Why the Question?

Brethren are asking if the law of tithing is binding on the New Testament church. I am giving some attention to another question which is arising in my own mind. Why do they want to know? There are legitimate reasons for asking, surely. It may be that they are anxious to know so they can more accurately obey God. I do not believe that the Old Testament law of tithing is bound on the New Testament church. But some brethren seem greatly relieved, even tickled, to find this to be true, and are ready to make use of this freedom as a cloak for covetousness. But hold, brother, have you never read what the New Testament does say? "He that giveth, let him do with liberality." (Rom. 12: 8.) "Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 8: 7.) "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." (1 Cor. 16: 2.) Now figure some on these texts. If you have figured out this means less than the tithe in your case, maybe you had better figure some more. They certainly cannot mean as little as a good many brethren give.

Overlooked

Some of the most heated discussions of the qualifications of elders and deacons arise in the midst of a local church trouble. Arguments are hurled back and forth in a factional spirit by contenders who are sparring for an advantage. Anything the Bible teaches is very good, if it favors my side. If it is against me, I hope the other side doesn’t think of it or happen on to it. The Bible has a good deal to say about the qualifications of elders, deacons, preachers, and the like. But there is one point which is often overlooked in the midst of confusion. To begin with, it is assured that they are Christians. If some elders and some deacons and a preacher or two get all crossed up, forget that they are Christians and brethren, and fall to tossing texts at one another pertaining to their qualifications and prerogatives, then you have a situation with a carnal odor. "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it: nay, not even now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men?" (1 Cor. 3: 1-3.) The word of God should be used reverently. "Give diligence to present yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2: 15.)

It is ludicrous for carnally minded men to be lambasting one another with the inspired word of God.

A Doctor’s Advice

A prominent surgeon says that health demands that a happy frame of mind be cultivated. People who worry and fuss and allow their troubles to work them into a foment are wasting precious energy which should be used constructively and are undermining their health. This sort of thing can grow into a vicious habit, leaving its scars on both body and mind. Besides, who wants to remind everybody of a crab apple? The doctor is right, to be sure. But a very long time before medical science made very impressive advances, the inspiration of God furnished some very good advice along this line. "But godliness with contentment is great gain: for we brought nothing into the world, neither can we carry anything out; but having food and covering we shall be therewith content." (1 Tim. 6: 6-8.) "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4: 6, 7.) "Not that I speak in respect of want: for, I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4: 11-13.) "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord." (Phil. 3: 1.) "Rejoicing in hope: patient in tribulation; continuing stedfastly in prayer." (Rom. 12: 12.) So, after all, the modern doctor just agrees with Paul and admits that following this inspired advice would keep a good many patients out of the hospitals and save the cost and other consequences of some drug bills. Some people worry themselves into a state of self-pity, and mistake the result for piety.

The Point of View

The men who do and give the most for the cause of Christ, and those who do and give the least, are often near equals in point of ability. It sometimes happens that the poor brother will do and give more than the more fortunately endowed brother. One says: “How much can I do?” The other says: “How little can I do?” The one seeks ways and means to keep such unpleasantness as depressions from slowing him down in his doing and giving, while the other is glad to make use of the excuse, to keep what he has to spend on his own lusts, Some (Continued on back page)
Reference is here made again to the radio address recently delivered by R. H. Boll in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on premillennialism, a review of which was begun in the December issue of the Bible Banner. Chattanooga has been one of the battlefields on the premillennial issue and was the scene of a major defeat of the premillennial advocates. Only recently has any open effort been made to regain the declining glory of that decliningism in Chattanooga. The usual and almost universal tactics of false teachers are being employed by Boll and Hoover to withdraw the actual doctrines of premillennialism and to disguise the designs of its teachers under a robe of righteousness and a cloak of innocence. But too many people have become wise to their tactics to be so easily sidetracked and we do not aim to allow those who are less informed to be deceived by their devices.

In the address under reference, which was printed and circulated in the Chattanooga area and afterward reprinted in Word and Work (Boll's paper), R. H. Boll has the temerity to assert that the essential point in premillennialism is the fact that Jesus will come again. According to that, to believe that Jesus will come again is to be a premillennialist-or, a premillennialist is one who believes that Jesus will come again! And that is the latest pass that Boll has made—but it shall not pass.

It has been a common thing for sectarian advocates of the direct operation and indwelling of the Holy Spirit to assert that those who do not accept such theories of the Holy Spirit's influence just do not believe in the Holy Spirit! We could hardly expect honest and fair representations to come from those prejudiced minds of sectarian men who are steeped in the deceptions of denominational dogma. But the colossal audacity of Boll and Hoover in putting out the assertion that the fact that Jesus will come again is itself the essential point of premillennialism would be astounding if we had not long ago come to know that he adopts precisely the type of propaganda and misrepresentation so ingeniously and effectively employed by all of the originators and promoters of these movements from Charles T. Russell down to Robert H. Boll. We shall see to it that his does not become effective.

Under the division of his outline entitled “the essential point in premillennialism” he lists two sub-divisions: 1. The coming of Jesus. 2. That his coming must take place before certain events occur that are named in the New Testament. In this installment of the review we submit evidence that New Testament teaching on the fact that Jesus will come again in itself contains the essential points against premillennialism. In the next installment we shall submit evidence that the assertions of R. H. Boll on the order of events related to the coming of Christ, epitomized in his outline, squarely reverses New Testament teaching on the very items mentioned, and that he is guilty of a gross perversion of the writings of both inspired and uninspired men.

WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING?

The third chapter of Second Peter is a sort of an excursus on the second coming of Christ and the end of the world. Its purpose was to instill in the “sincere minds” of the New Testament Christians a firm hope in the coming of Christ. Scoffers would arise, saying: “Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” (Verse 4.) To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Peter tells them how to answer the scoffer.

Today, as then, thinking Christians are confronted with two extremes regarding this mooted question of the Lord's return. On the one hand, there is skepticism and on the other fanaticism. Between these extremes is simple belief in the promise and the resultant hope of this faith.

The promise of the Lord’s coming was never used by the apostles as a theme for curiosity and speculation. Yet some extremists in our own brotherhood have seized upon the doctrine of the second coming and attempted to make prophecy out of what the New Testament calls a promise. They are teaching theories no less fanatical than the theories of Adventists, Russellites, Mormons, Christadelphians, and a horde of others of various shades and colors. This group of speculators in the church have, in fact, largely borrow their theories from these sects. The writings of Pastor Charles T. Russell, of “Millennial-Dawn” notoriety, contains about all the speculations the brethren among us insist upon the “Christian liberty” to teach, while “Christian patience” decrees that the rest of us who do not believe them to be always bored by their borrowed prognostications. Their lack of originality is obvious to all who are informed in the writings of Russellites and Adventists. Almost any, Adventist can beat them entertaining an audience with a lecture on the horns and hooks of prophecy.

The epitome of simple facts concerning the promise of Christ's coming in the third chapter of Second Peter stands as a rebuke to the scoffer, skeptic, and the speculator alike.

1. The Lord has promised to come. “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.” (Verse 3.) Christians believe it.

2. Peter answers the scoffer. “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” (Verse 8.) The Lord does not reckon time in the keeping of his promise. It may require centuries, or millenniums, or millenniums upon millenniums, yet with the Lord it is but a day.

3. The Lord is not indifferent concerning his promise. He is long-suffering to us; he is extending probation to man. “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is “long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (Verse 9.) If his coming has been stayed to extend probation, will probation not, therefore, end when he comes? This fact obliterates the theory that men will have a chance to be saved after Jesus comes.

4. Although the promise is of long standing and the Lord’s coming long deferred, it is a certain fact that he will come. “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also


NOTICE: Address all matter for publication or notice of change of address to P.O. Box 1804, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” (Verse 10.) This announcement is not a dream, but the statement of a great truth at once repeated by all the writers of the New Testament.

5. The manner of his coming will be unexpected. He will come “as a thief in the night.” “But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” (1 Thess. 5: 1, 2.) No one knows the time, nor will it be revealed, for “so shall be the coming of the Son of man.” The only way Christians may avoid the suddenness of his coming is to “watch and be sober, ... putting on. the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.” (1 Thess. 5: 1-8.)

6. His coming will be accompanied by great and awful events.

(1) It will be the end of this present world. The heavens shall pass away, the elements shall melt, and the earth shall be burned up. (See 2 Pet. 3: 10-12.)

(2) It will be the end of probation. (Verse 15.) As in verse 9 the apostle set forth probation as the object of his long delay, so in verse 15 he says: “And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.” What could this mean, if opportunity to be saved does not end when Jesus comes? “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” (Heb. 9: 27.) The next thing after death to men—all who die—is the judgment.

(3) It will be the day of judgment and the resurrection of all the dead. “Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” (2 Pet. 3: 14.) The scene of this judgment is delineated in Matt. 25: 31-46. It shall take place “when the Son of man shall come in his glory.” It is “then” that all the nations shall be gathered before him, and he shall separate one from another. It is upon this occasion of his coming and the judgment that the King then shall say to those on the right, “Come, ye blessed, ... and those on the left he shall then say also, “Depart from me, ye cursed.” This judgment scene takes place “when the Son of man shall come.”

(4) This necessitates the resurrection of all the dead. The judgment will be set when he comes. All nations will be gathered before him. The resurrection of all the dead—both the good and the bad—will, therefore, occur. “And. shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” (John 5: 29.)

7. These events, all of which take place at his coming, will consummate the reign of Christ, and he will deliver the kingdom in which he now reigns to God. “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and became the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.” (1 Cor. 15: 20-24.) Peter said that Paul taught the same things he did concerning these matters. “And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you.” (2 Pet. 3: 15.) Therefore, no construction can be placed on Paul’s summary of the events that shall take place “at his coming” in 1 Cor. 15: 20-24 that contradicts the foregoing summary from 2 Pet. 3. In language very similar to Peter’s, Paul says, “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God.” Christ will reign till the resurrection, not a thousand years after. When the resurrection occurs, death is destroyed—the reign of Christ ends. He is reigning now by appointment. “And I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom.” (Luke 22: 29, 30.) His appointment will have expired when he comes. His reign will have accomplished its purpose. He will then surrender the kingdom, not establish one. And this will be at his coming, all passages harmonized. Any construction allowing an earthly millennial kingdom between events of his coming involves the argument of Paul in 1 Cor. 15 in an inexplicable tangle with the parable of the judgment recorded in Matt. 25: 31-46 and the events of his coming recorded in the third chapter of Second Peter. Since Paul and Peter taught the same thing, according to Peter, the events that will take place when Jesus comes, therefore, are as follows: (1) The end of the world; (2) the end of time; (3) the end of probation; (4) the resurrection of all the dead; (5) the judgment; (6) the end of the reign of Christ and the surrender of his kingdom to God; (7) the “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness”—heaven itself.

The Lord is coming. When he appears, “the dead in Christ shall rise first”—before the living in Christ are translated, and all Christians, living and dead, will meet him “in the air.” (1 Thess. 4: 15-18.) The dead will be raised, the world will be destroyed, the wicked punished and the righteous saved. “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?” (2 Pet. 3: 11.) “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify—unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.” (Tit. 2: 13-15.)

For R. H. Boll to assert that the New Testament fact that Jesus Christ will come again is “the essential point in premillennialism, is a reflection on his integrity and the brethren’s intelligence.

I especially wish to commend you for the fight you have made on the issue of civil government and war. Your position is logical and it is Scriptural and there is a tremendous drive among our people away from that Scriptural teaching and those issues—and I feel that the time is here now when some good strong Scriptural teaching needs to be done if we are to arrest that trend.—James A. Scott, Long Beach, Calif.

I admire your courage and good judgment in the way in which you have handled the “War Question.” Your position has my full endorsement. Sometimes issues can be forced upon us at a time when we feel it should be put off, but it is essential that we speak out.—R. A. Hartsell, Broken Arrow, Okla.

The Bible Banner is extensively read and appreciated by the members of the congregation here; the copies that come to Del Rio are borrowed and loaned around until nearly everyone has access to one.—Ted W. McElroy, Del Rio, Texas.
The mocking Ishmaelites

Abraham made a feast for his young son Isaac. “And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking” (Gen. 21: 9). The mocker and his mother were cast out of the Abrahamic household.

Ishmael mocked Isaac and the order of things represented by Isaac. His successors still follow this sorry business. “But as to understand that the law of Moses had been abolished in the son of the handmaid of Abraham, and one by the freewoman. Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman. (Gal. 4: 30). Only as people are saved by grace and are utterly humbled thereby can they get to heaven at all. The tables will be turned between Isaac and Ishmael some day.

It is unfortunate that any religious teacher or writer, and this group of editors, should be so blinded by a theory in religion as to even ignorantly pervert the scriptures. The consequences are often tragic to many. The Baptist and Reflector holds that a sinner is saved by grace through faith before and apart from any acts of obedience whatsoever. He classifies all who insist that obedience to the gospel is essential to salvation as Ishmaelites and condemned by Paul in his famous allegory of the two women and their two sons. Paul declares that Jesus “became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation.” (Heb. 5: 9.) “But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness.” (Rom. 6: 17.) We conclude, therefore, that the editor has looked at Paul’s allegory through the spectacles of his Baptist theory and missed the point of it. We propose to point that out here. Here is the allegory in Paul’s language:

“Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law. For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one by the handmaid, and one by the freewoman. Howbeit the son by the handmaid is born after the flesh; but the son by the freewoman is born through promise. Which things contain an allegory; for these are two covenants; one from Mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar. Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is; for she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother. For it is written,

Rejoice thou barren that bearest not, Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: For more are the children of the desolate than of her that hath the husband.

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now (Gal. 4: 29). Only as people are saved by grace and are utterly humbled thereby can they get to heaven at all. The tables will be turned between Isaac and Ishmael some day.

The editor seems to think that those of us who insist that it is necessary to hear the words of the Lord and do them to be saved are “ignorant of regeneration” and lack “a real experience of saving grace” whatever that is and even Baptist editors have not been able to make it intelligible. “Getting religion” does not make it clear, for that sort of thing is wholly foreign to New Testament teaching about how a sinner is regenerated. Regeneration is an intelligent process brought about by the power of the gospel. A man is saved by faith and that comes by hearing the word of God. The man who hears and believes must obey, or remain lost.

The Baptist brother is considerably exercised over the mockery and scorn and sneers directed toward those who cling to the Baptist scheme of things. Personally, I’m not minded to do more than try to teach them better, but think I can respect fully suggest that Baptists themselves have not always been free from that sort of thing. Who has not heard of Baptist preachers sneering at the idea of “finding Christ in a tank or baptistery or mudhole?” Christ says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” A stock answer of many who prate much about “salvation by grace” and talk endlessly about “a real experience of saving grace” is some sneering remark about “salvation in water.” Some years ago a prominent editor among the Baptists, one who engaged in many debates, declared that nothing was born of water except mosquitoes, tadpoles and baby Baptists before they were baptized!

The Baptist brother is considerably exercised over the mockery and scorn and sneers directed toward those who cling to the Baptist scheme of things. Personally, I’m not minded to do more than try to teach them better, but think I can respectfully suggest that Baptists themselves have not always been free from that sort of thing. Who has not heard of Baptist preachers sneering at the idea of “finding Christ in a tank or baptistery or mudhole?” Christ says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” A stock answer of many who prate much about “salvation by grace” and talk endlessly about “a real experience of saving grace” whatever that is and even Baptist editors have not been able to make it intelligible. “Getting religion” does not make it clear, for that sort of thing is wholly foreign to New Testament teaching about how a sinner is regenerated. Regeneration is an intelligent process brought about by the power of the gospel. A man is saved by faith and that comes by hearing the word of God. The man who hears and believes must obey, or remain lost.

The Baptist brother is considerably exercised over the mockery and scorn and sneers directed toward those who cling to the Baptist scheme of things. Personally, I’m not minded to do more than try to teach them better, but think I can respect fully suggest that Baptists themselves have not always been free from that sort of thing. Who has not heard of Baptist preachers sneering at the idea of “finding Christ in a tank or baptistery or mudhole?” Christ says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” A stock answer of many who prate much about “salvation by grace” and talk endlessly about “a real experience of saving grace” whatever that is and even Baptist editors have not been able to make it intelligible. “Getting religion” does not make it clear, for that sort of thing is wholly foreign to New Testament teaching about how a sinner is regenerated. Regeneration is an intelligent process brought about by the power of the gospel. A man is saved by faith and that comes by hearing the word of God. The man who hears and believes must obey, or remain lost.

The Baptist brother is considerably exercised over the mockery and scorn and sneers directed toward those who cling to the Baptist scheme of things. Personally, I’m not minded to do more than try to teach them better, but think I can respect fully suggest that Baptists themselves have not always been free from that sort of thing. Who has not heard of Baptist preachers sneering at the idea of “finding Christ in a tank or baptistery or mudhole?” Christ says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” A stock answer of many who prate much about “salvation by grace” and talk endlessly about “a real experience of saving grace” whatever that is and even Baptist editors have not been able to make it intelligible. “Getting religion” does not make it clear, for that sort of thing is wholly foreign to New Testament teaching about how a sinner is regenerated. Regeneration is an intelligent process brought about by the power of the gospel. A man is saved by faith and that comes by hearing the word of God. The man who hears and believes must obey, or remain lost.

The Baptist brother is considerably exercised over the mockery and scorn and sneers directed toward those who cling to the Baptist scheme of things. Personally, I’m not minded to do more than try to teach them better, but think I can respect fully suggest that Baptists themselves have not always been free from that sort of thing. Who has not heard of Baptist preachers sneering at the idea of “finding Christ in a tank or baptistery or mudhole?” Christ says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” A stock answer of many who prate much about “salvation by grace” and talk endlessly about “a real experience of saving grace” whatever that is and even Baptist editors have not been able to make it intelligible. “Getting religion” does not make it clear, for that sort of thing is wholly foreign to New Testament teaching about how a sinner is regenerated. Regeneration is an intelligent process brought about by the power of the gospel. A man is saved by faith and that comes by hearing the word of God. The man who hears and believes must obey, or remain lost.

The Baptist brother is considerably exercised over the mockery and scorn and sneers directed toward those who cling to the Baptist scheme of things. Personally, I’m not minded to do more than try to teach them better, but think I can respect fully suggest that Baptists themselves have not always been free from that sort of thing. Who has not heard of Baptist preachers sneering at the idea of “finding Christ in a tank or baptistery or mudhole?” Christ says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” A stock answer of many who prate much about “salvation by grace” and talk endlessly about “a real experience of saving grace” whatever that is and even Baptist editors have not been able to make it intelligible. “Getting religion” does not make it clear, for that sort of thing is wholly foreign to New Testament teaching about how a sinner is regenerated. Regeneration is an intelligent process brought about by the power of the gospel. A man is saved by faith and that comes by hearing the word of God. The man who hears and believes must obey, or remain lost.

The Baptist brother is considerably exercised over the mockery and scorn and sneers directed toward those who cling to the Baptist scheme of things. Personally, I’m not minded to do more than try to teach them better, but think I can respect fully suggest that Baptists themselves have not always been free from that sort of thing. Who has not heard of Baptist preachers sneering at the idea of “finding Christ in a tank or baptistery or mudhole?” Christ says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” A stock answer of many who prate much about “salvation by grace” and talk endlessly about “a real experience of saving grace” whatever that is and even Baptist editors have not been able to make it intelligible. “Getting religion” does not make it clear, for that sort of thing is wholly foreign to New Testament teaching about how a sinner is regenerated. Regeneration is an intelligent process brought about by the power of the gospel. A man is saved by faith and that comes by hearing the word of God. The man who hears and believes must obey, or remain lost.

The Baptist brother is considerably exercised over the mockery and scorn and sneers directed toward those who cling to the Baptist scheme of things. Personally, I’m not minded to do more than try to teach them better, but think I can respect fully suggest that Baptists themselves have not always been free from that sort of thing. Who has not heard of Baptist preachers sneering at the idea of “finding Christ in a tank or baptistery or mudhole?” Christ says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” A stock answer of many who prate much about “salvation by grace” and talk endlessly about “a real experience of saving grace” whatever that is and even Baptist editors have not been able to make it intelligible. “Getting religion” does not make it clear, for that sort of thing is wholly foreign to New Testament teaching about how a sinner is regenerated. Regeneration is an intelligent process brought about by the power of the gospel. A man is saved by faith and that comes by hearing the word of God. The man who hears and believes must obey, or remain lost.
Paul was suffering much anxiety of heart over the spiritual state of the Corinthian saints. “For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears.” (2 Cor. 2: 4.) They were restless and threatening to break out of gospel bounds. “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ.” (2 Cor. 11: 3.) Many today, even in the church, have “itching ears” for something more than the simplicity of the gospel. There is no prominent item of New Testament teaching which has not suffered because of the pious profanity of some religious busybody who imagined he could improve it somewhat. The simple gospel is still “foolishness” to many and “a stumbling-block” to others. In the early days of the church the simple proclamation of the gospel led men and women to believe in Christ repent of their sins, confess Jesus as Christ, and submit to baptism. They were then considered Christians, members of the body, the church. “But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” (Acts 8: 12.) “For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.” (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) “Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof.” (1 Cor. 12: 27.) These members of the body were associated together in various localities in independent “churches of Christ” for work and worship. The organization was very simple. Each congregation had its “bishops and deacons” and members. Its mission was fulfilled in the simple program of edifying itself, looking after the needy, and preaching the gospel to the lost. The worship of God in these assemblies was so simple that we note the absence of all gaudy ceremonialism. It does not remind us of the “carnal ordinances” of either popery or Judaism. The New Testament does not mention “the holy sacrament” in discussing the Lord’s Supper, nor is there any burning of incense or instrumental music in the prayer or praise of the New Testament churches. The simplicity of the New Testament order should be scrupulously observed by Christians today. We are hearing too much about organizing Friday Night Clubs and Endeavor Societies and Ladies’ Aids and other symptoms of displeasure at the “simplicity and purity that is toward Christ.” In some religious circles a man does not amount to much who is satisfied to be just a Christian and a normal member of a local congregation of others like him. A man with a New Testament who starts out to worship and obey God, serve his fellows, and finally reach heaven, will not find it a stunt-performing program. A lot of the frenzy and fuss of modern religion is a bid for the attention of men rather than the glory of God. The warning of Paul is still a timely one.

Is It a Partisan Use of the Term?

What are you in religion? “I am a Christian.” Is that a partisan use of that term? It is a New Testament term. It was not used in a partisan sense there. It is not so used now so long as you mean by it what was meant by it in the New Testament, all that was meant by it in the New Testament, and nothing less than was meant by it in the New Testament. Because of the divided condition of religious people, it may be necessary to explain with some care that Christians in the New Testament were the disciples of Christ, saints of God, and brethren in a common, spiritual family known as the church of God. What church do you belong to? “I am a member of the church of Christ.” Is that a denominational use of a religious term? Not if you mean by it all and nothing less or more than was meant by it in the New Testament. For obvious reasons it may be necessary to explain that the church of Christ in the New Testament was the body of Christ, which included all Christians. They were members of it because they were Christians, and Christians because they were members of it. God added all the saved to the church, when they were saved and because they were saved. There was no such thing as being saved and not being a member of the New Testament church. If our explanations do not go over, it is a good idea not to run the risk of becoming sectarian in an attempt to make the matter any plainer than the New Testament does. It would still be a pretty plain book if sectarian goggles had never been manufactured. Don’t be afraid to say: “I am a Christian, and therefore a member of the church of Christ.”

What Is a Denomination?

There are supposed to be about two hundred religious denominations in the United States. What is a denomination? You will get your information outside the New Testament. The simple order of the New Testament includes individual Christians made such by the preaching of the gospel. They all belonged to, were members of, “the church, which is his body,” the church of the Lord. There were congregations of them in various localities. These local bodies had elders, deacons, and members. Christians were not much handicapped in New Testament times trying to wiggle around under official board piles. Sometime this side of the New Testament the idea of a religious body larger than a local church and smaller than the whole body of Christ took objective form. If some Christians were at liberty to thus organize themselves into a denominational ecclesiasticism, then others could do likewise. It is named and organized after the order of a partisan brotherhood. It may be named after some man, as the Lutheran or Wesleyan denomination; or after some form of church government, as the Presbyterian denomination; or after some ordinance in religion, as the Baptist denomination; or carry the name of method, as the great’ Methodist denomination. But this is all contrary to the Scripture. God did not intend for any of his people to emphasize some truth above other truth and make it the creed of a partisan brotherhood. If so, then a man would have to be a member of all the denominations to be in possession of all properly emphasized truth. As it is, a man can take a New Testament, believe what it teaches, do what it commands, be just a Christian, and a member of nothing but the body of Christ, which includes all Christians, and not be a member of a denomination at all. It will not rob a denomination of its sinful character to make an adjective out of some Bible noun and call it the “Disciple Church” or the “Christian Church,” or even apply it to the title “Church of God” or “Church of Christ.” The thing itself is wrong, regardless of what you call it; and if it is called by a Bible term, the term is misused. The only fool-proof way to steer clear of all denominational affiliations is to refuse to be anything but a New Testament Christian. To call yourself a “Christian” and then, in the nature of the case, denominationalism would cease. If a man is satisfied with the New Testament in his faith and practice, no unscriptural terms will have to be invented to describe him, nor will it be necessary to use Scriptural terms in an unscriptural sense to do it. “Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim. 1: 13.)
"But we exhort you, brethren, that ye abound more and more; and that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your hands, even as we charged you; that ye may walk becomingly toward them that are without, and may have need of nothing." (1 Thess. 4: 10-12.)

True religion can be practiced in work clothes at all hours of the day, any day in the week. It is practical life. It has a place in all work and all play of a legitimate character. It is something not the spirit of our world. Jesus is not an arbitrary code for polished piety and holiday use. A truly religious man is one who is doing the will of God. God wills that men be happy and useful. He alone is familiar with the requirements. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." All divine urgings and prohibitions are for man's good for time and eternity. He does not arbitrarily restrict man's happiness. He is good. "He hath showed thee, 0 man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6: 8.) At the time Paul wrote to them, the Thessalonians had only recently turned from idols to God. They had shown notable progress in some of the graces of the Christian life. Paul encouraged them to go on and not become easily satisfied with their attainments, and he instructed them in the practical activities of genuine religion. Some of his suggestions are surprisingly simple. They do not remind us of thunderstorms and tempests. He advocates a Strange Ambition

"Study to be quiet." That is, be ambitious, make it your aim to be quiet. Some had misinterpreted the nature of their calling. They were noisy and disorderly. One would think they belonged to the spiritual tribe of God instead of the church of Christ, the way they gadded about, idling away their time, gossiping and meddling. They were injuring the cause of true religion. Christians should "lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity." This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2-4.) That ambition which is motivated by worldly pride leads to sin and ultimate disappointment. Ananias and Sapphira were seeking notoriety when they were led into the sin of lying against the Holy Spirit. False ambition will make them lie. Pharisees and hypocrites sounded trumpets, prayed long prayers, and dressed peculiarly, "to be seen of men." Christ condemns such conduct among his disciples. They must not "love the chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the market places, and to be called of men, Rabbi." (Matt. 23: 6-8.) "Study to be quiet." Genuine humility is too scarce among disciples of today. We deserve anew the reproof and encouragement of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. He is far afield who thinks he might devote his time to religion. It is a great blessing that most people have to work to live. "If any will not work, neither let him eat." Pity the man who has nothing to do but hold his hands and be pious. The apostle of true religion says: "Do your own business and work with your hands." Did you ever hear of a man who did not have time to be religious? He is like the man who couldn't see the forest for the trees or the city for the houses and people. If he has time for honest work, he has time to be religious. Lord Tennyson defined a living poet as "a reed through which all things blow into music." Another has paraphrased his language and defined a living Christian as "a reed through which all things blow into religion." We can live like the angels when we become as the angels. While we are on earth, it is God's will that we live as men. Religion glows in the activities of a busy, useful life. It is practical enough.

The apostle offers good and sufficient reasons for the practical religion he enjoined upon the Thessalonians. Their idle, fussy, excitable ways were having a bad influence. "Walk becomingly toward them that are without." The church has a character to sustain. It should command the respect of "them that are without." This demands that Christians lead quiet, peaceable lives and attend to business. It is God's will that Christians be thrifty enough to be independent, "have need of nothing." There should also be a surplus to be given for those who are not so fortunate. There may be good reasons for poverty, but it is nothing to boast of. It may be actually disgraceful, considering the good health and opportunities of the pauper. The beauty and practical nature of texts like these explain why the Bible maintains its vigor.

**RELIGION FOR EVERYDAY USE**

**CLINT E. WALLACE**

**ZIP-OFF THIS COUPON**

Attached find $1.00, for which enter (or renew) my subscription for one year.

Name ____________________________

R. F. D. or Street No. ____________________________

Town __________________________ State—_______

Box 1804 Oklahoma City, Okla.

_The Bible Banner_ publishes facts no other paper publishes._
BAPTIST ADMISSIONS OF UNSCRIPTURALNESS

O. C. LAMBERT

It would be amusing to hear a bachelor give a married man’s experience and for the same reason singular indeed for a person who had all his life been a sinner give a Christian experience. This has been for generations one of the most cherished of Baptist practice and at the same time, one of the most embarrassing matters, as is evidenced by the following quotations. J. R. Graves, of Baptist fame, after citing a passage from Richardson’s Memoirs of A. Campbell to the effect that Campbell demanded of Elder Luce, that he be baptized exactly as Philip baptized the Eunuch and that Elder Luce finally did so though it was “contrary to Baptist usages,” he makes the following observation:

THE WHOLE SECT IS MANIFESTLY AND CONFESSEDLY WITHOUT CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

“1. According to all the principles that characterize Baptists, neither Alexander Campbell nor his father was scripturally baptized.

2. Mr. Luce had no authority from Christ or a Christian Church to baptize Mr. Campbell as he did, and therefore the act was null and void.

“The church that ordained Mr. Luce, nor the church he served as pastor, gave him a shadow of authority to go forth and baptize whosoever he deemed qualified, even after hearing from whom he could baptize him. The church that received a minister that a Baptist minister receives from a church is to preach the Gospel and to administer the ordinances, i.e., when called upon by a church to do so. This is understood, because all the New Testament churches hold that the ordinances are church ordinances, in and under the control of each church. If it is claimed that he may administer one ordinance, as baptism, to whom and where he sees fit, then he is equally empowered to administer the Lord’s Supper when and to whom he pleases, for a principle cannot be divided. Mr. Luce had no authority to baptize Mr. Campbell, and therefore the immersion he performed in Buffalo Creek was not Christian baptism.”—Tri-Lemma, page 183, 184.

Since it is admitted by Dr. Graves that it was according to the New Testament and not according to “Baptist usages,” it necessarily follows that “Baptist usages” are not according to the New Testament teaching! He also says that no Baptist preacher can Baptize like the New Testament teaches! But probably the most ridiculous statement he makes is that this baptism performed exactly like the New Testament example is not Christian Baptism!

A few years ago a young preacher in Texas confronted with this same situation appealed to the Baptist editor for advice and was informed that “you are not Philip and he is not the Eunuch” in a History of the Denton County Baptist Association, by J. N. Rayzor, pages 82 and 83, we find the following interesting statement:

“An incident occurred in the Pilot Point church during Rev. J. B. Cole’s pastorate, which involved a point of doctrine that subjected Pastor Cole to criticism, and gave the incident much publicity and notoriety. Pastor Cole went fishing one day with a business man who was not a Christian, and he availed himself of the opportunity to talk to the lost man about his unsaved condition, and led him to an acceptance of Christ. Joe Ives, the man converted, said to Pastor Cole, ‘Here is water, what doth hinder me from being baptized’? Obviously Brother Cole thought of the story of Philip and the Eunuch, and, taking that incident as an example, he led Mr. Ives out into the water and baptized him. Rev. Cole had been a Baptist minister that a Baptist minister receives from a church is to preach the Gospel and to administer the ordinances, in and under the control of each church. If it is claimed that he may administer one ordinance, as baptism, to whom and where he sees fit, then he is equally empowered to administer the Lord’s Supper when and to whom he pleases, for a principle cannot be divided. Mr. Luce had no authority to baptize Mr. Campbell, and therefore the immersion he performed in Buffalo Creek was not Christian baptism.”

A QuiBle on Names

CLED E. WALLACE

“Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” (Eph. 5: 17.) Such a man can go about in full confidence, armed with the truth of God. He is “ready always to give answer to every man that asketh him” a reason concerning the hope that is in him,” yet with meekness and fear.” (1 Pet. 3: 15.) Here is a Christian indeed. A sectarian is not so. He is armed with equivocation. He carries a quiver full of quibbles. He shuffles and evades when he encounters a text of Scripture or a Bible truth athwart his course. It looks as though such a man would renounce the gospel, denounce the Bible, fold his tent, and steal away to a position frankly free of sectarianism. But the system of denominationalism is defended by them, and they have become so widely tender of sectarian trade. The very system of denominationalism is defended by them, and they have become so widely current that large numbers of honest people believe them, because they do not recognize their counterfeit nature.

I recently preached a sermon on what the Lord’s people should be called. I, of course, pointed out that the Lord’s people are one family, religious divisions are wrong, and the names used to perpetuate the sectarian divisions are also wrong and should be dropped. Behold the approach of a quibble vender! “Preacher, how many children do you have?” “I have five.” “Do you have the same name?” “Yes, they are all Wallicases.” “They each have a given name, do they not?” “Yes.” He replied, and insisted, and repeated, as is the custom of quibble venders: “Well, we all belong to the same family. It is the Christian family. But we have our given names, such as Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc., to distinguish us from one another.” There is no point in the attempted analogy, because there is, as all know, a Baptist and a Methodist and a Presbyterian family. Each of my children has its own given name. According to, this quibbling quarrel with Bible truth, there are millions of Christians and not enough given names to go around. If we are going to have given names, each Christian ought to have a distinct one. Sectarian divisions are wrong. And there is not a party name nor a party principle incorrelated in the New Testament. But this does not disarm our quibble monger. He is as brisk as a bee, and, finding no honey in this blighted flower, he goes with nimble wings in search of another.
"Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth to me; I will recompense, sayeth the Lord." (Romans 12: 19.) This positive command to "give place unto the wrath of God" is in perfect harmony with the negative command: "neither give place to the devil." (Eph. 4: 27.) To quote this text on this important subject and then stop is to pervert it, for by further investigation we will see that Christians are not assuming the prerogative of God, when, in harmony with God's revealed law and in obedience to his commands concerning vengeance, they pursue a course accordingly; but, to not observe God's law and commands concerning vengeance, would be to "give place to the devil," for human agency is no less involved in the operation of God's law concerning vengeance than it is in the operation of God's law respecting his grace and being saved by it. In neither case are we logically concerned with these two powers of God, except as revealed to us and as we sustain a relation to them by inspired command.

How then, are Christians to "give place unto the wrath of God"? Just two verses further on we are told: "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." (Romans 13: 1.) The general nature of this command definitely involves Christians in a course of vengeance, for the principle seeks to govern not only the Christian's own moral conduct within the limits of what is allowable under the government, but its general nature just as certainly enjoins obedience to God's ordinance when it commands that Christians, as its subjects, to assist in restraining those who are not Christians from that particular kind of "evil" that is a menace to the common weal, even to the extent of the mission of God's ordinance, including executing wrath and vengeance in war. "For he (it'-margin) is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." (Verse 4.) And that mere passive submission is not implied in these texts is plain from Titus 3: 1, where "to obey" and "to be ready" are enjoined by specification.

Why then were the early Christians not more active in the affairs of the temporal government? There are two reasons right on the surface. First, the early Christians, including some of the apostles at first, did not understand the nature of the spiritual kingdom to which they belonged; hence, were unable to differentiate effectively between the spiritual and the earthly. The very terms, such as King, kingdom, etc., being applied to both, called for a mental transition of meaning from the earthly to the spiritual, which is even yet not generally understood. Moreover, national Israel being an earthly government, embracing God's elect race, subject to special blessings, and having then so recently passed into history, the spiritualized sense of "Israel" was obviously as confusing then as now. Secondly, when the subjects of the spiritual kingdom themselves did not generally understand its nature, there was even a better reason for aliens to not understand it, and consequently, for the personnel of the temporal government to consider it subversive. These reasons alone are sufficient to bar Christians from general participation in the temporal government. But inasmuch as God has ordained such powers, revealed their mission to Christians, and commanded them to obey such powers, only that divinely revealed mission is the logical limits to such participation, except as a failure to understand that mission and its identity with the motives and courses of such powers results in a protesting conscience. Of course no obedience to God is possible with a conscience protesting against that obedience, whether that obedience pertains to accepting God's grace in the salvation of one's soul or to participation in the affairs of God's ordinance in executing vengeance, etc. For this reason, Christians are frequently confronted with the problem of resisting the conscience of others but not their logic, especially in time of war.

For governing adult humanity, God has ordained two distinct powers: By persuasion God's power of the gospel seeks to have mankind obey its commands, including Christian morality; by force, when necessary, God's power of his temporal ordinance seeks to have mankind obey that part of Christian morality that is divinely assigned to it: the defense of "human rights bestowed by God upon mankind." This power of God does not depend upon persuasion but upon force; this power of God, as divinely ordained, is to save humanity from humanity. It seeks to deprive an individual, a band, a nation or group of nations of the powers of "evil" (the kind of evil referred to in Romans 13: 4) that menace life on earth. And since so many people will not respond to persuasion, what infinite wisdom in this divine provision of force!

The respective missions of these two powers of God, although wholly different in nature, overlap to a limited extent; for while that aspect of the gospel of Christ that is God's power for saving souls eternally, which relates only to God and to the subject of obedience, is not the mission of the temporal ordinance; yet that part of Christian morality on which civilization depends, does belong to the mission of the temporal ordinance, and to the extent that it performs its divine mission, it seeks to enforce that part of Christian morality. And since at no point are these two powers rivals and at one point their missions are co-essential to the same end, then manifestly, by no logical conclusion are they antagonistic, as divinely ordained. But the antagonists of the spiritual kingdom are spiritual forces as set forth in Eph. 6: 12.

While the personnel of the temporal government may properly be interested in the spiritual kingdom of the Prince of Peace in a personal capacity, the ordinance itself is not divinely concerned with that power of God, except to the limited extent of the overlapping aspect where their interests are mutual respecting Christian morality, for only the church is the support of the truth of the gospel in its fullness. Its only antagonists are therefore religious powers that seek to supplant the gospel of Christ with a spurious gospel. True, by a superficial reading of the facts of history, antagonism between the spiritual and the temporal may seem to exist; but upon closer investigation it will be seen that such clashes have been due to the designing personnel of government, prompted either by Paganism or else a religio-political motive wholly foreign to the divinely assigned mission of the temporal government. But such departures from its divinely assigned mission no more represent the temporal government as divinely ordained than do the departures from the mission of the spiritual government represent it as divinely instituted. Hence, a restoration movement to teach the divine distinction between, and the respective purposes of the two natures of government would be in order, for just such departures from the divinely assigned mission of
the civil-military government have furnished the causes of this global war.

That Paganism, devilry, and ignorance of Christianity, motivated Hitler in starting this war, is evidenced by an article in Look magazine of December 29, 1942, which quotes him as saying: “We are not out against the hundred and one different kinds of Christianity, but against Christianity itself. All people who profess creeds are smugglers in foreign coin, and traitors to the people. Even those Christians who really want to serve the people—and there are such—will have to be suppressed.”

Thus, his reference to so many “different kinds of Christianity” betrays his ignorance of Christianity and proves his incompetence to be entrusted with military power which he uses in his departure from the divinely assigned mission of temporal powers. Incidentally, his statement is also a rebuke to the preservation of these rights bestowed by God upon mankind. Every honest human being is interested in the preservation of these rights. While Christianity scripturally comprehends much more than “these rights”; yet, preservation of these rights is comprehended in the divine mission of the United Nations.

But the United Nations that seek to execute wrath upon Hitler and his powers of evil, in harmony with Romans 13: 4, are not fighting for those principles that are exclusively Christian and relate only to God and the subject of obedience; only the figurative sword of the Spirit is divinely designed to defend those principles. But Hitler's designs involve more than those principles that are peculiarly Christian, but to quote further from the article in Look magazine, his designs involve “human rights bestowed by God upon mankind. Every honest human being is interested in the preservation of these rights.”

While Christianity scripturally comprehends much more than “these rights”; yet, preservation of these rights is comprehended in the divine mission of the United Nations.

Finally, if Hitler’s rejection of Christianity only involved himself, he could not be scripturally opposed with the literal sword or its equivalent, but he has made his rejection too broad for his escape. Thus, he has stupidly accommodated the United Nation in opposing him, for by making his designs so broad and varied, he furnishes scriptural ground for their motive in fighting for the destruction of his far-reaching powers of evil, for they are engaged in a mission of wrath and vengeance divinely assigned to them under the present conditions.

4. With reference to a public meeting without respect to religious affiliations. (Acts 19: 32, 39, 41; in these three verses the word “ekklesia” is translated “assembly,” and has no reference to a religious group.)

Inspired writers could appropriately apply the word “ekklesia” to the people of God because in a figurative sense they had been “called-out” of the world-called out of the kingdom of darkness. (Col. 1: 13; I Pet. 2: 9; Jno. 15: 19; 17:16.)

The Israelites were called “ekklesia”-church because they had been called out of Egypt. The mob in Ephesus was called “ekklesia” because it had been “called-out” by Demetrius to try to check the influence of Paul’s teaching. (Acts 19: 24, 25.)

Modifiers of the Word “Church”

Apostles and other inspired writers and speakers freely used, when necessary, descriptive adjectives with the word “church” to show clearly the sense in which they used the term. Here is an example: The expression, “the church of God which is at Corinth,” is found in I Cor. 1: 2. The clause, “which is at Corinth,” restricts the meaning of the word in this passage to a company in Corinth and excludes all groups not in Corinth. The phrase, “of God,” limits the meaning of the word as here used to a body of Christians and excludes all other companies or assemblies that might be in that city. By thus modifying the word “church” with this phrase and clause, Paul makes it clear in his use of the term in this passage that he does not refer to all Christians everywhere, nor to any institution, assembly, body or gathering that is not “of God,” though such should be found in the city of Corinth.

In his use of the possessive pronoun “my,” in Matt. 16: 18, Jesus shows that he referred to his own kingdom (established on Pentecost), and not to the congregation of Israelites in the wilderness, nor to any church or “called-out” assembly of human origin. By the phrase, “of Christ,” in Rom. 16: 16, the Romans could understand they were being saluted by congregations of Christians as distinguished from all other “called-out” assemblies throughout the world.

Many other descriptive terms were used as modifiers by the apostles to show what they meant in their use of the ambiguous word “ekklesia”-church; such as, “of the living God” (I Tim. 3: 15), “in the wilderness” (Acts 7: 58), “of the Thessalonians” (I Thess. 1: 1), “of the saints” (I Cor. 14: 33), and “of the Gentiles” (Rom. 16: 4). These descriptive terms do not make different names out of the word they modify, for they all modify the same name—“church.” That is, the expressions, “churches of the saints,” and “churches of the Gentiles,” and “churches of Christ” (I Cor. 14: 33; Rom. 16: 4, 16), are not three names; it is one name—“churches”-with three different modifiers.

Other Names Denote God's People

Other names with their modifiers are used to denote and describe collectively the people of God, or the church; such as, the body of Christ (Eph. 1: 22; Col. 1: 18; I Cor. 12: 27); the house of God (Heb. 3: 6; I Tim. 3: 15); elect race, royal priesthood, holy nation (I Pet. 2: 9); temple of God (I Cor. 3: 16, 17; II Cor. 6: 16); the tabernacle (Heb. 8: 2; Heb. 9: 11); the kingdom (Matt. 16: 19; Jno. 3: 5; Col. 1: 13; Heb. 12: 28; Rev. 1: 6, 9); the flock of God (Acts 20: 28, 29; I Pet. 5: 2-4); Israel of God (Gal. 6: 16); the circumcision (Phil. 3: 3); Abraham’s seed (Gal. 3: 7, 29); and others. All these are different names, and not the same name with different modifiers as is the case with the expressions “church of God,” “church of the Thessalonians,” and “church of Christ.”

Your stand on the Christian’s attitude during present crisis is 100 per cent correct. The drivel that is being passed out in some quarters these days, in my judgment, is pure nonsense. Power to you in your stand on these troublesome questions.—Burton Coffman, Houston, Texas.
WHAT MUST I DO TO BE LOST?

OSCAR SMITH

It is not at all uncommon to hear a sermon on the important question, “What Must I Do To Be Saved?” but we rarely if ever hear a sermon on the subject of “What Must I Do To Be Lost?” Realizing that the majority of the human family will be lost eternally, I am asking you to study with me this question.

I am not talking about alien sinners. You may wonder why I am not including them, but the answer is, they are lost already. When Christ commanded the apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark 16: 16.) The unbeliever is condemned already. “He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3: 18.) Again in that same chapter we are told that “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; but he that obeys not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” (John 3: 36; A. S. V.) Thus we see that the man described by the Holy Spirit as “an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, and a stranger from the covenants of promise,” is today without hope and without God in the world. And if he should die in that condition, he will go to the judgment of Christ, unprepared to be saved eternally.

It might be suggested that a man who has been delivered from the bondage of sin, and has enjoyed the blessings which accompany salvation, cannot possibly be lost. That doctrine is almost as old as the human family. It was first proclaimed by Satan in the Garden of Eden when he said, “Ye shall not surely die.” (Gen. 3: 4.) If the doctrine of “once in grace always in grace is a Bible doctrine, Satan is a much bigger fool than we have given him credit for being, for he has been trying for six thousand years to get one of God’s children, and if he has not succeeded, he is a fool for not quitting. The prophet Ezekiel lays down a principle which is universal in its application. He says, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his righteousness that he hath done shall he live.” (Ezek. 18: 20-24.) The man outside the kingdom of God is in a lost condition until heExperience the power of immersive learning with a comprehensive Joyce Ching Nature's Garden, a 3D model of a garden showcasing various plants and flowers, along with their corresponding data cards and fact sheets. Understand the beauty of nature through this detailed and interactive model, and learn the unique characteristics and care requirements of each plant. Whether you're an amateur gardener or a nature enthusiast, this model provides an engaging and educational experience! The model is complemented by a series of informative text cards that highlight key information about each plant, making it an invaluable resource for anyone interested in gardening or nature. The Nature's Garden model is designed to enhance your understanding of plant diversity and the vital role they play in our ecosystem. Engage with the model through various interactive features, and expand your knowledge of the natural world. Explore the different species, learn about their adaptations, and gain insights into the importance of preserving biodiversity. This immersive experience is perfect for educators, students, and anyone seeking to deepen their appreciation for the beauty and complexity of nature.
Notatian, who while sick had water poured upon him until it ran down on the floor. That was in the year A.D. 261. But immersion was generally practiced until the year 1311 when the council met at Ravenna, Italy, and passed the first general law for sprinkling. That was in the year 1311, and the council which met at Ravenna was composed of high officials in the Roman church. Whoever practices sprinkling for baptism, observes nothing more than a human tradition, which Christ says, "makes void the word of God."

Let us come a little closer to home with a very important tradition, that of instrumental music in worship. In about the same year that Texas stepped into the arena as an independent Republic, or at about the time the battle of San Jacinto was fought just a few miles below Houston, on Buffalo Bayou, the church of which I am a member, had its origin in this section of the state. A congregation was founded on Red River not far from Texarkana. Another congregation was founded at Clarksville. Another one at Moores Springs, now known as the Reno Church of Christ. While I do not have the dates at hand, and for that reason cannot be specific as to the origin of these congregations, but they came into being about one hundred years ago, or more. For a time, preachers of the gospel of Christ rode all over this country contending for the principle of "where the Bible speaks we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent." Their idea was to "call Bible things by Bible names." The church being a New Testament institution, should have all the earmarks of the New Testament. With that motto, they founded churches everywhere. But alas, dark hours for the church came very suddenly. Men came in bringing with them a number of idols. Instrumental music was introduced into the worship of the church, and the division came about. In many instances, the introduction of the organ with its pianos, organs, harmoniums, boards, etc., were organized, and today that part of the church began to leave the New Testament teaching has gone so far into the wilderness, as to practice the observance of the Lord's supper on Thursday evening instead of the First Day of the Week, and they now have services called annual consecration service for babies. The church of Christ still aims to occupy New Testament ground, and we invite all men to unite with us only upon New Testament teaching.

The introduction of mechanical instruments into the worship of the church originated many years this side of the New Testament period. And with reference to the church of Christ, the organ was first introduced into the worship of the Olive Street Church of Christ, St. Louis, Mo., in the year 1869. It caused trouble as it always does, and was removed by a committee composed of Isaac Errett, J. K. Rogers, Alexander Procotor, and Robert Graham. When was that? In the year 1869. Christ says, "ye made the commandments of God of none effect by your tradition." Now permit me to ask, Is instrumental music in worship a tradition, or do we find it authorized in the New Testament? If it is a human tradition, do you not think that it is dangerous to practice it in connection with our worship? There is no command in all the New Testament to make music in the church. The command is to sing praises unto God.

It might be said that instrumental music aids the singing. The A Cappella Choir, of the North Texas State Teachers College, Denton, Texas, conducted by Wilfred C. Bain, give their programs in various auditoriums without mechanical accompaniment of any kind not even the aid of a tuning fork. It is the best musical program I have attended. When a pretended musician informs you that he cannot play, or sing without accompaniment, put it down that he could not sing or play much with Sousa's band backing him.

II. We Will Be Lost If We Are Classed With the Foolish Virgins

The Lord says, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five foolish." (Matt. 25: 1-13.) The wise took their lamps, and extra oil in their vessels. The foolish virgins took their lamps, but no extra oil. If the bridegroom had come in the first watch of the night, they would have been ready. But according to the lesson, at midnight, the cry was heard, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." Then all the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. But the five foolish virgins began to try to borrow oil. The wise virgins said, "Go ye rather to them that sell and buy for yourselves." They went to buy, and while they were gone, the bridegroom came, and the wise virgins went into the marriage hall, and the door was shut. Afterward came the five foolish virgins knocking for admission, but the voice from within said, "I know you not." So in order to be lost, we may just fail to prepare for the meeting with the Lord.

In that same chapter from the book of Matthew, we have the account of the parable of the talents. One man received five talents, another received two, and another one. According to the story, we will be lost if we bury our talents.

III. We Will Be Lost If We Do Not Proclaim the Gospel

As members of the church, the body of Christ, it is clearly our duty to proclaim the gospel to the lost. What could we do toward sounding out the word of the Lord, if we were all active in his cause? The primary mission of the church is to "evangelize" the world. View the church from any standpoint, almost, and you will be impressed with the idea that its paramount work is that of preaching the gospel to the lost. In Matt. 20: 1-16, the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, shows that God is the householder, the vineyard is the kingdom of God and the laborers are the disciples. In the work of preaching the gospel to the lost, the church is the sending agency. (Read Romans 10: 11-15.) In the parable of the sower, (Matt. 13: 3-9) the church is the sowing agency. The seed which is to be sown is the word of God, and the sowing must be done in the world. Paul teaches that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. 3: 14, 15.) If we fail to teach the lost the gospel of Christ, or if we fail to sow the seed of the kingdom, we will be lost.

IV. We Will Be Lost If We Do Nothing

The question, "What Must I Do To Be Lost," can be answered in one sentence: do nothing at all. Unfortunately many church members will be lost for that, and that alone. I do not like the word "lost." Think of a person being lost in the desert, or a child being lost in the woods! It is more fearful to think of people being lost in hell. Hut the Lord has a place for every thing. Fish swim in the sea; birds fly in the air; beasts roam the earth. Likewise, the rich man died, and went to his place. The righteous man went to the place called Abraham's bosom. When we appear before the Lord in judgment, if we have been inactive in the kingdom of heaven, the Lord will say of us, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." (Matt. 25: 46:) But if we have put spiritual things first, and have done our best to follow him in all things, he will say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."
The Northside Church of Christ, which meets for worship at 118 Woodland Avenue, believes and contends for the apostolic gospel in all of its purity and forcefulness.

In the various walks of life there have been those individuals who have tried to promote their false aims by taking advantage of the righteous and good. Even Satan appears as an angel of light. Paul, the apostle, declared in II Cor. 11: 13-15—

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” The church in Paul’s day was cursed with false teachers that arose in their midst. The apostle gives an example of two such teachers. II Tim. 2: 17, 18—“And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.” The church has constantly been afflicted by such teachers on various themes all through its history. The apostles’ admonition to the church at Ephesus is well taken by every truth lover today.

Acts 20: 29-31—“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” Today we have false teachers in our midst. There are three reasons why we must speak out against them: first, they commit the church to false teaching. Secondly, they lead away disciples after them. Therefore we must speak out against them; third, they overthrow the faith of some. The church in Paul’s day was cursed with false teachers on various themes all through its history. The apostles’ admonition to the church at Ephesus is well taken by every truth lover today.

Acts 20: 29-31—“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” Today we have false teachers in our midst. There are three reasons why we must speak out against them: first, they commit the church to false teaching. Secondly, they lead away disciples after them. Therefore we must speak out against them; third, they overthrow the faith of some.

In recent years the church generically and also here in Chattanooga has been cursed by false teachers who have arisen within our midst to lead “away disciples after them.” This group is generally known as premillennialists.

Let me suggest here and now that I am held responsible for what I shall say, and not this radio station or anyone connected with it. If you have any objections, make them directly to me, and I shall be happy to meet anyone in an open and honorable controversy of these matters.

In a recent radio sermon in our city, one R. H. Boll of Louisville, Kentucky, speaking under the auspices of the so-called Downtown Church of Christ, 610 Cherry Street, for which E. H. Hoover is minister, committed the church to the unscriptural and anti-scriptural doctrine of premillennialism. Let it be distinctly understood that the Downtown Church of Christ is not considered as a loyal New Testament church because of its divisive, speculative teaching in regard to premillennialism and does not enjoy the fellowship of the many other churches of Christ in Chattanooga and vicinity. Such a declaration was printed in the outstanding papers and periodicals of the brotherhood and it now seems to be necessary to inform the religious community at large.

In the radio speech previously mentioned it was denied that several points of the premillennial theory were taught or believed by the speaker and his associates. But later it was claimed that the doctrine has always been the teaching of the church and an attempt was made to commit many of the pioneers of the church to said position. Granting for arguments sake, that every pioneer of the church declared the doctrine, is our faith and practice to be based on their faith and practice? It makes no difference to me basically what they believed or taught as I do not rely upon them but depend upon the teaching of Christ and the apostles. They were inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit directly, but the pioneers only had the same source of information that I have—the scriptures. It is the worst kind of deception when a man who is well educated will deliberately misrepresent the teaching of one who is dead and cannot answer for himself. For example, Alexander Campbell was quoted as believing and teaching the premillennial theory but said quotation was taken out of its setting and badly misrepresented. Here are some statements taken from the Millennial Harbinger of 1849, pages 289-294 that are of sufficient length to not misrepresent the writer.

“An opinion has been occasionally propagated at different periods of the Christian church. That the conversion of the Jews would be effected at once in a national way, and by a personal and literal return of the Messiah to the literal and earthly Jerusalem in Judea, where our Lord was crucified. This opinion has again been revived in connection with other kindred notions, propagated also at different periods of the Christian church concerning the state of the dead, of which I cannot now speak particularly. But the recent attempts to revive the oft alleged, and as often refuted, notions of the personal and literal return to Jerusalem of the Messiah to sit upon the literal throne of David, and thus convert the Jews by sight rather than by faith, demands a passing notice at our hands, and more especially as it has now been presented to our consideration by our esteemed brother Anderson, of Kentucky.” On page 292, Campbell says: “With this induction of all the passages that speak of the throne of David, and with all that is said of the anointing or coronation of the Lord Jesus, can anyone find a vestige of authority for the assumption that Jesus Christ will descend from the throne of God in the heavens, to sit upon anything called a throne of David, in the literal Jerusalem; and, thus, in the form of a man, reign as a prince and priest over one nation and people, for any national, temporal, or spiritual purpose.”

Once again we have a quotation from the Millennial Harbinger of 1841, page 103:

“These seven specifications of antithesis between the literal and figurative resurrection, may suffice for the present. There are other points that have occurred to us besides these, but these, we presume, incontrovertibly show that the Lord cannot possibly come in person before the Millennium; and that with me, at present, is all that I wish to establish.”

According to Mr. Bolls’ own definition of premillennialism, which he still means when he speaks of the Millennium, we find Alexander Campbell taking an undeniable stand to the contrary. What do you now say, those of you who would have Alexander Campbell believe and teach the premillennial
theory? This is only a portion of what he said on the theory and it all is definitely opposed to premillennialism. For lack of time we let this suffice for the present, but every fair minded person can easily see where Alexander Campbell stood.

It was also declared that David Lipscomb believed and taught the theory. Questions Answered by Lipscomb and Sewell was referred to. Well, let us see. On page 367 in answer to a question, "Is Christ a King? If so, when was he crowned?"—we find this answer:

"If Christ is not a King now, I cannot see when he ever will be. Paul (I Cor. 15: 24-28) says: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death-And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all and in all." He reigns now, will reign till the last enemy is destroyed; then he (Christ) will be subject unto him (God) that put all things under him. He now possesses an authority that he will not possess when he having conquered the last enemy, will become subject to God, "that God may be all and in all." Paul (I Tim. 6: 15) says: "Who (Christ) is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." Christ clearly has as much authority as he will ever have. In the exercise of that authority it takes time to overcome his enemies. When they are overcome, he will surrender the kingdom he has rescued up to the Father and be subject to him. The word prince is often used in the sense of king. Webster defines it: "The one of highest rank, a sovereign, a monarch; the son of a king or emperor, or the issue of a royal family." Jesus Christ is the Son of the King or Emperor of the universe. He is in the exercise of kingly powers and prerogatives. He was given the kingly prerogative when all power in heaven and earth was given into his hand. If we follow him, we will find his power sufficient to save us. No truth can be elicited by trying to draw a distinction between him as Prince and King, and the effort to draw these unreal and speculative distinctions indicates a disposition to follow untaught and improper questions."

"Notice it is declared that Christ is King; also that "he is in the exercise of kingly powers and prerogatives." Now listen to R. H. Boll in his book Kingdom of God, page 71: "So long as Satan's throne is on the earth Christ is not exercising the government." And again page 8—"And the Lord's refusal of the offer, left, and leaves until yet, these kingdoms and this authority in Satan's hands." Hence, Mr. Boll teaches one thing, Lipscomb and Sewell taught the contrary. How can they honestly be quoted as standing where Boll and his theories stand today?

Mr. Boll attempted to leave the impression that he believes that the kingdom has been established. He ought to talk as he writes: In his book again, page 75, he says: "Thus again the coming of the kingdom is made contingent upon the return of the Lord Jesus Christ." Again, page 34—"If it be felt a difficulty that that kingdom, though announced as 'at hand,' has never yet appeared, we shall find an explanation unforced and natural, and one which will cast no reflection on the truth and goodness of God." What confidence can one have in a teacher that talks one way and writes another?

These teachers again affirm that the Roman Empire must return. Kingdom of God, page 19—"The Roman world-power then, though now it does not exist, is to return." Question: Mr. Boll, will Italy win in the present conflict? Won't they almost have to, to meet your doctrine of the imminent return of Christ? Are not you therefore pulling for the Axis powers rather than the United Nations?

The Jews, according to Mr. Boll, are denied the right to obey the gospel. On page 84 of his book we find this—"Moreover Israel is not in this judgment; for it is the 'nations' that are here judged before the King; which term is elsewhere translated 'Gentiles,' and always means the nations as distinguished from Israel, who are "not reckoned among the nations." Listen to the Word of God-Luke 24: 27—"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Turn to Acts 2 to the record of the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem and verse 5—"And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven." What is the import of this? Simply that the Jews were considered among "the nations" or "all nations" and were as such those that received the gospel on Pentecost, obeyed it and were saved. If they were not among the nations then they were not the subjects of the gospel of the Great Commission, which was age lasting and therefore are without God and without hope. Therefore, friends, I charge that premillennialism is vitalizing to the gospel of Christ and stands as a barrier to every Jew who would render obedience to it and be saved.

In conclusion, let me suggest that so much more could be said. But I trust this will be sufficient to correct any wrong impression that may have been made. I have no apology to make for these remarks as I feel bound in my love for truth, my fellowman and even my enemies to speak out against those things which are so manifestly wrong. In the words of the peerless apostle—"Do I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?"

R E V E L A T I O N  S T U D I E S
Twenty-six Lessons Covering the Entire Book of Revelation Prepared for Use in All Bible Classes and Home Study

The purpose of these lessons is to help the student acquire a knowledge of what the Revelation actually says. They contain no speculation and they give no encouragement to the "interpretation" of symbolic and prophetic utterances which the Lord himself did not reveal; rather they are a definite warning against such.

Harry Pickup says, "This study is written in the question and answer style which has proved so successful in other studies by the same author. Its value as a treatment of the entire text of this difficult book is inestimable."

A study of the Book of Revelation is much more important than some think. Blessings are promised to those who read and hear and keep the things written in the Revelation. (Rev. 1: 3) It is sinful to neglect the study of it, because it is the "Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants." (Rev. 1: 1)

Price:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Copy</th>
<th>$0.35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three copies</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six or more copies, per copy</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"REVELATION STUDIES" will help the teacher build up class attendance and interest.
SECTARIAN QUIBBLES
CLED E. WALLACE

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee. Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3: 6.) This text has been the occasion of much equivocation and evasion on the part of men under the influence of the party spirit. It has become the rule for men with sectarianized minds to quibble when the Lord speaks. Some of them put it this way: “Why do you think that Jesus meant literal water in John 3: 5, when we know he did not mean literal water in John 4: 14?” The latter passage reads this way: “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life.” (John 4: 14.) It is a generally recognized fact that Jesus uses such terms as bread, water, meat, flesh, blood, leaven, etc., in both a literal and a figurative sense. The rule is that a term shall be construed literally unless there is a compelling reason for giving it a figurative interpretation. The command of Jesus to eat his flesh and drink his blood cannot be literally obeyed of course, for obvious reasons.

Is there any compelling reason why “born of water” should not mean a coming up out of literal water? Some Baptists of late have become so ridiculously literal as to make it apply to the water incident to the natural birth. Others figure it away so that there is no water of any kind, anywhere. Jesus very clearly explains his own language when he says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark 16: 16.) The practice of the early Christians is conclusive in making water baptism a condition of entrance into the kingdom of heaven. “But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” (Acts 8: 12.) But these ghostly interpreters flit like apparitions from one evasion to another when pursued. They are likely to argue that there is no water even in baptism—that it is all spiritual. “And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came out of ...” (Acts 8: 36-39.) Serious sectarian criticism has made lowering efforts to reduce this water to what might be found in a camel’s track or a crawfish hole, and frowns would give way to shouts of joy if even they could be found to be as dry as a cow chip in Arizona.

This partisan quibbling does not even resemble sound exegesis. We have it on the authority of Dr. Wall, the great Pedobaptist historian, that “all the writers, not one man excepted,” of the first four hundred years understood Jesus to mean water baptism in the celebrated expression “born of water” in John 3: 5. Among modern writers who agree with the primitive fathers may be mentioned John Wesley, Adam Clarke, Dean Alford, Albert Barnes, Bloomfield, Whitby, Timothy Dwight, George Whitfield, J. R. Graves, and plenty of others.

Then why all this modern, hysterical ambition to make the water in John 3: 5 appear as a sort of spiritual mirage? The reason is not far to seek. It is done in the defense of some precious theories, cherished traditions, in religion. Our Methodist friends have argued in wroughtup fashion that affection is scriptural baptism. If “born of water” refers to baptism, how in the name of reason, or anything else short of the boundaries of insanity, can a man be “born” of a few drops of water? This one question has upset a lot of plausible argument. Baptists have been known to use it gleefully when debating with Methodists on the action of baptism. But it became a thorn in the side of our Baptist friends in another connection. If there is anything in the world which will give a modern Baptist nightmares, it is the idea that baptism is a condition of salvation. If “born of water” means baptism, then baptism is a condition of entrance into the kingdom of God. “Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3: 5.) So, after all, it is really a case of ancient history brought down to date. “And he said unto them, Full well do ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition.” (Mark 7: 9.)

WHO ARE ISHMAELITES?

(Continued from page 4)

sneering at the editor of the Baptist and Reflector when we suggest that he forget, if he can, that he is a Baptist and re-examine Paul’s famous allegory to find out what Paul really teaches in it. “But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” (Luke 11: 28.) He who believes and obeys the word of God will not be lacking in the blessings of “salvation by grace.” He who depends on some mystical “experience of saving grace” the word of God says nothing about is most likely to miss all of these blessings. It is worth noting that “the plan and the people” who say most about this sort of experience are connected with some human organization in religion that is not even once named in the New Testament, for instance the Baptist church.

PECULIAR PREACHERS

Preachers are peculiar things—
Some so good you think of wings,
Some so bad you wonder why
Long ago they didn’t die.
There’s the one who talks and talks,
When he’s through the crowd just gawps;
Lengthy words were all he said,
None of which stuck in their heads.
Some preach fast, and some preach slow,
Some close your mind, some make it go.
He who speaks at even speed
Gives to each just what he needs.
Some can mingle with the crowd;
Praise of them is oft so loud,
Converts seem to flock to them;
Making heaven’s light grow dim.

Some do preach for love of Truth,
Giving lessons to our youth,
Which they’ll never turn from cold,
Clinging to them when they’re old.
There’s the man who must be funny
Wanting to appear he’s sunny,
Tales he tells, off color, dead,
Better would have been unsaid.
There’s the man that’s so aloof
Hardly can the church house roof
Hold him and the herd together,
He’s a bird of different feather.
Big Shot says the space too great
Between the plow and pulpit gate.
Does he shorten it a single step?
He refused when asked for help!

Some will study, some will not,
Some complain about their lot,
Being unable to ever see
One is where he’s prepared to be.
Politics are used by some.
Places with a good income
Cause some men to love the work—
Souls, not salaries, they smirk.
Take the preachers as a whole,
Strong in body, clean in soul,
Pure in mind, of great foresight,
They are men of highest type.
Work to them is quite a pleasure,
For they hold earth’s greatest treasure,
Sent from heav’n to every one—
’Tis the gospel of God’s Son.

Willard Hedge, (Mrs. John W. Hedge).
“And in those days cometh John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt. 3:1, 2.) “Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled! and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1: 14, 15.)

What kingdom was this which was “at hand,” come nigh unto you,” approaching? It was the kingdom of Jewish prophecy that Daniel, Isaiah, and others said would come. Jesus came “in the fullness of the time” and said it was “at hand.” Had it in mind when he taught his disciples to pray, “Thy kingdom come.” Was it “at hand”? If it did not come soon after John and Jesus made the announcement, it was not “at hand”; and if disciples are still to pray, “Thy kingdom come,” John and Jesus were mistaken, or else some unforeseen calamity occasioned the postponement of the kingdom at the last minute. If disciples use the language of Jesus in prayer today, they ought to have in mind the same kingdom he had when he used the language. The kingdom he taught his disciples to pray for was close by at that time. Whether or not that kingdom has come is a live issue today. There is no righteous occasion for any lover of the truth shrinking from a vigorous discussion of that issue. If any sizable number of disciples are uninterested in it, it affords an added reason why such a discussion and campaign of education on kingdom matters. Zealous of various beliefs otherwise are active in their advocacy of the future-kingdom idea. It was proper for us to fight the notion that the kingdom was established before Christ ascended to heaven. It is also proper for us to fight the error, which is as bad or worse, that he will not exercise the authority of King until he again returns to the earth.

Premillennialists teach that the Jews understood their prophets, that their idea of the kingdom was approximately correct, and that the fulfillment of the “kingdom prophecies” would have demanded such an earthly reign when Jesus was here as premillennialists hope for now when he comes again to earth. Jesus planned to give them what they were looking for. But they were disappointed with Jesus, They rejected him. The Jewish nation was such a vital factor in the kingdom scheme that it could not be carried out when they were guilty of the national crime of rejecting the Messiah. So the kingdom was postponed and the church was substituted for the kingdom he failed to set up when he came for that purpose the first time. With some, the church is merely a “phase” of the kingdom which had no place in prophecy. It was an afterthought, a theological accident. If the Jews had not rejected their Messiah, this “gospel age” would not be what it is now. Of course there is no speculation in all this! The Scriptures clearly teach it!

How do these future-kingdom advocates know the Jews understood their prophets? They did not understand their Messiah. The same prophets foretold the Messiah, and they will not even recognize him when he appeared. He was as clearly revealed in prophecy as the kingdom was. If they were mistaken in their views of the King, it is reasonable to conclude that they were likewise mistaken in their views of the kingdom. The birth of Jesus was a subject of prophecy. The life of Jesus was a subject of prophecy. The suffering and rejection and death of Jesus were subjects of prophecy. The prophets talked about “the glories that should follow” “the sufferings of Christ,” involving as they do the “so great salvation” of the present and citizenship in “a kingdom that cannot be shaken,” which we now enjoy as members of the church. It is quite clear that the Jews of the time of John and Jesus misinterpreted the prophecies concerning both the King and the kingdom. And some of our modern theorists are falling headlong into the same errors.

John and Jesus did not preach the “kingdom of heaven is at hand,” if the Jews do not reject their Messiah. It was foreknown and foretold that they would do so. The kingdom was “at hand,” anyway. “Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay.” So said Peter on Pentecost. David foretold his resurrection from the dead that the promises regarding the kingdom might be fulfilled. And they are fulfilled in that he is now “both Lord and Christ.” “Who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven; angels and authorities and powers being made subject “unto him.” (1 Pet. 3: 22.)
men, whose names lengthen local church membership rolls, have not been converted. They do not bring forth the fruits thereof. One well-to-do brother listened to a very nice sermon on liberality, punctuated by plain texts on the sin of covetousness. By the time the contribution plate reached him, his resentment was so great that he put his “quarter” back in his pocket, and then boasted about it as though he were even with the preacher. In view of the ability of some men in the church, the meekness of their gifts is an insult to God. They spend dollars on themselves and pennies for the church of God, “which is the pillar and ground of the truth.” My attention was once called to a certain church which had in its membership men who owned and controlled three rather handsome estates. The church received practically nothing from these estates. The ones who owned them were close-fisted and stingy. They resent it if some one points out what the Bible says about it being more blessed to give than to receive. They do not have the point of view. They act as though they would be glad to go to hell if they could escape the expense of running the church. It is a rather serious thing to think about. “But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life.” (Gal. 6: 6-9.) “But this I say, He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” (2 Cor. 9: 6,7.)

Through the Things That Are Made

There is no excuse for either atheism or agnosticism regarding the being of God. He is, and the evidence is compelling. “For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse.” (Rom. 1: 20.) All things that are made proclaim that they are products of a maker. If they were made, they did not just happen. The operation of laws which produce intelligent results could not have begun without an intelligent lawgiver. A denial of such axioms would indicate a disordered mind. When an excavator brings to light a hidden city, he takes it for granted that it was built by a race of men, and the nature and extent of their civilization are determined by a study of what they made. Their work may be extensive enough to afford material for a complete history of an ancient people. Thoughtful men, historians, and archeologists deal with causes and effects. When the spade uncovers a monument or a temple, there is no need to conclude that God made it, for man is entirely capable of doing something so magnificent. He merely left himself some witnesses of his power and ways. His customs are perceived through the things that he made. And the Eternal God has “left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness.” (Acts 14: 17.)

Natural history, chemistry, and astronomy all present phenomena which cannot be explained in terms of power which men possess. Man can plant a seed and watch it grow and reproduce itself, but he cannot make one. He did not make the heaven and the earth and the sea, nor is he the author of the wonders that abound in them. He can harness the forces of nature and produce an electric light, but is still so dumb he cannot tell what electricity is. But these things had an origin. What mighty power brought them into being and set them in motion? The most satisfactory explanation which has ever been given is the first verse of the Bible: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Gen. 1: 1.) And man was not even capable of writing that, without inspiration from a source higher than himself. “He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding hath he stretched out the heaven. (Gen. 10: 12.)

“What Doth Hinder Me To Be Baptized?”

The Ethiopian eunuch was reading a newspaper concerning Christ in prophecy. An inquiry from Philip, the evangelist, brought out the fact that he did not understand what he was reading. He was willing to be shown. A willingness to learn is a fine spirit, and much too rare among those who are interested in religion. A man with a sectarian spirit repels everything which does not accord with his sectarian point of view. He even approaches God with an idol in his heart. The eunuch’s refreshing honesty was an invitation to Philip to preach “unto him Jesus.” Hungry ears must have devoured every word of the precious story. The immediate result was that the eunuch demanded baptism. An unbelief in the Lord is not supposed to the power of ordinances, rather than in the Lord who gave them. The very idea of trusting in the Lord implies obeying the Lord’s commands, and believing the Lord’s promises. Philip, the evangelist, taught the people of Samaria to trust in the Lord. “But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” (Acts 8: 12.) They were not trusting in baptism; they were trusting in the Lord. Philip was the right sort of a preacher, and the eunuch was the right sort of a hearer, and so “they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.” (Acts 8: 38.)

The eunuch was a proper subject of baptism, because he believed Philip’s preaching. He wanted to be baptized, because Jesus Christ required it. The authority of Christ is the source of the command. If you do not believe that Jesus is the Christ or if you are indifferent or rebellious, then you will not demand baptism as did the eunuch. And you will have not occasion to rejoice as he did. In view of modern practice, it is proper to remark that Philip baptized the eunuch, without seeking authority to do so in the vote of a church.

Trusting in the Lord

What must I do to be saved? How shall I be rid of the burden of sin? “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin.” (Rom. 4: 7, 8.) It is by the grace of God. The sinner must trust in the Lord. But the Lord “became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation.” (Heb. 5: 9.) It is a strange idea that the man who obeys the Lord is clothed with the power of ordinances, rather than in the Lord who gave them. The very idea of trusting in the Lord implies obeying the Lord’s commands, and believing the Lord’s promises. Philip, the evangelist, taught the people of Samaria to trust in the Lord. “But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” (Acts 8: 12.) They were not trusting in baptism; they were trusting in the Lord. It would have exhibited no confidence in the Lord, had they refused to be baptized. Old Simon, the sorcerer, also trusted in the Lord when he “also himself believed” and was baptized. He did it just like the others did. And this trust in the Lord brought them all alike the blessedness of forgiveness of sins. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,” said the Lord. Simon turned the Lord loose, and hit out on his own when he offered to buy the gifts of God with money.