teaching that tells men to call “for justified people to come to the altar and seek sanctification” and “for sanctified people to come to the altar and seek the baptism of the Holy Ghost.” He indicates that such teaching, if it ever was recorded in the Bible, has been “lost, strayed or stolen.” But it should not be very difficult for him to find this record. There are three verses in the Bible in very close connection—in fact, they follow each other consecutively—that contain the record he seeks. One verse tells about “sanctified people” being “called to the altar to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit”; the one preceding it tells about “justified people” being “called to the altar to seek sanctification”; and the verse preceding that tells about “alien sinners”, being “called to the altar to seek salvation.” Now, surely Mr. Abney knows where to find this last mentioned verse. He and his brethren have long called “for alien sinners to come to the altar to seek salvation.” That is unadulterated Baptist doctrine. So he certainly knows where to find that in the Bible. Well, if he does he should have not trouble locating the other “lost scriptures, for they are found in the two verses that follow. This ought to make it very easy for him, and I am glad to render him and his brethren this assistance.

But what is the sum of this whole matter? Simply this. There is no Bible record that tells that Jesus ever “ordained a woman to preach the gospel; nor is there any record that he ever “ordained any man to preach Baptist doctrine.”