SIGHTING-IN SHOTS

CLED E. WALLACE

-Don’t Need Any Campbellites

If being dipped in water is essential to salvation, then every Baptist that has ever lived or died will go to heaven, for they have all been dipped. Therefore, we don’t need any Campbellites for the dipping business on a confession of faith, for Baptists have long been in the affirmative on this proposition—the faith of the Bible alone being the rule and guide of our faith and practice.—American Baptist.

We have our doubts about a Baptist or anybody else going to heaven who speaks of one of the Lord’s ordinances as “the dipping business.” Baptism is a picture of the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is shockingly irreverent to sneer at it as “the dipping business.” And it is inconsistent in one who belongs to a church which can be entered in no other way but by “being dipped in water... for they have all been dipped.” Paul says that Christians have all been “baptized into Christ.” I have heard Baptist preachers sneer and leer about “finding Christ in the creek or tank.” Where are Baptist Church privileges found? “We don’t need any Campbellites,” and we don’t need any Baptists, either, for the New Testament doesn’t say anything about either. How would it do for the “Campbellites” and Baptists to just be Christians like the followers of Christ were that we read about in the New Testament? “If being dipped in water is essential to salvation.” There is no “if” about it for the man who believes what Jesus says. Jesus says: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Baptists can mock at the statement, but they cannot answer it. They “have all been dipped,” but it will take something besides water to wash the sneer off their faces before some of them “will go to heaven.” The American Baptist ought to be ashamed of itself.

“...and humble. He was all but overcome with injured innocence when he was charged with being a hypocrite. A preacher, for instance, may stumble on to some very humbling considerations. Strange as it may seem, there are some very good churches built up in places where I have never been. They have somehow managed to get along very well without using me in meetings. ‘And the places which have used me possibly would not have been injured beyond repair had they never heard of me. And when I some day take a long journey, the cause of Christ will in all probability not even miss a cog in its onward progress because of it. Nobody is missed much or long, outside of a very small circle. A man is to be congratulated, therefore, if he can live and work a while, do a little good and no harm, and depart with gladness in his heart.

Concerning Faith in God

A skeptic asks me if theology has “any proof of a material nature that God is a personality.” The revelation concerning God in the Bible is so exalted, full, and satisfying that I am not at all concerned over the speculations of theology. If our skeptic wants a God that he can examine much as he would a Chinese idol, or that he can reduce to the size of a man, such “material” evidence will be lacking. “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4: 24.) “He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.” (Heb. 11: 6.) He is the Almighty Creator and has revealed his will to man in the Bible. The Book is worthy of such an Author. “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.” (Rom. 1: 20.) A Supreme Intelligence must be the Author and Guide of the universe. If our skeptical friends can read what the Bible says about God, the profoundest concepts which ever stirred the soul of man, and then not be able to perceive “his everlasting power and divinity” through the things that are made, the material universe, then we must of necessity leave them to the darkness of their own hearts and let them learn by cruel experience that “it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” More evidence is not what they need, but more intelligence to appreciate the evidence every where at hand.

Material Evidence

An “honest doubter” would like to have some “material evidence” that “Christ was divine.” The evidence was material enough to convince Nicodemus and other members of the Jewish Senate. “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from...” (Continued on Page 16)
THE STIGMA THAT TURNED OUT-TO BE A MIRAGE

CLED E. WALLACE

It will be recalled that Jimmie Lovell and the editor of the Gospel Advocate got all stirred up over a supposed “stigma” that threatened the good name of churches of Christ and proposed to wipe it out with a committee. At least the Gospel Advocate gave the scheme its editorial endorsement and said: “We hope to soon wipe the above stigma from our slate and hereafter care for those we call our own.” The “Service Committee For Conscientious Objectors” is touted as “an avenue through which to help these young men” and, according to the Gospel Advocate, “to protect the good name of the church in which we place our hope.” It seems to some of us that the chief hope of these brethren is in a committee rather than in the church. They-think they have found it necessary to “provide an avenue of service” for the church besides the church. “A National Service Board for Religious Objectors” under sectarian auspices spent some $15,000 on some “of our boys” who ought not to have gone there in the first place. Churches of Christ did not authorize the expenditure but they are asked by a committee endorsed by the Gospel Advocate to pay it back to remove “the above stigma.” Pay it back to whom and why?

THE ADVOCATE’S “ABRUPT” CHANGE

I was surprised at the gusto and haste with which the Gospel Advocate jumped into this new sort of a venture among us, but before I got over my surprise, the Advocate took alarm and backed up. Almost immediately the editor changed point of view is that: “Whatever obligation we have in the matter, as disciples of Christ, is owed to the boys rather than to the camps. No one on behalf of the church of Christ bargained with the camps to look after the boys. None could do that. Those who operate the camps volunteered their services, but found that they had committed themselves more heavily than they had expected. Yet the churches of Christ are not responsible for this miscalculation on the part of these denominations.”

“Those who desire, as individuals, to make a contribution to the boys in the camps are to be commended for their interest and zeal; but they should be careful, in every respect, not to overstep the bounds of propriety in thought, word, or deed. The proper sense and relation of obligation should be kept clear, and no questionable or unscriptural means should be used.”

So all the talk about “a stigma” was beside the point to begin with for there was none, at least where the Advocate and the committee tried to find one. The churches could not be stigmatized for not paying a debt they had not “bargained” for and had nothing to do with making. I am really gratified to see the Gospel Advocate back up and suggest that “no questionable or unscriptural means should be used,” but I think it would be still better if the editor would just back clear out of this new and unauthorized “avenue of service.” It is ludicrous for the editor of the Gospel Advocate to exhort the brethren to “be careful, in every respect, not to overstep the bounds of propriety in thought, word or deed,” when he took an editorial lead in doing that very thing. In reality he asks the brethren not to pay any attention to his first editorial endorsing the committee for it “overstepped the bounds of propriety.” I should say as much. The editor should be a little more “careful” himself. I’m not right sure that I know what brought about the quick “change” in the editor of the Gospel Advocate, but evidently it did not take him four years to make it. It is a remarkable feat considering his allergy to “changing.” It is possible that he got in that first editorial without Brother Boles passing on it.

THE SELF-APPOINTED “SERVICE COMMITTEE”

Nobody is surprised when Jimmie Lovell goes off half-cocked or not cocked at all, but when the “venerable” Gospel Advocate ties an editorial to the tail of this committee kite of his, then a few observations on committees in general seem to be in order. What is a committee anyhow? This particular one of Jimmie’s places “no emphasis upon organization.” But does not a committee imply an organization? Should it not act on organized authority? This one does not represent a local church and cannot represent the churches because they have no central organization to authorize such a committee. When I scrutinize the definition of a committee, I’m led to believe that this so-called “Service Committee For Conscientious Objectors” which had “to assume a specific designation,” is really no committee at all. A group of brethren have just assumed to be something which they are not and have no authority to be. Unless the brethren are ready for a quick and radical change under the exigencies of a real or imagined emergency, these brethren and their mirage of a committee should be ignored. They are “overstepping the bounds of propriety” if not something worse. According to about the most abridged dictionary I can lay hands on, a committee consists of “persons appointed to examine, consider, and report on any matter of business.” Who appointed this group of brethren to organize themselves into something that had to have “a specific designation,” and tried to have it with “no emphasis on organization.” What they are trying to do is absurd and the way they are going at it is unscriptural.

According to the light I have, the churches are having to endure too much outside meddling from impertinent sources. Churches are independent bodies with the right and duty to choose their own fields of activities, raise their own money, select their own workers and attend to their own business generally without self-appointed groups outlining their programs and assuming leadership in their affairs. They do not need Jimmie Lovell, the Gospel Advocate or anybody associated with them to provide “an avenue through which to” work. The churches are capable of providing their own avenues with what organization the New Testament authorizes them to maintain. They are trying to do is absurd and the way they are going at it is unscriptural.
Chaplain Zimmerman added in relating the incidence, "I am opposed to a denominational committee to look after things for the churches and I am also opposed to the idea of a committee. But I know such was impossible and he got a big kick out of Boles' asking for something that he and his brethren didn't believe in."

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ASKING ACCORDING TO GOD’S WILL

W. CURTIS PORTER

God, in His word, has promised to answer prayer. However, He has not promised to answer the prayers of all men; neither has He promised to answer every prayer of any man. There are certain men upon whom God has called to pray and whose prayers He has promised to answer. But even these have certain conditions to meet if they would have their requests granted by the heavenly Father. God’s children, those who are endeavoring to serve Him, are required to pray. But the Lord has specified a number of things for them to keep in mind and to observe when they pray. For example, they must ask in faith, they must pray in the name of Jesus. Christ, they must ask in sincerity, and they must pray in humility, if they would have their prayers answered. But in addition to all of this, they must ask according to the will of God. They might observe all other requirements God makes of men who pray, but if they fail to observe this, God will not hear them. The language of the apostle John is very specific and plain. Listen to his statement: “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.” (I John 5:14,15.) Thus John expressed his confidence in God and in His willingness to answer prayer. But that confidence was based upon strict adherence to the condition mentioned—“if we ask anything according to his will.” The passage certainly means that we cannot expect God to answer our prayers if we do not ask according to His will.

Even Jesus, our Lord and Master, the world’s Redeemer and the Savior of men, kept this point in mind when He prayed. In the garden of Gethsemane, just a short time before He suffered on the cross, knowing that soon the time would come when He was to taste the cup of death for every man, Jesus prayed to the Father. He said: “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” (Luke 22:42.) He did not pray for the Father to ignore His will and answer the prayer; but he prayed for the cup of death to be removed if it would be according to God’s will. Jesus always recognized this principle, for He tells us that He came down from heaven not to do His own will but the will of the Father who sent him.

God’s will for us has been revealed in His word. If we desire to know what the will of God is, we must read His word to find out. In no other way can we know the will of God. When we are told, therefore, to ask according to His will, it means we must ask in harmony with His word. A prayer could not be contrary to His word and yet in harmony with His will. His will is made known in His word, and when we go according to that word in our prayers and in our living, we go according to His will; but when we ignore His word, we likewise ignore His will. It is certainly possible for a man to pray contrary to the will of God or we would never have been taught the importance of asking according to it.

That we may discover the fact that God will refuse to answer prayers that are contrary to His word let us study a prayer offered one time by that great servant of God, Moses, the leader of Israel. The greatness of this man, and his willingness to sacrifice and suffer for the cause of Jehovah, along with his great faith in God, are all revealed to us in Heb. 11:1-36. Concerning him the inspired writer of the book of Hebrews said: “By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” This is the description of a great character. His humility in the service of God was so great that he was said to be the meekest man “upon the face of the earth.” (Num. 12:3.) Moses was the kind of man that God has promised to hear. Peter said: “The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.” (I Pet. 3:12.) Moses was a righteous man; he was a man of faith; he was the kind of man unto whom the ears of the Lord are open. In fact, God had often heard and answered his prayers. His prayers to God had saved Israel from destruction when God’s anger had waxed hot against them because of their rebellion. But even a man like this might pray contrary to God’s will.

That wretched disease called leprosy was often found among the children of Israel in those days. The person who was afflicted with leprosy was regarded as unclean, and God had a law to govern such cases. His will was made known in a specific commandment regarding leprosy. In Num. 5:1-3,2, we read this language: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper.” Again in Lev. 13:46 these words are found: “All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.” These, with many other Old Testament statements, reveal to us God’s law concerning leprosy. When leprosy appeared on a person the person must be put out of the camp for seven days. And if the leprosy continued to exist and develop, the person must be declared unclean and put out of the camp as long as the leprosy remained.

On a certain occasion the brother and sister of Moses, Aaron and Miriam, spoke against him. They felt that Moses had assumed too much authority, that God had spoken by them as well as by Moses. The Lord was displeased with them because of this, called them to the door of the tabernacle, rebuked them for their arrogance, and allowed his anger to become kindled against them. When he departed and the cloud from the tabernacle vanished, “Behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.” (Num. 12:10.) This led Aaron to confess before Moses his act of foolishness, his sin, and to plead with Moses for her. At once Moses went to God in prayer about it. To some extent we can understand the anxiety of Moses. His sister that had stood watch over him when he was a babe cast on the river Nile and secured a nurse, his own mother, to assist Pharaoh’s daughter in caring for him, is now smitten with leprosy, a disease that is terrible and wretched. His heart is touched with her sad condition, and he prays to God in these words: “Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.” (Num. 12:13.) I have never read on the pages of any book, nor heard fall from the lips of any man, a prayer that seemed more sincere and earnest than this prayer of Moses. He is the kind of man who could pray to God an acceptable prayer; he approaches God with deep sincerity and earnest anxiety to heal his sister; he displays a humility that ought to characterize all men who pray. He was eager for immediate results; he prayed: “Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.” Can you for a moment’s time doubt the sincerity of that prayer? Yet, as strange as it may at first seem, God did not answer that prayer. Although it was a petition of earnestness from the heart of the meekest man upon the earth, God did not answer. Do you wonder why? Simply this: It was a prayer that was contrary to God’s will. To answer that prayer would be to set aside God’s revealed (Continued on Page 16).
A Matter of Principle

In a sermon I expressed opposition to the use of instrumental music in the worship of God on the ground that such worship is will worship. It is offered because it pleases the worshiper. God has nowhere expressed his pleasure in having Christians worship him in any such fashion. He says, “singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.” (Eph. 5: 19.) A fairly well-informed lady member of a denominational church took me to task at the conclusion of the service. She could not understand why anybody should oppose such a lovely thing as the music which is mechanically produced. And it is hard to make anybody see it whose principles are broad enough to justify membership in a church organized by men and guided by a human creed. If a man or a woman belongs to a church the New Testament says nothing about, subscribes to a human creed, wears human religious names, and ignores divine authority in such fundamental ways, I suppose he or she might as well go along and play on instruments, burn incense, sprinkle water on little babies, or do anything else he or she likes to hear, see, or feel, or smell. What difference does it make to such people what God says or does not say, anyway? But it makes a big difference with those of us who have decided to get our religion from the Bible, and be able to give chapter and verse for what we believe and practice. It is a matter of principle. In the light of her too broad principles, the lady considered my opposition to instrumental music an absurdity to be smiled at. In the light of the principle I accept, such opposition is a necessity and her broad principles are rebellion. It would be foolish to try to convince a man that instrumental music in worship is wrong while he thinks it is perfectly proper to be a Methodist or a Baptist or a Presbyterian or anything else like that. He might as well go ahead and play on as many instruments as there are denominations, as long as he accepts such loose principles.

They Can See It in Business

George Matthew Adams tells the story of a business man who engaged a young fellow to work for him. He took him to the back of his store and asked him to move a pile of bricks to the other side of the yard, and when the job was finished, he asked him to move them back to where they were, and then he had him move them to the other side again. Then he said to the young fellow: “That will be all. You are the chap I have been looking for. I can depend upon you for anything I ask.” They can see it in business, but they cannot see it in religion. It might occur to them that God is looking for people that he can depend on to do anything he asks. “But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word.” (Isa. 66: 2.) Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, went to Elisha, prophet of God, to be cured of leprosy. The prophet told him to dip himself seven times in the river Jordan and he would be cured. Naaman wouldn’t move a pile of bricks even once. He became angry, went away in a rage, and complained because the prophet of God did not act in a more rational way. Naaman “thought” he would come out and stand and call on the name of his God, and strike his hand over the place, and carry on a show designed to honor his distinguished guest. But he had to come under and dip the required number of times to secure his cleansing. After that, he was anxious to do anything God might ask. Many a business man who would laud the young fellow for moving a pile of bricks three times, simply because of orders from his employer, thinks it foolish to be baptized simply because God says so. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark 16: 16.) He hasn’t promised to save anybody who cannot be depended on to do what he tells him to do. The man who ridicules God’s commands as foolish is certain to be lost. He is sure-tagged for hell. “He became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation.” (Heb. 5: 9.) What would you think of a young man, for instance, who would move a pile of bricks three times under the circumstances which inspired Mr. George Matthew Adams to write an article about it, but would refuse to be baptized in obedience to a command of God? If men are to be praised for obeying men in business, they should not be sneered at for obeying God in religion. “This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.” (Eccles. 12: 13.)

A Serious Business

The work of saving men from sin is serious business. Jesus Christ, “existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yes, the death of the cross.” (Phil 2: 5-8.) God sent him as the greatest apostle ever known on the greatest mission ever conceived—re-demption of mankind from sin. In pursuance of this mission, the “ministry of reconciliation” was chosen, the great commission was given, and the gospel became the power of God unto salvation. When Christ ascended up on high, the Holy Spirit came down and the apostles became active ambassadors on behalf of their reigning Lord. “We cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard,” Peter and John said sharply to the angry Sanhedrin. “The love of Christ constraineth us... woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.” Paul considered himself a “debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish,” to the full extent of his opportunity and ability in preaching the gospel. A world lying in the evil one is a direct challenge to the church. The fact that the world was evangelized in a generation, in the face of persecution armed and designed for annihilation, affords eloquent testimony to the magnificent manner in which that challenge was met in the first century when Christianity was new.

Christians today view a world in sin with too much complacency, or indifference, maybe it is. Too many well-fed and properly clothed disciples feel that the measure of their responsibility is attending a service or so and dropping in a coin or so occasionally. But is it? Paul said: “I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart.” Let us note the occasion of this distress. His “kinsmen according to the flesh,” the Jewish nation, for whom God had done so much and from whom Christ had come, were displaying an amazing and unreasonable stubbornness in their rejection of the Lord and opposition to the gospel. Paul was chilled to the heart at the thought of their lost condition, in their fatal self-righteousness. Suffer for them? Sacrifice on their behalf? He would do anything and everything for them. “I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren’s sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh.” Were it possible to do such a thing or right to wish such a thing, Paul was capable of choosing a place in hell, if thereby he could purchase a home in heaven for the Jewish race. Such burning intensity mocks the insipid indifference of many present-day disciples. Sin is a terrible reality, and through it death reigns. It even worked condemnation and ruin through such a good thing as the law. The gospel is the only means of escape from sin with its indescribable consequences. How zealous, then should Christians be in preaching the gospel! It is serious business;
THE DIVINE DIGNITY OF CHRIST

The letter to the Colossians is a masterful effort to exalt the divine dignity of Christ, the one and only adorable Redeemer. “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full, who is the head of all principality and power: in whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.” (Col. 2:9-12.) This burial and resurrection which took place in their baptism made them Christians, joined them to Christ, made them members of “the body, the church.” (Col. 1:18.)

A Christ is presented in Colossians as the “fullness” of God, so in Ephesians the church is exalted as the “fullness” of Christ. The purpose of God looked forward “unto a dispensation of the fullness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ.” (Eph. 1:9,10.) The church is the goal of the divine purpose which God purposed in Christ. It is the title Paul applies in this letter to the redeemed, the new humanity “created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:10.) God wrought mighty things “in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” (Eph. 1:20-23.)

While Christ was on earth, come down to do His Father’s will, He foresaw this grand consummation of the divine scheme. He confined His earthly ministry mainly “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” but view afar a new Israel. “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.” (John 10:16.) Then years afterward Paul from Rome wrote the Ephesians that Christ was the head of the church, and that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.” (Eph. 3:6.) Paul himself was the “chosen vessel” to carry the Lord’s name among the Gentiles. He reminded them that at one time they were no people, but were “at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” (Eph. 2:11,12.) But Christ came, shed His blood, took the Mosaic law out of the way, that middle wall that separated between Jews and Gentiles, and created a new institution of spiritually born Jews and Gentiles, making no distinction whatever between them. This institution is the “one new man,” the church which Christ said while on earth, “I will build.” (Matt. 16:18.) He built it, He is head of it, He is Savior of it, and both Jews and Gentiles are saved in it. Salvation is found nowhere else except in it. “And might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.” (Eph. 2:16.) It is “a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.”

In the light of this teaching, new meaning attaches to that characteristic expression of Paul’s, “in Christ.” “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 8:1.) “Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.” (II Cor. 5:17.) “Who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” (Eph. 1:3.) “In Christ” certainly denotes a very close and intimate relationship. What, then, is Christ? Christ is the head of the body, the church. Paul says we are “baptized into Christ” and “did put on Christ.” (Rom. 6:3-6; Gal. 3:26,27.) We were “all baptized into one body.” (I Cor. 12:13.) To be in Christ, then, is to be in the “church which is his body.” All the blessings are found therein. Why should any one care to remain outside who has any respect for the honor and glory of Christ? One cannot detour around Christ and have fellowship with God, nor can he detour around the church and have fellowship with Christ.

According to Paul, then, the blessings of God flow to humanity through the church. “To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Eph. 3:10,11.) The goal of “the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” is the result of Christ’s redemptive work, the spiritual community of the saved. Anything in the way of a religious denomination that a man can “join” after he becomes a Christian is not of the Father’s planting, nor “according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord”; Christ is not head over it, and it “will be rooted up.” (Matt. 15:13.)

Pagan philosophers mocked as Paul discoursed on the resurrection of the dead. Sadducees countered the teaching of Jesus with hypothetical objections and captious questions. “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God,” reveals the status of the modern objector as clearly as it did that of the ancient Sadducee. “For in the resurrection they neither marry; nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven,” is a most satisfying assurance in view of the authority that supports it. The teaching of Jesus and Paul is infinitely superior in every respect to the hazy speculations of so-called “wise men.” “For ye know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens.” There is that about Paul and there is that in us that forces us to believe he knew. There is nothing in materialism that can so appeal to that ineradicable passion of the human heart to live forever.

Long years of suffering and toil, climaxed by prison life, made the prospect of life beyond death peculiarly precious to Paul. “If we have only hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable.” He wrote this to the Corinthians in the midst of such conflicts he said that he died daily. Out of his prison life he wrote the beloved Philippian that death would be gain to him; that he had a desire to “depart and be with Christ.” He was tired, but was willing “to abide in the flesh,” because it “is more needful for your sake.” “It is very far better,” though, to go and be with Christ. This is the faith of the gospel. This is what makes any affliction “our light affliction, which is for the moment,” in view of “an eternal weight of glory.” This prospect is what renews the “inward man” day by day, while “our outward man is decaying.” The epistles of Paul are honeycombed with this hope. “We are saved by hope,” he said. “And exercise thyself unto godliness: for bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation. For to this end we labor and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe.”
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LORD’S SUPPER
CLED E. WALLACE

During the lifetime of the apostles and the years immediately following, there were thousands of churches of Christ scattered throughout the Roman Empire, and these thousands assembled on the first day of the week to break bread or partake of the Lord’s Supper. And today, after the passage of many centuries, churches patterned after the ancient order, thousands of them, meet on the same day, the first day of the week, and go through the same observance.

What does it all mean? Is there any significance attached to the fact that on a stated day, and often a stated hour, hundreds of thousands of devout people throughout the world taste a bit of bread and sip some grape juice, or drink a bit of wine? Believe as you will concerning its origin and significance, some rational explanation must be made of the fact that such is being done. Who started it, and why was it begun? Is it a vain hope and faith that they entertain who observe the institution? Are they merely the dupes of a traditional hoax? The observance of the Lord’s Supper is so closely related to the facts of the gospel—namely, that ‘Christ’ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures—that no one can consistently partake of the elements of the Supper who does not believe these fundamental facts. Nor could any one ever do so. It is a matter of fact that from Pentecost on, the thousands of believers who partook of “the cup of the Lord” and “the table of the Lord” (I Cor. 10:21) looked on that partaking as “a communion of the blood of Christ” and “a communion of the body of Christ.” (I Cor. 10:16) The apostles themselves entertained this faith. Saul of Tarsus, the chief persecutor of the church, accepted this faith. They all believed that the blood of Jesus which was shed on the cross was “poured out for many unto remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28), and that propitiation for sin must be “through faith, in his blood” (Rom. 3:25); and they entered into this “communion” of the blood and body of the Lord on the first day of the week because they believed that on that day He really and literally arose from the dead. This was the faith of the Christians we read about in the New Testament. Were they dishonest? Were they deceived? The very circumstances connected with their faith demand a negative answer to both of these questions. The first ‘Christians’ were terribly in earnest—so much so that they would surrender their lives to retain their faith. They could not have been the victims of a hoax. The Lord’s Supper is a standing and imperishable monument, a guarantee that the facts of the gospel are substantial. This all suggests an interesting deduction. A modernist cannot partake of the Lord’s Supper. He does not believe as the early Christians did, and it is out of place for him to ever touch the bread and wine of the communion service. He does not believe as the early Christians did, and none between them ever heard of such a thing. Abraham and Moses were as ignorant of such a thing as they were of the rants of infants in the name of Jesus. It just wasn’t when they lived. A memorial institution does not exist and proclaim its monumental meaning before the thing it memorializes takes its place among the things of history. It was fitting that Jesus should introduce the disciples to its significance on the night of the betrayal, when the very next day Calvary was to witness the blood of atonement. For centuries men had been familiar with sacrifice, the shedding of animal blood, priesthood and ritual, circumcision and feast days, together with a multitude of “carnal ordinances imposed until a time of reformation.” But before the cross we find no eating and drinking at the table of the Lord in His kingdom. This belonged to the “time of reformation,” the substance, of which the former things were only a shadow. The Lord’s Supper is more than a “church ordinance,” making use of a common term. It suggests that we cannot go behind the cross to find the Lord’s church established. The church consists of Christians, all of them, and they are all entitled to eat at the Lord’s table. It is their birthright, for they were born into the kingdom of the Lord. They remember the Lord, discern His body and His blood, as they eat at His table in His kingdom.

THE TIME OF ITS ORIGIN

The very nature of the Lord’s Supper rather accurately points to the time of its origin. It is a memorial of the body and blood of the Lord, of the death on Calvary. “This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me.” (I Cor. 11:24, 25.) It points forward as well as backward. “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord’s death till he come.” (I Cor. 11:26.) It cannot, then, look forward any greater distance than the coming of the Lord, and it cannot look back any farther than the cross of Calvary. Its observance must be confined to the period between the death of Christ and His coming to raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. If Jesus is to reign a thousand years on earth, as some contend, and do so in person after He comes again, the Lord’s Supper will not be one of the observances of that reign. The character of the ordinance would have to be changed to fit such a reign, and it would then become a new and different institution. “And I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” (Luke 22:29, 30.) This is what Jesus said to His disciples at the time of the institution of the Lord’s Supper. Christians “partake of the table of the Lord” in the kingdom that now is, and apostolic authority is the recognized authority in the true Israel of God.

It was at the close of the last Jewish Passover Supper, before the law was nailed to the cross, that Jesus took the bread and the cup and gave thanks and invited the twelve to eat and drink, and explained to them the meaning of the new institution which was being born. Before this time no holy man, priest, rabbi, or prophet had ever thought of such a thing. Neither Adam nor John the Baptist ever partook of the Lord’s Supper, and none between them ever heard of such a thing.

The Bible Banner publishes facts no other paper publishes.
The minds of millions of men and women are clouded on the supreme question, What shall I do with Jesus? By other questions such as this: Which church shall I join? or, Is it necessary to be identified with any church in order to please God and be saved?

In these questions it is rightly assumed that one ought to please God, and not simply seek to please himself or other men, by his course of life. "The whole duty of man is to fear God and keep his commandments." (Eccl. 12:13.)

It is right to do one's duty. It is certainly wrong and sinful to fail to do our duty; and sin separates man from God. All who profess to believe the Bible will cheerfully agree that it is right to obey Christ. "Christ now has all authority in heaven and on earth." (Matt. 28:18.) "We are under law to Christ." (I Cor. 9:21.) Christ, then is Lawgiver as well as Savior. He must be obeyed. "Though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation." (Heb. 5:8,9.) He earned the right to require obedience as well as belief. "He became obedient to the Father's will even unto death, yea, the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:8.)

If we can settle it in our minds that one ought to do right; and that it is right to obey Christ, the answers to many other questions will come out of the settling of this one.

It is a proposition which ought to be clear to even a casual reader of the Bible that the only book in the world from which one can learn what Christ commands, is the New Testament of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This is in force now, since the death of Christ. (Heb. 9:16,17.) His death repealed the law of Moses, the Old Testament. (Col. 2:14-17; Heb. 10:9,10.) We are not under the law to Moses. (Rom. 6:14; I Cor. 9:20.) After His resurrection, Jesus gave the world-wide, everlasting commission to His apostles. This commission is an epitome of the New Testament. Jesus in this commission states the conditions on which He offers us the forgiveness of sins. The gospel was to be preached. Men were required to believe it, to repent of their sins and to be baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16; Luke 24:46,47.) His royal promise, "He shall be saved," or shall receive the remission (forgiveness) of his sins, is made to those who obey Him by humbly submitting to these conditions, All agree that to believe is a "must" requirement. (Heb. 11:6.) But so also is repentance. (Acts 11:18;17:30,31; Luke 13:3.) But He who said believe and repent also said, "Be baptized for the remission of your sins." (Acts 2:38.) He said to Saul of Tarsus, "It shall be told thee what thou must do." (Acts 9:6.) He was told, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." (Acts 22:16.)

On the day of Pentecost, the day of the beginning of the preaching under the gospel commission, when men heard Peter preach and had been told what to do, the record says, "Then they that gladly received his ward were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41.) If you refuse to be baptized, you reject the word of the Lord. (Luke 7:29,30.) They had been commanded to repent and be baptized for (unto R. V., the scholarship of the world) the remission of their sins. (Acts 2:38.) They had been exhorted, "Save yourselves." Those who obeyed these commands are immediately referred to as "all who believed." (Acts 2:44.)

We know, then, that the command was addressed to the unsaved. The people who thus obeyed Christ are called the church, in the New Testament. When you obey Christ, you become a member of His body, the Church. The same process that saves you makes you a member of the church you read about in the New Testament. Christ is the builder of it (Matt. 16:18;); He bought it with His blood (Acts 20:28;) in it He reconciles men to God (Eph. 2:16.); We are baptized into one body. (I Cor. 12:13;) We are baptized into Christ. (Gal. 3:27;) It is absurd to talk about baptizing a Christian into Christ, and it would be absurd to talk about being saved out of Christ. You must obey Christ in order to be saved. Obedience to Christ makes one a Christian. Christians constitute the body of Christ.

Have you obeyed Christ? Do you expect to be saved in disobedience? Christ will come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that obey not the gospel. (II Thess. 1:7,9.) Why not obey Him? Why not go today and obey Him and be saved; become a Christian; then be faithful unto death that you may receive the crown of eternal life? (I Pet. 4:15,16; Rev. 2:10.)

Why not obey the truth you know? And then study the New Testament to learn your duty? Be what it tells you to be. Do what it tells you to do. Thus follow Christ. Faith that obeys, saves. If you haven't faith enough to believe what God says about baptism and to be baptized because God commands it, you haven't the faith that saves. Baptism is a stumbling-block placed at the door of God's kingdom to keep unbelievers out. We, too, must pass our Gethsemane and say, "Not my will, but thine be done." Why reject Jesus? "Why will ye die?"
A Kingdom Picture

JESSE A. MADDUX

The writer desires to call attention to the parable found in
Luke 19:12-18. Verse 11 clearly declares that Jesus gave this
parable to the people because they thought that the kingdom
of God should immediately appear. So it must be a picture of
the kingdom of God, or He failed in His purpose of correcting
their misapprehension of the time when the kingdom should
appear. Did the Master intend to give them a picture of His
going away from this world to heaven, to receive His king-
dom, or of His coming from heaven to earth to receive His
kingdom? He said that a certain nobleman went into a far
country to receive a kingdom. He was here on earth, nigh to
Jerusalem, when He spoke those words. Did He mean that he
named the nobleman went to a far country? If He did, why did He not
say so? He said "went away." He went up as Daniel said He would. (Dan.
7:19-16.) He was escorted before the Ancient of Days, as Daniel fore-
told. His apostles saw Him disappear in the cloud, and Daniel
saw the clouds bring Him near before the throne. He received
His kingdom. He fulfilled His Father's "good pleasure" as
spoken in Luke 12:32, and sent that kingdom (rule, reign,
dominion) down to the "little flock" (Luke 12:32).

There were very many of the Jews who refused to be ruled
by Him. They "would not have this man to rule over them.
But He has ruled and will continue to rule over all them who
will "suffer Him to rule over them." He will return to reckon
with all to whom He brought, revealed, and dispensed the glo-
rious privileges of salvation. He will find some to have faith-
fully handled His affairs, while others have failed. Those who
refused Him and who failed to use their opportunities, will "be
slain."

Is the foregoing picture one of what happened when Christ
left this earth and of what shall take place when He comes
again, or is it a view of what shall happen when He leaves
heaven and comes again? There is not a word in the Bible
that teaches He will ever set foot on earth again. But if this
is a picture of His coming back to earth, we then have the
following: (1) Christ (the nobleman) leaves heaven (the far
country); (2) He comes to Jerusalem (earth) to receive His
kingdom; (3) Some (in heaven) will not have Him to rule over
them (the Jews); (4) When He leaves heaven He will give
talents to people there; (5) After receiving His kingdom when
He arrives at Jerusalem (far country) He then returns to
where He was (in heaven); (6) There He finds some have been
faithful, some slothful (in heaven); (7) Some of them had been
wicked servants (in heaven); (8) He approves the good,
condemns the bad, and orders all slain (the Jews) who would
not have Him rule over them.

If Christ is coming back to this earth to establish a king-
dom, the latter picture must be the true one. The truth is:
When He left earth 1,900 years ago, He went to heaven to re-
cieve His kingdom. He left His people on earth with the gospel
and its ordinances. He will return some day and reckon with
all.

Does "And" Mean "Even"?

FEIX G. TARBOT

One of the popular tricks of those who attempt to evade
the force of the statement of Jesus to Nicodemus, "Except a
man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into
the kingdom of God," is to say that water does not mean water,
but that it is used as a symbol of the Spirit. In support of
this view John 7:38,39 is introduced, which reads: "He that
believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly
shall flow rivers of living water. (But this he spake of the
Holy Ghost, which was not given; because that Jesus was not
yet glorified.)" Of course, it must be admitted that "rivers
of living water" here symbolize the Holy Spirit, but this does
not mean that water is always symbolical. We could not sub-
stitute Spirit for water everywhere water is found. To say
"John was baptizing in Aenon because there was much Spirit
there" would be rather improper. Did the rich man in Hades
mean that he wanted Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in
Spirit and cool his tongue? Such a substitution would make
Jesus say, "Except a man be born of Spirit and of Spirit,"
which would be senseless repetition.

But here is the main argument growing out of the above
evansions. "Water means Spirit, and kai which is translated
and in John 3:5 sometimes means even; so the verse should
read, "Except a man be born of water even of the Spirit he
cannot enter the kingdom of God." Thayer's Greek-English
Lexicon, in its many shades of meaning which it attributes to
the conjunction kai, says, "Before a comparative it augments
the gradation, even, still, (Germ. Noch.)" Matt. 11:9 (John
14:12)." The verses cited read: "But what went ye out for
to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you and (kai), more than
a prophet. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth
on me, the work that I do shall he do also; and (kai) greater
works than these shall he do."
The reader can readily see that kai is used in the sense that it could mean even in these
verses, but it is used before such words as more and greater
which are comparatives. There is no comparative in John 3:5
and Thayer gives even as a definition of kai only when it is
used before a comparative.

Our attention may be called to such passages as Rom.
15:6 and Eph. 1:3, The Greek in these two passages reads the same
but the English renderings are as follows: "God, even the
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and "God and the Father
of our Lord Jesus Christ." The comparative or the ascensive
is understood in these passages. God is not only God, He is
more than God; He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

edited by H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey (both Baptists),
we are told that "three generally accepted classifications and
meanings for kai are: as transitional or continuative-and; as
adjunctive-also; and as ascensive-even." When kai is used in
the sense of our English even, it is a "stepping stone" upward
(ascensive) from one plane to a higher plane. By no stretch
of the imagination could we make it a step upward from Spirit
to Spirit, which would be true if water means Spirit in John
3:5, and if and means even.

Substitute even for and and see if the above mentioned argu-
ments will stand up under this exposure. "He that believeth
even is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16.) "Repent even
be baptized." (Acts 2:38.) It can readily be seen that the word
kai is rendered even in these passages only when it suits
the peculiar doctrine espoused by those who would thus change
it, and they would not be willing to accept such change when
those changes did not favor their tenets.
"By nature the children of wrath even as others." (Eph. 2:4.) The Baptists say this means baby nature, that is, we are born children of wrath. We are all children of wrath by generation, they say, because of Adam's sin.

To be saved we must be regenerated, they say, and I can agree with them on this point. But what does the word "regenerate" mean? There is just one thing that it can mean; it brings us back to the line of generation. To generate, says Webster, is to procreate, propagate, to produce a creature similar to its parents. In the word "regenerate" we have the prefix re, which simply means again; therefore, the word means to create again, or be born again, as the Lord said to Nicodemus, who wanted to enter the kingdom on his old birth.

But the prefix re implies a previous degeneration, and it merely undoes the effects of degeneration. The prefix de takes man below the line of generation, and the prefix re brings him back to it, and leaves him at the line of generation. Now he is generated a child of wrath, according to the Baptists, and he is totally depraved, they say, and not capable of even a good thought. That is how he is when he is born—he is a child of the devil, and as bad as the devil himself, for the devil can be no more than totally depraved.

Now, he must be even worse than the devil when he degenerates, for he was as bad as the devil when he was generated. He must, therefore, be worse than totally depraved when he degenerates. But now the Spirit comes, say the Baptists, and regenerates this child of the devil. Regeneration only undoes the degeneration, and brings the man back to the line of generation, and leaves him there. This is the force of the three words, and they cannot do more than that. Generation produces a creature like its parents, degeneration takes him below the line of generation, and regeneration brings him back to it.

Then, what have we according to the Baptist doctrine? The child is generated, or born, totally depraved, as bad as the devil. He degenerates and gets worse than the devil, worse than totally depraved. He is regenerated, and brought back to the line of generation, back to total depravity, and made as good as the devil, and then the Baptists vote on him and take him into their church, in full fellowship, with all other members.

According to Baptist doctrine every member of their own church is totally depraved, as bad as the devil, which would make the Baptist Church nothing but an association of devils. If they don't believe that, then they don't believe their own doctrine, and should quit preaching such foolish things.

To illustrate this argument draw a straight line on the blackboard. This is the line of generation; the child was like this when he was born, and they say he was totally depraved, and a child of the devil when he was born. Now he degenerates, for without degeneration we can have no regeneration. The line of degeneration descends below the line of generation, like this line. Now regeneration takes hold of him at this point and leads up to the line of generation, but it cannot take him above it, for then he would be above generation. And this is where the Baptists say he is saved, at the end of regeneration, still totally deprived, a child of wrath, and as bad as the devil.

But what does the Bible teach on this point? Jesus said of little children, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," and again He said that we must "be converted and become as a little child" to enter the kingdom of heaven. If we can learn what kind of folks are in the kingdom of heaven we can know what state the little child is in when it is born, or generated. Those in the kingdom have been washed and cleansed from all sin by the blood of Christ, says Paul. Then the child when born, or generated, is not a child of wrath.

But later this child grows up, and falls into sin, then it degenerates, and becomes a child of wrath, but I would not say it is even now totally depraved. I leave that for the Baptists to say, but it is a sinner, and under just condemnation. Now he is regenerated, and brought back to this line of generation, which makes him like the little child, and fit for the kingdom through the blood of Christ. That is how my Bible teaches it, and I am glad it does.

The word "nature" as used by Paul in the passage does not mean nature by birth, but nature by practice. It was the practice of sin that made them children of wrath, and not a birth over which they had no control. Nature teaches us that it is a shame for a woman to sing her hair, Paul said, and nature teaches that it is a shame for a man to wear long hair like a woman, but not baby nature, like the Baptists teach.

The little child is like a man who is saved by the blood of Christ, said the Master, and I am glad He did. Now, I know the little child is safe, and just as pure as the blood-bought saint, and not totally depraved like the Baptists teach.

JESUS AND THE CHILDREN

Infant riantism is a substitute for the personal obedience the Lord requires in commanding believers to be baptized. Maybe your dear mother did bear you gently to a priest or a minister and have your forehead touched with his damp finger when you were so young you cannot now remember. The Lord will not accept it in lieu of your personal obedience. There is not a command, example, or necessary inference in the New Testament justifying the sprinkling of water on even one infant. Infants cannot believe, do not need to repent, and not one scriptural reason has ever been offered for either riantizing or baptizing them. A postmaster in a Texas town, and a devout Methodist, cited me to the story of Jesus and the children as though the case were plainly made out in his favor. "Then there were brought unto him little children, that he should lay his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 19: 13-15.) It is quite strange with what facility religionists can find water where there is none at all, and cannot find any at all in such an expression as "born of water" in John 3:5. When Jesus laid his hands on the children and prayed, they see clear authority for a preacher sprinkling water on a baby, although such a thing is not remotely implied in the text; but when they read that "we were buried therefore with him through baptism into death" (Rom. 6:4), they cannot imagine even one drop of water. A strange perverseness has taken hold of the hearts of the people. We wonder if we are not justifying in bringing the language of Jesus down to date: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them." (Matt. 13:15.) Religious bias can cause a man to see a thing in a text which is not there, and he ought not therefore to see, and it can blind his eyes to something which is there, and which he therefore ought to see. He ought to be able to see, for instance, that Jesus did not consider that these "little children" were totally depraved by birth. His language is most interesting when compared with that of Calvinistic dogma. —Cled E. Wallace.
SECTARIAN PHRASEOLOGY

P. W. STONESTREET

The Gospel Advocate of July 8, 1943, carries an article by E. W. Stovall under the caption, "Who Baptizes in the Name?" In contrast with some highly commendable teaching of the article, Brother Stovall says: "Most all of the religious world believes in some form of baptism, the Quakers excepted."

Knowing Brother Stovall quite favorably, I feel perfectly sure that he conceives the truth on the subject in spite of what he says. I am therefore not dealing with his conception, nor with what he may have meant, nor with his evident good intentions; instead, I am dealing with what he said. If, as he claims, so great a part of "the religious world believes in some form of baptism," why be a stickler for a mere "form of baptism"? If sprinkling, pouring and immersion are forms of baptism, then what is baptism? The truth is, sprinkling and pouring are not "forms of baptism" at all, except in a purely sectarian sense. Biblically they constitute entirely different acts to that of baptism. True, "much of the religious world believes in something that it erroneously calls baptism," but that is the width of the poles from the above quotation.

Another statement in the article is: "My observation of every baptism, regardless of the mode or method, is that the preacher pretends to do it 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'"

Yes, and such preachers perform such acts "in the name of" the trinity in precisely the same sense that Brother Stovall refers to such acts as a "form," a "mode," and a "method" of baptism; and that is, the sectarian sense. All who practice sprinkling and pouring are in perfect agreement with such phraseology; "it is right down their alley."

The following statement in the article is highly commendable: "The definition of the expression 'in the name of' as given by the dictionary is 'by the authority of.'" Also: "To baptize 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost' will necessitate that all who do so find the thing they practice authorized by the sacred three. Any failure to do this will necessarily void the act, and it cannot be 'in the name of.'"

The foregoing scriptural and timely observations show plainly that the author of that article conceives the truth on what it is to truthfully baptize in the name of the sacred three. Hence the surprise is, in the first place, that one so well informed would resort to sectarian terms to explain that truth; and in the second place, that the vigilant editor of the Gospel Advocate did not notice it with a clarifying editor's note, especially since it is published on the editorial page. Divine truth is not dependent upon purely sectarian terms to explain it; it is worthy of better treatment. Besides, sectarianism can never be corrected in speech that is peculiar to sectarianism; it thrives on such speech.

There is an important distinction to be made between the application of terms that originated with sectarians for purely sectarian ends on the one hand, and phraseology that is not peculiar to sectarians on the other. For example, since several local churches exist in the same city or area, the expression, "My church," is not necessarily sectarian. Even when a sectarian says "my church" without local church significance, but simply to indicate identification with a denomination, it means no more than such identity. The sin of sectarianism, then, is not in politely informing another of that fact, but in the fact itself. So the usual reply to that statement that, "I have no church," is not only wide of the mark, but is often considered rude, depending on one's audience.

In neither case does the expression "my church" indicate ownership any more than "my country," "my state," "my city," or "my neighborhood" indicates it. So far as the meaning of that expression is concerned, it would be perfectly in order for a Christian to reply: "My church is the one of which Christ is head." Hence, let us attack sectarianism itself, not the harmless figure of speech in which some identify themselves religiously. And may we thus distinguish between an unfortunate religious condition on the one hand, and a harmless statement of that condition on the other. And above all, may we refrain from applying approvingly the terms "mode" and "form" to baptism, for that application originated with pseudo-Baptists for purely sectarian ends. They needed just such phraseology to prevent people from realizing that sprinkling and pouring are not the act commanded by Inspiration.

The Premillennialist

May the Lord have compassion on that destitute soul,
Who is praying and looking for millennial dawn;
For the history of his life might have best been untold,
If at Judgment he's wrong, and his one chance is gone.

If the daddy of this dream was the only one involved,
It would still be most tragic; for the soul of one man
Is beyond the world's computing and the tiniest thought evolved
Will reach out to the rim of eternity's span.

If believing a lie by the very first pair
Brought death to our bodies, how great the despair,
For the souls of the thousands such a man has so fathered
Of whose destiny he seemingly not once has been bothered.

Of his followers are some who assuredly disavow
That they openly teach, lest they cause a big split;
In their conversations, though, they will allow
This insidious thing the church's vitals to hit.

If this doctrine, he says, is of private opinion,
It's impossible to see how there's harm to be done.
But he's stripping the Christ of His glory and dominion,
And denying the authority of our Father's own Son.

Will it matter, my friend, when the Judgment you face,
And some trembling lost soul, doomed to horror and woe,
Be consigned to all hell through eternity's space
Because, YOU, a premillennialist, told him so?

- Mr. S. John W. Hedge
ANENT THE "NATIONAL SERVICE COMMITTEE"

I have read with interest the recent articles in the Bible Banner by Brother Cled, R. L. Whiteside, and yourself.

I have conducted 58 public debates, having met some of the ablest men in denominational ranks, and some of the meanest.

When any man stoops to the plain of personalities and ugly statements it is because he is too little and weak to meet logical arguments. He loses for his cause and magnifies to the thoughtful his utter defeat.

No matter how ugly others may act, stay on the same high plain you have occupied and now occupy.

The Bible Banner grows better and better with age. May God's richest blessings rest upon you in your consistent and scriptural position with reference to a Christian's attitude toward war and his relation to civil government.

While Paul was "a Roman citizen and a Christian," I'm a citizen of the U. S. A. and also of the government of Christ. I appreciate my citizenship in both.

Keep the Bible Banner reading. The enemy is in retreat, and confused retreat at that.—WILL M. THOMPSON, Welling- ton, Texas.

First, I want to thank you for the Bible Banner which has been coming to me for several months. I enjoy it very much and especially the writings of you and Brother Cled. Just yesterday I received a request from the Jimmie Lovell group in California asking me to contribute to our boys who are conscientious objectors. To me a thing of this kind is laughable as I have a son in the Marines who just finished his basic training at San Diego, Calif. He writes me that he and thousands of others during a part of their training period have to double time of 20 miles in two hours, carrying a pack weighing 97¼ pounds. And they are doing this to make this a safe place in which to live.

I am enclosing a copy of an article I wrote for The Chevron some months ago. I am not sending this to display my ability as a writer as I can never hope to be in the class with you and Brother Cled. (I am only a farmer.) I just wanted you to see that your mind and mine runs in the same channel on this war question and the question of a (Christian doing his duty in time of trouble as well as in time of peace.

Please remember me to your family and Brother Cled.

Sincerely your brother in Christ.—J. E. BACIGALUPO, Gal- latin, Tenn.

Service Committee for Conscientious Objectors,
Los Angeles, California.

Gentlemen:

With two sons in the service of their country and another expecting a call any day to enter the armed forces of our coun-
are obliged to prove, that Christianity exempts Christians from such duties. I thank you for your research and able elaborations.

Brother H. Leo Boles is beginning to note the different forms of sin and evil as they classify according to the word of truth under the admonition given in II Tim. 2:15, for on the first page of the Gospel Advocate of June 17, he aptly declares: “Some sins have greater effects on society than others; some sins may be only in the limitations of one’s own heart and life; others may go out and effect for evil many people.”

Exactly! And if the sins of Hitler, with his gangster colleagues, were limited to his “own heart and life,” only the sword of the Spirit could be used scripturally against him; but since his sins “go out and effect for evil many people,” the literal sword, with all that it implies, is used scripturally against him with all the evil-doers he represents.

Thus, Brother Boles conceives and concedes the exact truth on this point. He defines the very nature of sin and evil against which temporal governments are divinely commissioned to fight. And it is to this kind of temporal government, of this kind of nature, with this kind of mission, against this kind of evil, that “every soul” is divinely commanded to “submit,” to “obey;” and it is “unto” this “good work” that Christians are admonished “to be ready.”—Tennessee.

COMMENTS AND COMMENDATIONS

I refuse to read your paper any longer without paying for it. I not only pronounce your paper good, but I am telling you that it stands at the top. God give us more men like Foy and Cled. Here is my dollar. God bless you in the great fight you are making against error.—R. C. LEDBETTER, Comanche, Texas.

The Bible Banner is fine. You are doing a great work. Hope you may be spared many years to continue your work of faith and labor of love.—JESSE W. STEPHENS, Modesto, Calif.

Have enjoyed the May Banner very much indeed. Brother Cled’s article, “Irritation Spread Over Three Pages,” is well written and fits the case nicely. Yours, “The War Question and Restoration History,” is appropriate and convincing, and I would say, as to attitude and spirit, faultless. These, together with the other good things that complete the issue, make it a banner number. The firm and kindly manner in which his ranting has been answered and rebuked should cause Brother Goodpasture to moderate his tune.—W. A. PHILLIPS, Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Brother Foy and Cled:

May you live long to keep up the splendid work you are doing so well. We read each issue with much interest and profit.—J. G. HARDeman, Henderson, Tenn.

I have thought for a long time I would write you a few lines just to tell you how much I appreciate your stand in the Bible Banner, in holding out for the truth in the long neglected fight against Premillennialism, and now I want to commend you for the same kind of stand against the doctrine that a Christian cannot defend his government and still be a Christian.

Brother Glen E. Green’s recent article, “The Christian in Government Versus the Sinner Only Theory,” is certainly well worth considering, and I don’t think it can be scripturally contradicted.

If those confused on this subject would take just two paragraphs of Brother Green’s article and understand it, they would be clear in this matter, I think.

First: “The truth of the matter is God has never ordained any particular civil government in toto, as a corporate body, but the institution of civil government as defined in Romans 13:1-7.”

Second: “Paul obeyed Caesar when he stayed in his God-ordained place. When Caesar got out of his place, and interfered with religion and the things of Christ, Paul obeyed God, and suffered for Christ’s sake. So ought we.”

I have reared three sons. They are all Christians and all are workers in the church wherever they are. They are all in the services of their country. I have studied this thing thoughtfully and prayerfully ever since the other world war, and I have no hesitancy to tell them, and all other young men serving their country in like capacity, do your duty whatever may come, and you will be safe in the promises of God.—HARL D. MANSUR (an elder of the church, Big Spring, Texas).

Accidently I picked up one of your magazines in an occultist’s office. I read it and became very interested.—MRS. HOWARD HICKERSON, Altamont, Tenn.

I will be grateful for a two-year subscription to your well written and worded “Banner.” Brother N. Z, Cross, 502 Gulf States Bldg., Dallas, loaned me your September, November and I believe June, 1942, Bible Banner. I have read them all very carefully and have been unquestionably helped by them. I pray for your continuance to speak the true Bible truth.—E. D. Cawwell.

Enclosed find a “limp” dollar bill for my sub. A few years ago I might have said “crisp” but that was then!

Please be assured of our intense interest in the subjects being discussed from time to time in the Banner. We appreciate the straightforward manner of expression.—J. E. WAINWRIGHT, Santa Monica, Calif.

I am enclosing a dollar for which you will please renew my subscription to the Banner for another year.

My wife and I enjoy reading the Bible Banner more than any other paper that comes into our home.

I wish to commend you and Brother Cled for the very fine articles you have published on the relation of Christians to Civil Government. Also I think you are doing a splendid job in your exposure of Bolism.

We eagerly look forward to the arrival of each copy of the Banner and wife joins me in wishing for you the best of health and ability to keep up the fight for sound doctrine in the Church of our Redeemer.—DR. U. G. LITTELL, Santa Ana, Calif.
THE SIN OF ADDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

CLED E. WALLACE

The word of God represents the wisdom of God, the power of God, and the love of God. God has revealed His will to man in the Bible. He has fully outlined and described man’s duty to God and to his fellow man. No one knows the relationship that man sustains to God so well as God himself knew it. To change His word is to change the wisdom, will, and power of God. No sin has been condemned with more frequency and clearness than the sin of changing the word of God. Faith comes by hearing the word of God, and to change the word of God is to destroy the testimony of God upon which faith is founded. It is a high crime against God for man to change His word.

There are different ways by which man sins in changing the word of God. Man may add to the word of God, he may take from it, and he may make substitutions of man’s wisdom for it. Jehovah gave the warning through Moses to His people and said: “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you.” (Deut. 4:2.) Again, He said: “What thing soever I command you, that shall ye observe to do: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.” (Deut. 12:32.) Again, the Holy Spirit said through John: “I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.” (Rev. 22:18, 19.) These scriptures show that it was possible for man to add to and take from the word of God. They also teach that it is a fearful sin for man to so change the word of God. The prophet Isaiah warned the people by saying: “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!” (Isa. 5:20, 21.) This shows that it was possible for man to make substitutions, and put evil for good and good for evil, the wisdom of man for the wisdom of God. Again, the Holy Spirit condemned the sin of substituting something else for the word of God by saying: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preach unto you, let him be anathema.” (Gal. 1:8.)

Some think that the quotation from Revelation applies only to that book of the Bible. Truly it does have direct reference to that book, but it is equally true of all that God has said. No one would claim that God has forbidden men to add to or take from the book of Revelation, but permits him to add to and take from other books of the Bible. Man is not permitted to touch with profane hands the word of God and change or modify it in any way.

The whole tenor of the teachings of Jesus warns men against changing the word of God. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.” (Matt. 7:21.) This means that one cannot reject the word of God and enter heaven; one cannot please God except by doing the will of God. The will of God stands between everyone and heaven. This will cannot be set aside; it cannot be added to nor taken from. The will of God must be obeyed by all who would journey the narrow way. Jesus warned the people of that generation and of all generations when He said: “Ye hypo-
law. Through Moses He had revealed His will to the people, that if any one developed leprosy, that person must be put out of the camp seven days. Although Moses knew that law, he prayed for God to ignore His will and “heal Miriam, and heal her now.” But God said to Moses: “Let her be shut out of the camp seven days.” (Num. 12:14.) Then, regardless of how good the man who prays may be, God will not answer his prayer unless he asks according to the will of God. God will not set aside His plainly revealed law to answer the prayer of any man who prays contrary to it.

And that principle still holds true today. With respect to the salvation of lost men God has revealed His will in His word. He has told sinners plainly what to do to be saved. Jesus, in the language of the great commission, said: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark 16:16.) He has never promised salvation to men upon faith alone. It is not merely “he that believeth” but “he that believeth and is baptized” that is promised salvation. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, said: “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” (Acts 2:38.) Thus the will of God concerning sin is just as plainly revealed in the New Testament as His will concerning leprosy was revealed in the Old Testament. Suppose I should ignore that will, just as Moses did, and pray to God for sinners as men do today, would the Lord answer my prayer? He has commanded sinners to repent and be baptized, but suppose I go to God and pray like this: “Save them now, 0 God, I beseech thee.” That would be parallel to the prayer of Moses. He said: “Heal her now, 0 God, I beseech thee.” I say: “Save them now, 0 God, I beseech thee.” So the prayers are similar. To answer Moses’ prayer would be to set aside His law on leprosy; to answer my prayer would be to set aside His law concerning sin and salvation. And God would no more answer my prayer than he would answer the prayer of Moses. Both are contrary to His will. It would have been perfectly all right for Moses to pray for his sister, but to pray for God to heal her while they were disobeying His law was not right. It is all right for me to pray for sinners, but for me to pray for God to save them now while in disobedience to His commandments for them is rebellion against the will of God. Paul prayed that his brethren, the Israelites, might be saved. (Rom. 10:1-3.) But he did not pray for God to save them while they were refusing to submit to the righteousness of God and were going about to establish their own righteousness. Paul’s prayer involved their giving up their own way and submitting to God’s way. And so it must be with me when I pray for sinners. Let us pray that they may submit to the will of God, for in no other way can they ever be saved. But let us not ask contrary to the will of God and beseech Him to save them in their rebellion against Him. Remember that John said: “If we ask anything according to his will he heareth us.” But do not expect an answer if you ask out of harmony with His will.
God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him. "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." (John 20: 30, 31.) Jesus fed five thousand men with a little boy's lunch; he walked on the water; he opened the eyes of a man born blind; and he raised Lazarus from the dead. So John declares. And his record stands up under the closest scrutiny as to its genuineness, integrity, and credibility. If it is not true history, then such was never written. Historical criteria vindicate it and establish its truthfulness. Christ claimed to be divine, that he was older than Abraham, came from God, and was going back to God. And he "was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. 1: 4.) So declares Paul. The empty tomb is material evidence. It was sealed with a Roman seal and guarded by a large number of Roman soldiers with the body of Jesus within it. And on the third morning it was empty. Over five hundred witnesses saw him and identified him after he arose from the dead. The eleven apostles, who had been with him for years, were among the number. Paul was one. Seeing and hearing Jesus changed him from chief of sinners to chief of missionaries. These witnesses were neither mistaken nor dishonest. If material evidence is what honest doubters want, we can readily change them into believers, or put a prefix on "honest" and change it into "dishonest." The evidence is plenty strong to make believers out of honest people. A man who thinks Jesus was an impostor ought to be able to believe that Robert E. Lee wrote the Proclamation of Emancipation, and that George Washington surrendered to Cornwallis at Yorktown, and that Andrew Jackson was a Tory.

The Main Point

"Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." (Luke 17: 3.) This is the language of the Lord, and he further says that if "thy brother" should sin against you seven times in one day, and should seven times ask your forgiveness, you must accord it to him. (Luke 17: 1-4.) Troubles are bound to come, and many will be caused thereby. Some will stumble, some of the Lord's own "little ones" will become discouraged and fall. The guilty cause of it all would have been better favored had he not been born, or had he been cast into the sea with a big rock hanging to his neck, than to have been the principal in such diabolical activities. The unity and peace of mind of the Lord's children are sacred, and must not be needlessly disturbed. I must not rebuke the brother who sins against me, for the sake of revenge, or any personal pleasure I may derive from it. Such motives make me as great a sinner as he. "And if thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." The main point is this: "Thou hast gained thy brother." You do not go to him for personal satisfaction. You go to him for the sake of his own soul. If his offense is not great enough to endanger his soul, then you can afford to ignore it and not mention it, either to him or others. The main point is to help the erring brother. A man must be a Christian, indeed, to keep this main point in mind. If there is nothing more involved than a little ruffling of your false pride, and possibly you are a sensitive soul, and you stir up a lot of fuss over that, then you are a big baby or worse. What a lot of trouble big babies can stir up in the church! If the recalcitrant sinner against you will not listen to you and is hell bent in spite of you, call to your assistance one or two others, and finally the whole church, if need be; but don't forget that the main point is to keep him out of hell. If he sins against you, and you get ven-

gance by getting him classified by the church, "as the Gentile and the publican," then you have not saved him at all. He has succeeded in making you a partaker of his sin. Perhaps the Lord's rule for the settlement of personal difficulties would be applied oftener, if it did not require such an unselfish interest in the welfare of the other party. It is a lot easier to hate him.

A Sorry Alibi

Occasionally, an otherwise good man will get mixed up in a lot of church trouble, and while the worst side of his nature is all agitated, will violate about everything that Christ and the apostles say about seeking peace and pursuing it. Christ says: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God" (Matt. 5: 9.) When the peace of a church has been broken up, and the ghost of division stalks about like living tragedy, the disturbances of the peace barricade themselves behind plausible alibis. Elijah and Paul and all other great servants of God have been trouble makers. All peacemakers are trouble makers, and Jesus really meant: "Blessed are the trouble makers: for they shall be called sons of God." Ergo, black is white. It is a sorry alibi for a guilty disturber of the peace, and withal, a very convenient shelter in which a guilty conscience may be whited over. You do not stand to lose a penny, if you offer a large reward for a trouble maker who does not compliment himself too highly, but compares himself with Elijah and Paul. They are all martyrs for conscience sake. And to answer some possible correspondence in advance, this applies to all who have acted this way, are doing so, or who are likely to do so in the future. If there is no such case, never has been, nor ever will be, then this much of my page this week is a total loss.

He Needed Conversion

It was Felix, the Roman governor of Judea, who held Paul a prisoner in Cesarée for two years. He was a murderer and an adulterer and guilty of all sorts of corruption in office. His chief interest in Paul was the hope that he might extort money from him or his friends as the price of freedom. "Rut after certain days, Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus." This guilty pair needed conversion, and there was hope for them in the gospel. Paul made a sincere and a masterful effort to convert them. It did not occur to Paul that Felix was nonelect and eternally and irrevocably reprobate by virtue of a divine decree dating back beyond the ages; nor that he was totally depraved by birth and incapable of receiving the truth without the direct enabling power of the Holy Spirit. He preached the truth to him just as though he considered him a free and responsible man. "And as he reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was terrified." God did as much for him as he does for any other sinner. Felix heard the gospel and was conscious of his power to either accept or reject it. He was moved by it, but deliberately hardened his heart against it and remained in sin. Had he obeyed the truth, God would have pardoned all his sins. All talk of restricted election, partial atonement, total depravity, and direct operations is beside the point. It belongs to the field of speculative theology. Paul says: "... there is no respect of persons with God." (Rom 2: 8-11.) There are no alibis. Felix and Drusilla are alone to blame for the perdition which will envelop them throughout eternity. God holds no reserved power to be used on those who reject the gospel. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to