SOME OLD DOCTRINES RESTATED AND EXAMINED

R. L. WHITESIDE

Direct Supernatural Influence

The theory advocated by many denominations that a sinner can do nothing till he is regenerated by a direct operation of the Spirit is a stupefying and blighting doctrine. There are recorded instances in which it seems certain that direct supernatural power was exerted on sinners, but in no case did such direct influence change the character of the sinner.

Pharaoh, King of Egypt, had two dreams; both had the same significance. (Gen. 41:1-36). Joseph, having been called in to interpret the dreams, said to Pharaoh, “What God is about to do he hath declared unto Pharaoh.” (v. 25). “What God is about to do he hath showed unto Pharaoh.” (v. 28). “And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh, it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.” (v. 32). Hence, the dream was the result of supernatural influence, but nothing is said about any change in the King’s character: neither was there any change in the character of the King’s butler as a result of his inspired dream—he immediately ignored his obligation to Joseph. (Gen. 40:9-23, 41:9).

When the children of Israel were settled in Canaan, the men went to a specified place three times a year to attend the feasts required by law; and yet they were surrounded by enemy nations, who took advantage of any opportunity to invade their country. What an opportunity when all the men were gone from their homes! Three times a year their wives, children, and property were without the protection of fighting men, and yet there was no enemy invasion while the men attended the feasts. Jehovah gave them this assurance: “Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou goest up to appear before Jehovah thy God three times in the year.” (K. 34:24). Jehovah exercised a direct influence on the desires of these enemies at stated times, but it made no change in their character. They did not even know that the God of Israel operated on their desires, and controlled their movements, at such times. May not Jehovah even now, when he so desires, exercise a like control over men and nations?

Balaam’s case is another striking illustration of the truth that direct, supernatural influence does not renew the heart or change the character. (Read Numbers, Chapters 22-24). When the children of Israel, in their journey to Canaan, reached the borders of Moab, Balak, the King, and all Moab were frightened, Balak sent for Balaam to come and
curse them, promising Balaam great reward. **Balaam wanted the** reward, but he knew God would be in control of what he said. (22:20, 35, 38). "The Spirit of God came upon him." (24:2). He tried repeatedly to get Jehovah to curse Israel through him, so that he could receive the reward Balak had promised him—he "loved the hire of wrong-doing; but he was rebuked for his own transgression: a dumb ass spake with a man's voice and stayed the madness of the prophet." (II Pet. 2:15,16). As the Lord would not allow him to pronounce any curses upon Israel, he went amongst them and corrupted both their religion and their morals. (Num. 3:16; Rev. 2:14). And so this direct spiritual influence did not regenerate him, nor prevent his becoming more and more degenerate, till he was finally slain by the people he tried to curse for pay. (Ex. 31:8). And by the direct power from heaven Balaam's ass spoke with the voice of a man, but no change in his character or habits.

A rather interesting bit of history is recorded in I Sam. 6:1-16. The Philistines had captured the Ark of God, and had carried it unto their own country. The **Philistines** suffered many plagues, and decided that it was because of the ark. They asked their priests and diviners what to do. Their advice: Make a new cart, take two milch cows on which a yoke had never been placed, and hitch them to the cart, and shut their calves up at home. No one was to control the movements of the cows. If they went the right direction, the Philistines would know their troubles had been brought upon them by Jehovah. "An I the kine took the straight way by the way of Bethshemesh; they went along the highway, lowing es they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left." Evidently these heathen priests and diviners were influenced from above in giving their advice, and the cows were certainly controlled by Jehovah. If left to follow cow nature, these cows would never have left their calves. But this divine influence did not change the character of the heathen priests and diviners, nor the nature of the cows. Direct divine power was brought to bear on them, but changed them not.

Jehovah selected Saul to be the first King over Israel. He started out well, but soon became so involved in rebellion against Jehovah, that Jehovah disowned him. He became envious of David, and tried to kill him. David fled to Samuel at Ramah. Samuel and David then went to Naioth. Saul was told where David was. He then sent three groups of messengers, one after another, to bring David to him. There were prophets with Samuel and David. As each group of messengers came to the prophets, they also began to prophesy. These messengers went there to assist Saul in carrying out his murderous intentions; and yet "the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they prophesied." Then the degenerate Saul came to take David, and he also turned to prophet. Some people today would pronounce such a scene as that a great revival! But this direct operation of the Spirit on Saul and his messengers made no change in character or course of life. It was not intended to benefit them, but was done for David's sake. (See I Sam. 19:18-24).

One incident in the life of Nebuchadnezzar gives us another illustration of direct spiritual influence on a sinner, a heathen sinner. He had a dream, which bothered him greatly, for he could not interpret it. Daniel interpreted the dream. As the interpretation was from God, we know that the dream was from God also. In fact Daniel said to the King, 'There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and he hath made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days.' But this direct operation of the Spirit upon the sleeping King, made no change in him, for we next find him erecting a great image of gold and demanding that all worship it. Read Dan. 2:1-45; 3:1-23.

A direct operation of the Spirit does not make saints of sinners.

Read John 11:45-53. Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead; and, as a result many Jews be-
I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment: of sin, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you. (John 16:7-14).

Read carefully again. If, as many contend, sinners can be convicted of sin only by a direct impact of the Spirit on the heart, ho W would sending him to the apostles have anything to do with convicting the world? Jesus would send the Holy Spirit to the apostles; and when he came to them, he would convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. The Spirit in them would convict the world, and do this by guiding them in presenting the truth to the people. The passage cannot be made to fit the direct operation theory. When the Spirit came to the apostles, he was to speak, not from himself; “but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak.” The Holy Spirit would take possession of the vocal organs of chosen men, and by means of them speak to the people. On a former occasion Jesus told the apostles that they would be brought before authorities and gave them this assurance: ‘But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” (Matt. 10:17-20). In this way the Holy Spirit would speak, and in this way convict the world. To say that the Spirit could not in this way convict sinners is to limit the power of the Holy Spirit. One who respects the Holy Spirit will not disrespect the Holy Spirit by saying he cannot convict sinners with his words.

After Jesus arose from the dead, he commanded the apostles to make disciples by preaching the gospel to the nations. (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15, 16). By their own knowledge they would not know what to say. In their own wisdom and power, they would be helpless before an unbelieving world. So Jesus said to them:

‘Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead; the
third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of my father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:46-47).

"And being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence. They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority. But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:4-8).

"And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire: and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:1-4).

Jesus according to promise, had sent the Holy Spirit to these waiting apostles to guide them unto all truth; they were now clothed with power from on high; the Spirit was speaking through them in various languages, languages the apostles did not know; the Holy Spirit speaking through them would convict sinners; this was the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It was not a mere sprinkling of the Holy Spirit; they were completely overwhelmed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

"And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own language." (v. 6). The multitude came together after the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit. Many Jews were there from various parts of the Roman Empire, and spake the language of the people where they were born and grew up. They were amazed to hear these Galileans speaking in all the languages represented there. But they did not see the significance of this speaking in tongues, neither do many today see its significance. It shows that the only way the Holy Spirit intended to reach the various nations was through the apostles—through his word. We have recorded what the Spirit said through Peter, and its effect on the people. "Now when they heard this they were completely overwhelmed by the power of the Spirit. Words brought conviction to their hearts, so intense that they wanted to know what to do. Peter was not like many deluded preachers of today, he did not say, 'There is nothing you can do.' Promptly the Holy Spirit said through him, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Yes, there was something they could do about it; "and with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, save yourselves from this crooked generation. Then they that received his word were baptized." In the record of what occurred on this Pentecost day, we see exactly how the Holy Spirit convicted and converted sinners. And if a man were baptized in the Holy Spirit today, he would answer inquiring sinners exactly as the Holy Spirit did on that day.

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PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE CHURCH -- NO. 3

CLED E. WALLACE

I promise not to find any fault with the size of the crowd if you won't find any with the size of the preaching. We are really having a delightful time. I am enjoying every bit of it. I'd like to start off with a reading, which will suggest in some ways some things that I will say.

"They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord. And the report concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem; and they sent forth Barnabas as far as Antioch; who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord; for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith: and much people was added unto he Lord. And he went forth to Tarsus to seek for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."

When I read that passage, it reminds me, as it often does when I read the scriptures, of problems that face us. I mean they are problems to those of us who are jealous for the New Testament way, and who, like the apostle, fear that some will remove from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ.

RECOGNIZING A PROBLEM

Some people profess not to see any of these problems. Somebody, that either is smart or thinks he is, will say here are no problems, or he sees no problems in a situation of that sort. Well, I can understand why because you can't see a problem unless you know what the relationship of that situation is to something that makes it a problem.

In order to recognize problems we have to know what the New Testament order is. We have to know what Christianity is, what the Bible teaches. Any development, or situation, arising that threatens the integrity, or any vital characteristic of the. New Testament order becomes a problem. The New Testament, for instance, teaches that the church is a divine institution, divinely planned, divinely built, divine-ly ordered. Anything that casts a shadow upon its divinity, or anyway suggests that it is not divine, lowers it in dignity and character to the same level of some human order-well, that would become a problem.

When I find that the New Testament teaches that the church has such marks of identification as organization, doctrine, worship, practice, any development in the thought, in the teaching, in the practice of any member of the church that seriously affects its organization, doctrine, worship, and nature—that is what I mean by a problem. When something arises that threatens the fundamental integrity of the New Testament order, whether it is a problem to me or not depends in the first place on whether I know anything about the New Testament order or not, and in the next place whether I care anything about it or not.

Sometimes when a man says he sees no problem in such and such a development, the first impression I get is that it is a reflection on his loyalty to the truth, assuming that it is not pure ignorance on his part as to what the truth is. A man that knows and a man that cares, when something arises that threatens the church or its integrity, will get stirred up about it.

We have had a good deal to say about institutionalism. When we talk about institutionalism, somebody will say, "Well, what's wrong with it?" There isn't anything wrong with institutionalism in certain fields. We are all familiar with institutionalism in our government and in our social life, of one sort or another. As long as institutionalism, in its own particular fields, does not reflect upon or in any way interfere with any part of God's plan, it is purely a matter of expediency, and we are not concerned about it. But in religion it is a danger point that has been emphasized even by the pioneers who accepted the standard of where the Bible speaks we speak, and where the Bible is silent, we are silent: and who are jealous for the divine order. You know, here is the choice. God could have given us a system of institutionalism, or he could have revealed latitudes that would have left us free to develop along institutional lines; but in the New Testament, I find nothing bigger in the way of an organization than the local church. In other words, there is the body of Christ, the church in its widest significance, and then there is the local congregation. Now get this point—I have thought about it, and I think, in fact, I know I am right about it—that the specific mission of the church is preaching the gospel and secondarily, looking after the needs of the poor. Sometimes we call the one missionary work, and the other benevo-
lent work.

As for what is called educational work, Christian education, the church is in the Christian education business in the meetings that it holds, the preaching that it does, and in ‘the work of teaching that it carries on. That is educational work, and everything that God proposes to do along that line is done either through the zeal, and the consecration of the individual or through the local congregation. Anything in the way of institutionalism which fundamentally changes that, in the way of an institutional development, changes the divine plan just as certainly and just as definitely as Israel changed the divine order when they tired of the rule of the judges, making the character of Samuel’s sons and aides a pretext (and that’s all it was) and demanded a king to rule over them like the nations around them. What was the matter with them? It wasn’t Samuel, and it wasn’t Samuel’s sons; that offered a pretty good excuse, better than sometimes we have, but, you know, the fundamental trouble was that they were dissatisfied with God’s plan, they wanted something more impressive, they wanted something more in keeping with the times, and they said, “We will have a king.” When God diagnosed the proposition and announced the trouble, he said, “Samuel they have rejected me from being king over them.” When someone selects a method, what they call a method; when somebody selects something else as being more powerful, more potent than God’s plan, the trouble is rebellion against God, dissatisfaction with God’s plan.

THE MISSIONARY PROBLEM

I proposed tonight to have something to say about the missionary problem. You know early in my preaching life and I began preaching pretty soon after I was old enough to obey the gospel-early in my preaching life, I was deeply impressed by the important principle that Bible things ought to be called by Bible names. I remember when my father gave me a book, “The New Testament Church,” a compilation of editorials, by F. D. Srygley, in the Gospel Advocate as far back as 1899 and 1900. I think it is out of print, but it ought to be required reading for every preacher. I suspect I have read it a hundred times. Here was the main line of thought: If a man in religion is just what the Bible teaches him to be, the language of the Bible will describe him; like names and things. If a church is what the New Testament teaches, if it measures up to the demands of the New Testament in its identical characteristics, then the names and the terms will properly describe it. Anything that requires unscriptural names to describe is unscriptural itself; if it is scriptural, it can be set forth in scriptural language.

We use a lot of terms which I suppose can possibly be twisted into a scriptural significance, but I never was too much impressed with such big sounding terms as missionary tours, missionary journeys, and the like. I have always felt that Paul just went on a preaching trip. And we use a lot of these high sounding titles; we talk about mission work, and we talk about missionaries. Well, what is a missionary? I don’t believe I find the term in the Bible, but if he is a gospel preacher, he is just like any other gospel preacher, and if he is preaching to sinners why he is doing just what any other gospel preacher is doing: the only difference would be a matter of place and locality. When the commission was given, the Lord said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation.” He said it would begin in Jerusalem and spread out into Judea and Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth. It is amazing to see what happened. When the Holy Spirit came, the first thing that happened was a plain gospel sermon, introduced by miraculous phenomena, but Peter stood up with the other apostles and he preached, and they all preached — and it is still God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe— they preached and we ought to preach. There wasn’t any particular plan about it, if there was, it was the Lord’s.

THE PROBLEM OF A PLAN

You know nowadays why you’ve got to have a plan—and that’s another thing I remember, I don’t think it is prejudice—but F. D. Srygley, in those pointed editorials, fighting digression in those days, fighting the departures from the truth that led to the Christian church as it is now called-Brother Srygley rang the changes on the word “plan.” He said there never has yet been a departure from the New Testament order that wasn’t according to some “plan,” and when people get ready to get away from God’s way, why they begin to talk about a ‘plan,” and we’ve got to have a ‘plan.” Why in the New Testament they preached the gospel and there wasn’t anything particularly said about a plan. Peter and the apostles with him preached it in Jerusalem and thousands of people accepted it, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ teaching. There is something simple, direct and spontaneous about the whole thing. When persecution arose and the church was scattered, the record says they went everywhere preaching the word, and literally it means they—and that doesn’t mean the apostles: it doesn’t mean a body of men known as the clergy: it doesn’t mean a clan of professional preachers—they went everywhere evangelizing. You know, when a man, or a woman is a Christian, to the extent that they know the truth and to the degree
that they are zealous enough to talk about it and impart the knowledge of it to others, that is evangelizing. If a woman in her kitchen should teach her colored cook about the gospel and about Jesus Christ, she would be evangelizing, and performing her “mission” in the New Testament sense. They went everywhere evangelizing. There wasn’t any coordinated plan about it. The members of the church were scattered and wherever they went, wherever opportunity offered, they taught the truth, they told the story in a simple way. I don’t suppose any one of them could have passed an elementary examination in the “department of religion” in one of our schools. But they could tell about Christ, tell about the church, and teach people what to do to be saved. Everywhere they went, the hand of the Lord was with them, and people believed and turned to the Lord; were added to the Lord, and were told to cleave to the Lord. That’s the way it was.

Then I find Paul and Barnabas leaving Antioch and going down to the island of Cyprus, and on up to the mainland, preaching in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia, preaching and establishing churches. I don’t suppose it occurred to them that they were doing missionary work. They were just preaching the gospel and establishing churches. Paul went on up through Phrygia and Galatia on another tour, returned and confirmed or established the people in the faith, went through Macedonia and down to Athens and Corinth and back through Macedonia, and down to Jerusalem, back to Antioch, spent three years in Ephesus, and finally wrote that all creation under heaven was helped with the gospel. All this accomplished without any big drives for money, no concentrated accumulations of wealth, no institutionalism of any kind whatever, no denominational ecclesiastical set-ups, nothing except the individual Christian and the local congregation. Take the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria, with a concentrated population, without institutional machinery, without any “extra” organization or “plan”, nothing of the kind in the New Testament, they evangelized those lands. Could these New Testament churches cooperate? Yes, they could cooperate, but look how simple their cooperation was. Paul left Antioch—and I don’t even read in the New Testament where Antioch sponsored that work, whatever that means, but that is another word it looks like we are riding to death, “sponsor”-but anyway, Paul went from Antioch, he and Barnabas, with the blessings of the congregation, their fellowship, and I suppose their support. Later Paul wrote, in the midst of some rather severe trials, that no church-no church, possibly it was due to lack of opportunity, possibly it was due to absence of communication—but he said, no church had fellowship with him in the matter of giving and receiving but them only. The church in Philippi was helping Paul in that work. Let’s not forget—I can’t keep this preaching angle out of my mind—the tendencies, if they haven’t gone a lot farther than that, toward professionalism. A man gets a degree from some institution and takes charge of some church, feeling like he can even apply a referendum and a recall of wild democracy to get rid of elders, if it is necessary so that he can run the church.

**THE PREACHER-ATTITUDE PROBLEM**

When you talk about “mission” work and “missions,” you are really talking about preachers. One of the most essential things is, does the preacher have the right attitude? Do you find on the part of Paul or Barnabas, or any of these New Testament preachers, any spirit of compromise? Any yearning to fellowship any sort of error that is out of harmony with divine revelations? I recall one incident in a surprising place. Simon Peter “wobbled on the spindle” a little over at Antioch. Paul referred to it in the second chapter of Galatians, not in any spirit of triumph, but rather in sorrow, and I’m sure he never would have referred to it, such was the embarrassing character of the situation, had it not been necessary. Peter compromised simply through cowardice. I can overlook a little cowardice on the part of any of us, due to the fact that some of the greatest men in the world have displayed it at times. The hardest thing in the world is to be consistent and courageous in the face of certain kinds of opposition. Even Barnabas was carried away by a hypocritical situation; but Paul stood, and rebuked them before the whole church, because they “walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel.” Paul not only condemned Simon Peter to his face, and Barnabas and the rest, but the truth required him to give them a good thrashing before the whole church. Not because he liked a fight, not because he didn’t love Simon Peter, he did love him, but the truth of the gospel meant everything.

This may not be strictly in line with logical sequence, but I have something here I want you to read. There is one thing I fear, lurking in the back of my mind all the time that I am talking about courage and loyalty to the truth, and an uncompromising spirit, is the fear that some young man, or some older one, will get the wrong impression, and mistake courage for recklessness, take an opposite extreme and play the bull in the china closet. We’ve seen it happen over and over again. But listen to 1 Thess. “Yourselves, brethren, know our entering in unto you, that it hath not been found vain.” If you will read of Paul’s experiences in Thess-
Alonice, you'll know what this means, "but having suffered before and been shamefully treated as ye know at Philippi, we waxed bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God in much conflict." From Philippi to Thessalonica Paul went out of the frying pan into the fire. "For our exhortation is not of error, nor of uncleanliness, nor in guile." Our exhortation is not of error, in other words we preached the gospel to you and preached it in its purity without fear or favor, without being influenced by either needs or flattery. You remember what he said to the elders at Ephesus, when he met them at Miletus, "In weakness and in fear, and in much trembling," in anxiety of heart, with tears and trials he "shrank not from declaring the whole counsel of God" in order that he might be "free from the blood of all men." There was an earnest attitude in all of it that cannot be found in that professional preacher spirit. "For our exhortation is not of error, nor of uncleanliness, nor in guile"—nothing deceptive —"but even as we have been approved of God to be intrusted with the gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God who proveth our hearts." We've been intrusted of God to preach the gospel. We have been honored of God with the divine revelation, and we've been true to him in preaching it and haven't done anything at all with the primary motive of pleasing men. "For neither at any time were we found using words of flattery, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness. God is witness: nor seeking glory of men, neither from you nor from others, when we might have claimed authority as apostles of Christ." And sometimes it is a little hard to reconcile that hard as nails attitude, that uncompromising; unbending, unyielding conviction; it's hard to reconcile that with humility, meekness and gentleness, but Paul said, "But we were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children: even so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, (because ye were become very dear to us.)" In other words, Paul said, "If I don't preach the gospel you'll be lost, and I love people, and I don't want them lost." But I'll tell you one thing, brethren, that Paul was never guilty of, and that any loyal man can't have an ounce of respect for today, and that's one of those fellows that's just as sweet as honey, just dripping with goodness, but horrified at anything that is strict and uncompromising. He is gentle and sweet, unless you rub him the wrong way. He is absolutely disloyal to the truth. He won't defend it, he won't maintain it, he won't preach it, he doesn't care anything about it. It reminds me of a story I heard W. A. Shultz t e 11. Talking about a preacher over in Arkansas, whom he knew and said was a good man. This preacher couldn't read and write when he married; his wife taught him how to read, and he turned out to be a very impressive and influential preacher in his own locality. People knew he was ignorant, but he knew the Bible; his wife read it to him, and he could quote it, but he couldn't read it. One day he decided to risk reading a little. He turned to the second chapter of I Peter, and read in a stumbling, halting, inaccurate sort of a way, until he came to the word hypocrisies, and he bogged down. He looked at it, backed up, took two or three deep breaths, swallowed a few times, and said: "Brethren, here is something. I don't know what these folks bad been doing, but it looks bad; it sounds bad; whatever it was the Lord called them hy-pot-o-rites." It doesn't make any difference ho w gentle, sweet and flattering a man is, if he is not loyal to the truth, he is just a "hy-pot-o-rite". That's all he is. And, you know, I've got to the point where it would almost hurt my feelings if somebody would say, "Oh, he is such a good man," for the simple reason that I have heard sentimental women and emptyheaded men slobber over false teachers for the last fifteen years. You can point out the fact that they are traitors to the truth and there is not a loyal grain in them—"Oh, but he is such a good man". He is not anything of the kind—he is just as mean as the devil. People were not good men in the New Testament times, even if they did pray long prayers and give a lot of money to be seen of men, and make loud pretenses. Jesus unceremoniously called them hypocrites.

The Centralized Eldership Problem

But back to the point of Bible authority for cooperation. Somebody will say, "If a church can do a certain work, and an individual can do a certain work, but here is work that needs to be done and ought to be done, too big for any individual, and too big for local church"—well, I want to tell you that any work that is too big for God's plan and God's way why God does not want it done. If a thing can't be done God's way, let it alone. You know, a lot of times I feel like that I don't get the results I ought to with the gospel. I sometimes feel, when I am trying to stir up heartfelt religion in folks with the gospel, that if I could resort to feeding them something else I could get some results through stomachfelt religion. You know you can accomplish more with weiners and buns with some folks than you can with the gospel, but that is not the way to do it. What I can't accomplish with the gospel, what I can't get done by preaching the gospel, I don't want to do, and I don't think God wants it done. What can't be accomplished by loyalty to the divine plan, without something bigger than the church
in the way of a religious institution, God just simply doesn't want done; and if you want to do something that can't be done with the local congregation, or with God's order, and you turn to some other expedient to do it, that's neither royalty nor progression. Israel didn't think they could get anywhere with God's plan of government, so they tried their own and headed for perdition. Moses warned them, and Samuel warned them, and over and over again, the prophets warned them but the warnings went unheeded, and Israel went into apostasy.

In Acts II a prophet named Agabus "signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world." The disciples determined to send relief to the brethren in Judea "which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul." There was an emergency. That emergency was too pressing and too big for the local church to handle alone. But they didn't organize an institution nor a relief 'board. The church in Antioch, and possibly some of the other churches, because the New Testament is confessedly a summary, sent relief to the church in Jerusalem in this emergency, and sent it to the elders. All right, here is an example of congregational cooperation. Here is an example of one church helping another in a legitimate work that a church is undertaking, or supplying a need that has arisen in connection with that church. How was that money handled? It was spent right there, and in the field and under the oversight of the elders, where these elders were eldering. It is not an example or a precedent for the elders of one congregation to form themselves into a brotherhood board to collect money from all the churches and spend it in widespread fields outside of their own place of oversight and activity. That just isn't a precedent for that sort of thing. You know the way Rome developed.

Well, I am not going to give you a history of apostasy tonight, at least not a complete one; but you know there wasn't any Roman church in the New Testament, I mean Roman Catholic Church, but the seeds of it are sown in the kind of problems I am talking about. Paul said the spirit of lawlessness was already at work. How did it start? I am under the impression that really the first development that could be really detected affected organization. You know, it is mighty hard to tell which started first, departure in doctrine or in organization, but there is bound to be some disloyalty in attitudes toward doctrine on the part of men who should know better, and be more loyal, before departures can take place. I can tell you how it started. One church became a little more important than another; its eldership became more important than the eldership of some other church; one of its elders, a presiding officer, became a little more important than other elders, and finally a lot more so, than his colleagues. Can't you see, can't I see, can't anybody see that if the eldership of one congregation becomes a missionary board or clearing house for all congregations to act through and work through in a general work, not merely an emergency, but a permanent continuing work, that it will get bigger and bigger, and will lead to an institutionalism that would, at least, parallel the missionary society? Making one eldership a sort of a central board for all churches to act through is not a New Testament proposition. I lay down the principle that God intended for a church, a local congregation, to raise its own money, select its own workers, its own field of activity, carry on its own work, under the supervision of its own elders. Oh, but we want to do something that we can't do with that simple set-up. That's exactly what's the matter—exactly what's the matter.

**SURVEY AND SPONSORSHIP PROBLEMS**

I pick up the paper and I read things; now I never was considered a crank, I think — I never would admit it—never have figured that I was radical or extreme, I never was considered a hobbyist, but I read things that rather shock me once in awhile—I pick up a paper, and I read where somebody has gone to "survey" some foreign field. Now who sent him? Where are the funds coming from, and what is he going to do when he gets there? But he goes and surveys Australia. Well, Australia is made up of a lot of intelligent people. I understand that their average of intelligence is about as high as ours, and they have churches over there, and they have Bibles, the same kind we have over here, but somebody goes over to survey Australia, comes back, writes a long report in the paper, and it dies down and you hear no more about it. My first conclusion is that some preacher had a pretty nice trip.

Then I pick up another paper, and I read where another man has gone to "survey" England. You know, they have congregations in England, and they think they speak purer English than we do—I doubt it, but they think they do. They have Bibles and churches, and I wonder sometimes if those brethren over there who read about some of our men coming over to "survey" England, who are not equal in knowledge, scholarship or piety, to some of them—if they don't consider it an impertinence on our part. But we've surveyed England, and when one brother comes back from surveying England, I read in the paper where another brother goes over to survey England, and he comes back and reports—not in the Bible Banner—but he comes back and reports—I think it is in the Christian Chronicle that does most of the re-
porting-but he comes and reports, a great, big, windy report, and two other preachers have had a pretty nice trip. What did they accomplish? Not a thing under heaven that is worth much to the cause of Christ, according to my humble judgment in such things.

Then I pick up the next issue of the paper and I find some boys who were educated in some of "our institutions" have "surveyed" Germany, and they "surveyed" Belgium, and they "surveyed" Italy, and while they survey, it has occurred to me that maybe I had misread the commission, and had better read it again, possibly it said, "Go into all the world and survey all the nations and report to the brotherhood." I'm telling you that I know some of the churches, or one of them at least, that is getting a lot of big advertising out of this proposition. It boasts of being one of the biggest churches in the brotherhood. I held a three weeks meeting there one time, and they didn't half support it. But anyway, when these boys survey the whole world, come back and report, then having surveyed, now what we need is a sponsor. Just give us a sponsor and we'll put on the show. Now, I think the gospel ought to be preached to everybody that we can possibly preach it to, and I don't think lines ought, to be drawn geographically or racially when it comes to preaching the gospel; however, I have never figured that in order to be interested in mission work that a fellow had to get seasick. Circumstances being anything like equal, the gospel ought to be preached where opportunity offers the greatest chance of doing good and saving people. But I still believe the New Testament, and I believe in the New Testament plan. I believe that we ought not to go beyond the things that are written, and we ought to have some regard for not only the Lord's commission but the individual zeal and personal consecration, and the local activity of the New Testament church. Why, the idea of a man going to hold a meeting at a place, doesn't amount to anything now-you know, the "plan" has gotten bigger than the accomplishment. If we can just have a high sounding plan, and always be surveying and planning something, and talking about the plan, like it was done when the digression was in development, when it was first becoming popular, it will give the church prestige! You know, while they were planning and having their conventions, and their meetings, and raising their money and all that sort of thing, and in the papers their statistics-well, after all the blow-up, and all the bragging, and all the wind-jamming—plain gospel preachers that had no connection whatever with organized work accomplished more in their gospel meetings that the whole shebang had accomplished.

I was sitting in a cafe drinking coffee-1 know some of our modern puritans in the pulpits say that it is an awful mistake, if not a terrible sin, to drink coffee, but the only trouble I have ever found with coffee is that some sisters use too much water in making it—but I was sitting in the cafe drinking coffee, when in walked Dr. Ray Lindley, a digressive preacher, head of the college of the Bible in TCU, successor to Dr. Hall over there. Ray Lindley walked in, I knew him at Weatherford; he came there and preached for that digressive church there awhile; a pretty nice sort of a fellow personally, but if I didn't have any more religion than he has, no more faith than he has in the divine plan, I'd get out of the pulpit and do something else. I said, How are you getting along? He said, All right, and he got confidential. He said, Wallace, I just want to say that there is something funny to me. I said, What's that? Why, he said, with all of our centralization and all of our big drives and schools, when it comes to churches, you've got more churches in Fort Worth than we have. I said, Yes. And he said, There is another thing-just talking off the record, it wasn't for publication: I suspect he'd deny it, and I wouldn't blame him, if it was to get down to TCU-go out over the country generally, and you've got churches in country communities, in small places and towns, and we've concentrated and centralized with big churches in a few places. I said, Yes. Well, he said, you've shown wisdom where we haven't. But now you know it looks like some of the brethren-of course, they would deny it now just like they denied digression a long time ago-men in high places in our institutions have fallen into the same trends of digression on that proposition. I'm talking about developments. They want to keep the schools in their place-but want the place to be in the budgets of the churches. They don't want them to encroach on the independence of the churches-but they argue that the church is dependent on the schools for the preachers and wives for the preachers. Like the digressives we become dissatisfied with the simplicity of the Lord's way and of the Lord's plan.

I said on last evening, and the more I think about it, and I've been thinking about it a good while, the more I think it's so. You know the main thing that's the matter with the church, anywhere that there is anything the matter with it, is the preaching. The elders of the congregation are partly to blame for that. And the trouble with them is-it's a vicious circle—it goes back to the wrong kind of preaching they heard. To illustrate just what I mean by that, a woman came into the congregation where I was preaching just a few days ago, and she said, "Bro. Wallace, I want to tell you that I thought we had about the sorriest preacher I
We've got 8 good congregation, but the man with us can't preach a lick; but he's a good man, and we like him. He is a fine fellow, and we sympathize with him, but he just simply can't do it. He doesn't know enough to preach, and he can't tell what he knows. We felt relieved when he left and went to another field, not because we didn't like him, but he simply couldn't preach. Now, we have so and So, 8 graduate of such and such a school, and I'll tell you, Bro. Wallace, I had no idea that there was anybody that made as poor an effort as the preacher that just left, but this man we've got now can't preach as good as he could.” Well, I said, “I'm sorry, awful sorry for you folks to have to put up with the sort of thing, but honestly, I can't preach for all these churchmen’s!”

You know the whole thing, when you get right back to the point, if 8 man knows the truth, and if he loves the truth, and if he'll preach the truth, these problems that arise out of disloyalty in the hearts of preachers, who are not strictly for the New Testament plan 8s they ought to be will be eliminated.

THE PROBLEM OF UNITY AND FELLOWSHIP

I pick Up 8 paper and I read about 8 fellowship forum and fellowship meeting, and what does it mean? It means that some of our preachers meet with 8 group of digressives to discuss matters of fellowship and they hold a love feast. Two of them, "ours" understand, who have been pretty bad about that sort of thing, have Joined the congregationalists, one of them is openly defending the practices of digressives, and the rest of them that engage in such things are soft 8s unrefrigerated August butter. You couldn't depend on them to say boo at a goose if there is an issue involved. Well, what does it all mean, what's the matter? You know, fellowship is one of the finest things in the world. I'm sorry I can't fellowship everybody. I never saw anybody that I didn't have natural inclination to fellowship when I considered merely human principles. I'm not as bad as Will Rogers was, or 8s good as Will Rogers was—who said he never saw a man he didn't like. Well, I've seen 8 few that I didn't like as well as I did some others, but I'm glad that I don't hate anybody. But this fellowship proposition—you know Paul talks about fellowship-fellowship in the gospel. He said, "I serve God in my spirit in the gospel of his Son.” And he prayed that they might have love in knowledge and in discernment. Love is a good thing, but not without knowledge and discernment. There are some things that even God hates. One is a sower of discord among brethren, and another tells lies and sheds innocent blood, all that sort of thing.

God hates, and I'm not supposed to love anything God hates. I picked up a paper and noticed an article directed at you. I am sure they didn't have a bit of reference to me, because they were talking about the ugly spirit somebody was using, but this article talked about love, how certain men he would have called their names if he hadn't been afraid-had violated the principles of love. Anybody that stands up and fights for the truth, violates the principles of love. He went on to tell what Christ did and what Christ said, and what Paul did and what Paul said, and I thought that I might write an article and show some more things that Christ said and some more things that Paul said. There are two sides to that proposition. Paul was gentle. Yes, but he was hard. Christ was gentle. Yes, but he said some of the hardest things anybody ever did, though not indiscriminate about it. But this brother says you mustn't use sarcasm, and you mustn't ever ridicule anybody. I hear that so often, the next time somebody tells me that, I'm going to tell them they are ignorant, and I'd just about as soon be called anything as to be called ignorant. Old Job said to his opposers—were all doctors. I guess—"You're the wise ones, and wisdom will die with you.” And I find more sarcasm in the New Testament, and in the Old Testament than any other religious book I ever read. Of course, not indiscriminately, but there are some times when nothing else will get the job done. If it is a righteous thing at the time, do it that way.

But coming right back to this fellowship proposition. Paul said, “love in knowledge and in discernment.” I didn't quite get through with this brother who was writing about us—I thought maybe I might look after his case in 8 nice sort of way, as I usually do, until I got down toward the close of his article, and he was inviting me: said that he knew he'd get attended to; we would take him apart for what he said, and it occurred to me that if I said anything about it at all, I'd write a squib to say that the brother is perfectly safe—we're not after minnows.

Here is the point that I am trying to get over on fellowship. I like people, and hesitate to mis-treat anybody to the point where my personal friendship and my personal feeling sometimes gets in my way. The sectarian preachers, for instance, in the town where I live: I can meet them and shake hands with them, go and drink coffee with them; find one sick, go and see him and take him a mess of squirrels I brought in out of the woods. They like me, and I like them personally, but, you know, you get to liking one of them too well, and he gets to liking you too well, and the first thing you know you've got

(Continued on page 13)
In the sixth chapter of John’s Gospel and verse twenty-six, we have this language, “Jesus answered them and said, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat the loaves, and were filled.’” Here we find one of the severest rebukes of the Lord to the unappreciative multitude of men who will not take time to investigate the evidence of divine things. They saw the miracles or signs, but were too obtuse or too indifferent to consider the source and purpose. This group would certainly include that vast class of folk today who claim to perform or believe in miracles and have never studied the purpose and place of them in God’s scheme of things. But I only mention this point in passing.

The most ungrateful class of folk in the world are people who enjoy the blessings that have been provided and never consider the source, offer a word of thanks. They have only one thing in mind: the satisfaction of their own desires. They feel that the world owes them a living and they have no other motive for the things that they do but to find selfish material gratification. They are not careful how or where they get the loaves and fishes. They want them and they will take them wherever and however they can get them. They do not know the giver of them and they care not for Him. They have no gratitude for or toward Him. They are selfish and grasping in character and disposition.

In this connection, I desire to relate some actual incidents. I am sure that these experiences are no different from some which others have had, who have tried to preach for a number of years and do charitable work that is demanded of Christians and the church. I resided in a West Texas City at the beginning of the recent depression. The bottom fell out of our stock market and men were thrown out of work all over the country. Tales of woe and want began to come to us from numerous sources. Each Lord’s Day after the regular services we took a special offering from those who wanted to give. This special offering was to buy groceries and clothing and medicine for the people who were out of work and in need. We took in from seven or eight dollars to about fifty dollars per week. We asked the relief agencies for the names of some worthy families, A committee was appointed to look into the need of each family. We bought everything wholesale and started out to do charity work. Many asked for snuff and tobacco and things of that kind. We did not furnish that, but some families swapped the soap that we took them for tobacco. Soon those who helped told their friends of our work, we had more than we could care for. We did not make any stipulations as to church affiliation, but invited each family to attend any or all of our services. If I remember correctly, not one came. Some of the families would not help carry the stuff from the car into their abodes. I became suspicious of one of the families and called the Salvation Army and found out that they were all on their list. One family in particular had been on their list for more than seven years. I do not think I regret the money and the effort that went into this project on our part, but I am sure that it is not the way to evangelize the world.

Case number two. I moved from West Texas to another city far removed. The depression was on in reality by this time. I took a considerable cut in salary and was very happy to do so. But even at that could have saved a little money, but for the large number of people that we helped. Many of these I helped out of my own pocket. We went out and brought a number of families to church, and helped them in various ways. I made three trips in my car every Sunday morning, and then carried the folk home after the church service. Others made one or two trips for people every Lord’s Day. We finally put on buses and hauled lots of people to and from church services. I remember one family that we had helped in various ways, that I had hauled practically every Lord’s Day for almost two years. They moved to within two blocks of the bus run. The husband was supposed to be a member, and the wife had talked about being baptized many times. They came twice after I quit going after them. They would not walk two blocks to come to a religious service with bus fare paid. Yet I saw them in town frequently. When we ceased providing the material things they wanted their religious fervor cooled off. There were several more that we helped for months and months. I became suspicious of their conduct and told them the man who was directing our Bible School work and who was very enthusiastic about the program of benevolent work, that these people would not come to Lord’s Days services after we quit helping them. He got quite huffy with me, but told me to go and see just what they needed. I waited a few days and went, but did not take any food or medicine. They were not on the bus next Lord’s Day. I waited a few days and went back to see them and found the mother with a table full of small bottles of something that is said to be good for “snakebite.” I inquired among neighbors and found that she had been selling it all along, but had used the church as long as she could. The first winter in this city, we helped about thirty families with food and

“LOAVES AND FISHES”

THORNTON CREWS
clothing and medicine. Twenty-one of these we helped more or less regularly. When spring came on and food was not so hard to get, most of them quit calling on the church. Spring lapsed into summer and a “Oneness Holiness” preacher came along and started a Revival Meeting that was to last until Jesus came. Every week or so he would pass out grocery cards asking for certain things. Nineteen of these families took these cards and gave him groceries and ice. I remember one family carried ice by my home to this preacher, and I knew they did not have ice at home. I do not remember that any of these folk ever turned out to be faithful Christians. People who use the church for loaves and fishes will never be worth much to the cause of Christ. There may be some exceptions, but these are a few of my personal experiences. I cannot say that I regret that I did what I could for these people, but some things I think I know: you cannot help the fellow who will not help himself, and if you could, the primary duty of the church is to preach the gospel. The “mission” of the church is found in the great commission — “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

PROBLEMS CONFRONTING --

(Continued from Page 11)

to put the pressure on him, practically slap him down, make him see where fellowship ceases. In matters of religion I say to them absolutely, “I can't go with you at all, because you're wrong and I'm right.”

Well, of course that's not tolerance. I'm reminded of a thing that happened at Lockney one time when I was in a meeting there. I held four meetings there when Early Arceneaux was preaching there. That's one reason I love Early Arceneaux so much; I know him and I know the work that he does. In the first meeting there we baptized forty, largely due to his work. The next meeting we baptized 29. 'They had their new building; the house and the balcony were full. Early was funnelling me all through the day, and it was just running on everything and everybody at night, and I mean they were mad, they were stomping; they were cutting-up down town. Early was introducing the meetings and baptizing people at every service. One night he said, “Now, you folks popping off downtown, that just suits me; that's just what I want you to do; but don't you lie about what we say; you tell the truth. One fellow said today that we thought we were right, and everybody else was wrong. That's a lie. We don't think anything of the kind—we know it.” Well, everybody laughed, Methodists, Baptists and all, but he got the point over. Of course, if I believed the other fellow was right I'd join him, and have a better time. As strict and conscientious as I am regarding some matters religious, sometimes to have a pretty good time I have to get away from the brethren and hunt up some friendly sinner. But you know fellowship must be “in the gospel,” and we can't have fellowship with anybody who is not loyal to the truth.

THE WHOLE DIGRESSIVE PROBLEM

Take the digressive movements. Digression from the truth has always followed the same pattern. The pattern for every departure from the truth there ever was, and here is the seat of every problem we have ever had, is found in the fourth chapter of II Timothy. Paul said to Timothy: “I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, by his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine.” That is an attitude toward the truth — they won't endure sound doctrine because they don't like it, they don't want it, they are in love with something else. “But having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts.” Let that attitude lodge in a man's heart, and action is going to follow pretty soon, and will be to get rid of the teachers that teach the truth, 'assassinate them, their character, or anything else, it doesn't make any difference what, get rid of them. “Will heap to themselves teachers” that will tell them what they want to hear. “Having itching ears.” You know itch is a pretty bad thing, and I've had it all over, but the worst, most fatal place in the world you can have the itch is in your ears. The truth of the business is, when a man has an itching ear, he is as bad off as the fellow that has it all over, he doesn't want anybody to find it out, and he won't admit it. When a fellow has an itching ear and you accuse him of it, he'll deny it. But Paul said, “Having itching ears will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth” -that is the rejection of it- “and turn aside unto fables”-and that is apostasy.

All digressions have followed that pattern. A lot of times our intentions are good when we stumble, but when we begin to drift, there is the pattern of it. First, is the wrong attitude: next, acting in harmony with that attitude, they turn away from the truth and turn aside unto fables and going that far they seldom back up. If there ever was a need for Paul's admonitions it's now—“watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong.” The elders of the church must wake up; the preachers
must wake up; we must all watch these trends. We're not fighting the schools; their individual character, they are legitimate; but keep these institutions in the private sphere where they belong, a private business activity, and don't let them threaten the autonomy, the independence, the peculiar, unique character of the church and its work. Tomorrow night I am going to take up where I leave off tonight. I am not trying to follow too much of a logical order, but simply talking with you about these problems in the churches, and what to do with them.

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I appreciate what you say in last B. B. in regard to G. C. Brewer's attack on me in the Gospel Advocate. Even before I got my G. A. out of the mail I had a letter from a noted brother urging me to reply to his attack, and also saying that he had written the G. A. urging that I be allowed a reply. I sent a reply, rather brief, composed almost entirely of Brewer's published statements that have appeared in F. F., and G. A. It was denied a place. After I had written at least three times asking why it was denied space, I received a reply saying that it might start unpleasant personalities. As though his article was not strictly personal. The fact is that it would have awakened unpleasant recollections that Brewer most certainly would be glad to have forgotten. A man who writes and speaks for the public certainly should stand back of his published statements till he retracts them. And why a writer's published statements should not be again published by the same paper, lest it start unpleasant personalities, is for others to explain. It is beyond my comprehension.

After Brewer made his Abilene speech that has been troubling him for more than ten years, I said to some brethren: “In my judgment G. C. Brewer is the Isaac Errett of this generation. Errett headed every trend away from the gospel, and Brewer is doing the same.” The soundness of my judgment has been greatly confirmed during the last ten years. And it would seem that he is going to have a free hand in publishing his writings. A few men and a journal with wide circulation can lead far from the gospel line, in a comparatively short time.

As certain as it was unscriptural to organize human institutions to do the work of the church sixty years ago, just so certain it is that it is unscriptural to organize human educational institutions and support them from the Lord's treasury now. And as certainly as driving the wedge of humanisms rent asunder the spiritual body of the Lord fifty years ago, just that certain will the driving of the same wedge of humanisms again rend asunder the spiritual body of the Lord at no distant future day. That men of ability, who thirty years ago, met in public debate the advocates of unscriptural things, and defeated them at every point, would now be defending (?) humanisms with exactly the same manner of confusing things not related, and employing exactly the same tactics that they exposed, is a marvel of the age. Were it a new and younger generation of men, it would not be so astounding. But when it is the same men who were in the very front ranks in exposing humanisms in the church—well, it is enough to cause sincere men to bow their heads in shame and sorrow, and to make angels weep—if such is possible.

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.”

In faith, hope and love,

W. W. Otey

P.S. This is a personal letter. But what I write can be read, repeated or published, at any time the one receiving it desires so to use it. And what I say in private about any man I am willing to say to the man. And anything I say or write may be published without objections or complaint from me.
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