PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE CHURCH--NO. 5

CLED E. WALLACE

The associations of this week have been extremely pleasant to me, but I can’t say that my work has been too pleasant. I mean that there are some things that I would rather talk about than the things that have been assigned me this week to discuss. But we all need to be told once in a while what’s the matter with us. This has been a series of criticisms. I’m telling what’s the matter with us. There are some things that ought to be said at times, that need to be said; and everybody can’t say them; and some who can’t won’t say them; and it is not extremely pleasant to anybody to say them, and not pleasing to everybody to hear them. There always have been problems, there always will be. The attitude that problems and troubles, and things that are alarming ought to be ignored is not only absurd, it is unscriptural. The idea of always accentuating the positive and eliminating the negative—I believe that’s the way they put it—just simply doesn’t line up with New Testament teaching. For instance, I find when Paul told Timothy to preach the word, he said, “Be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.” Now just what does that mean? Well, there is a perfect standard of Christian living set before us in the example of Jesus our Lord; there is a perfect standard of what the church ought to be in the New Testament. Since nobody measures up to that perfect standard of individual life, and no church can measure up 100% to the standard of excellency found for the local church in the New Testament, we need to be constantly on the watch. We need to be led into, and sometimes whipped into line. “Reprove, rebuke, exhort.” What is that but recognizing ‘and dealing with the problems that arise in the individual life and in the activities of the church?’ There are some people who don’t seem to know or care, but I do, and a lot of you people do; many preachers do. We care very deeply about keeping the church what it was when the Lord designed it and built it.

In the book of Jude, I find this statement: “Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.” When some development arises that modifies or changes the faith, or alters the church, it is alarming to some of us, and we don’t like it, and we are not going to stay quiet and allow subversive influences to gain headway.
unopposed. That is the spirit of the New Testament, some compromisers to the contrary notwithstanding. The faith is a definite system of doctrine revealed by the Holy Spirit. Contend earnestly for it. Why is it necessary to contend for it? “For there are certain men” The term “certain men” indicated that they had been marked, classified, and were pretty well known. “Certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our Lord into lasciviousness.” If you think that doesn’t belong to us; that it is none of our business; that we ought to ignore all such developments, note what Paul told the elders of a local church. “Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock,” because “from among your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things”, contrary things, “to draw away disciples after them.” Paul called them wolves, and in another connection he called them dogs. To use language like that now would give some modern degree men in religion creeping paralysis. They consider it very unchristian. But we find these warnings in the New Testament.

I have been dealing with problems, problems, problems, this week, till I feel that just a summing up might be the best thing, but we don’t have time to sum up. There are other problems that need to be dealt with, and when I am through, you can say that if I left anything out, I didn’t go to do it.

GOSSIPERS

About divisions that arise in the local church, one of the difficulties in maintaining peace in the local church is that there are some people in every one of them that talk too much. James said. “Be not of many you teachers, my brethren, knowing that ye shall receive heavier judgment.” You know, some crackpots in the church have an idea that everybody in the church ought to be a teacher, That is not so: the Bible doesn’t teach it. Some people are not qualified to teach, by intelligence, nature, or ability. There is a responsibility connected with words that is tremendous and awe inspiring. James said that the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. “Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire.” I’ve never seen a church trouble in my life that could not have been settled much more easily if a lot of irresponsible people had learned the lesson of when to talk, and more important still, when not to talk. I’ve known churches that were enjoying peace and getting along fine, until somebody with a long tongue and an empty head moved in from some other community and started talking. I was in a meeting in another state one time with a big church. The song leaders I’ve been associated with are usually fine fellows. This song leader had been imported. I was told by responsible men in the church, that this fellow is a splendid singer, but he is working around like a termite, talking and stirring up trouble, gossiping and agitating, what in the world are we going to do about it? When there are responsible people in a congregation who are capable of saying what ought to be said, it is a pity that some critical, senseless unreasonable gossiper will keep things in a stir by talking too much.

BEGGARS

Not speaking locally, but generally, there are some plain downright nuisances in the church—these traveling collecting agents. I remember one time where I was in a meeting, preaching twice a day, one of these fellows who had been traveling around agitating and collecting for various things breezed into town. The preacher came to me and said Bro. So and So is here, and he wants the morning service. You know those fellows feel like when they come to town, they are on the main line and everybody else has to take a sidetrack. Well, I was always agreeable; I am one of the easiest fellows to get along with in the world. I hardly ever say anything that people don’t like, so I told this preacher to let him have the morning service. You know he didn’t even say much obliged, hope
that we would have a good meeting, or even recognize me in my own meeting a bit. He got up and he acted as though his sideshow was the main show, and gave us a skinning because we didn't show interest in his pet project. He had been to Japan and made a failure, came back and had been running around over the country ever since collecting and skinning us preachers because we were not in Japan. We went to the same place for lunch that day, and I was letting him do most of the talking. He turned to me and said, “Bro. Wallace, why don't more of our strong men go to Japan?” I said, “I guess you mean me, but the reason I don't go is because I don't want to.” He said, “Bro. So and So is going to Japan.” And I said, “Well, what business has he got over there? He is a middle aged man with a family, and if he goes over it will take him five years to learn to say good morning to one of those heathen, what can he do over there?” To call it impractical and idealistic is honoring it too much. Understand me, if anybody wants to go to Japan or anywhere else in the world where there are people that he can teach, and can do any good, and he is qualified to do it, he has my good wishes, and maybe a little of my money, but the attitude that some of these surveyors, assessors and collectors are taking is a public nuisance.

Well, just to be plain about it, we have some beggars. I was over in Mineral Wells a while back, talking to the head man of a radio station with the prospect of using a little time. We just fell to talking about some of the problems. He said these radio preachers are problems, and getting to be not only a national problem, but a national scandal, making a racket out of it, and he said some of them are getting rich at it. It’s “send me a dollar please” for this or that or the other thing. Without calling any names, I’m too nice for that, we have at least one of them. ‘Send me a dollar please.’ To help him buy a printing press; then he wants some more money to pay his hospital expenses; and finally if you'll send him a dollar for the annual celebration of his birthday, he will send you his picture, and a picture of his family, and you can hang it up under “God Bless Our Home,” and have something to kneel down before when you pray.

You know the problem is that there are so many brethren over the country that are willing to just run over one ‘another to get on a sucker list like that. People that don’t have enough money to pay their bills will send a fellow like that ten dollars. And by the way, when he sends out an S.O.S. he wants you to be sure when you make out the check to mark it, whether it is gift or a loan. Are his books audited? Why, of course not. Does anybody know how much he gets? Why, of course not. On the face of it it is nothing but a racket. Of course a man who will work a racket like that won’t be ashamed of it, but folks who will play sucker like that ought to be ashamed of it. I’m ashamed of them. I didn’t tell my radio friend that we had one of them, I didn’t want him to know it. But some good, honest, sincere, innocent souls send a dollar and think they are doing God’s service. You know, well informed and sensible brethren ought to take care of a thing like that—but that is a problem also.

‘CRANKS

Then, you know, we have the problem of just a few plain nitwits, and I am not going to call any names here. One of them in particular I know is an editor, and I’m not talking about Roy Cogdill. Maybe I can help you identify him. He and the racketeers run together. He recently had an article in which, among the other haywire things he was advocating, he charged that we are unscriptural because we are not practicing the holy kiss, like Paul told the Romans to do. Before I tell you what I think about that, and I don’t think it will be necessary because you can think it without being told, he wrote in another article that he had a farm and he gave it away, and he gave it away because they raised tobacco on it; and since tobacco was such a sin, he couldn’t afford even to own a farm that raised tobacco, and he gave it away. Being nice like I am, I wrote a little squib and asked him if he put a restrictive clause in the deed to keep that farm from continuing in sin.

When it comes to crackpots, we have too many of them, and when they begin to sound off they vibrate in unison. You know what I mean—and it constitutes a problem in the church. In certain sections of the country, you’ll find them making tests of fellowship on matters that ought to be strictly matters of personal discretion. You know, some brethren use tobacco. I know a good brother over in West Virginia who doesn’t like it, he doesn’t like the way it looks, and he doesn’t like the way ‘it smells, I know, because I have blown pipe smoke on him. Somebody asked him if a man could be a Christian and use tobacco. He is pretty strict, but he conceded that he could but that he would be a dirty one. But in some places matters of personal discretion are being made tests of fellowship.

In one of the cities of this country, a preacher, a good preacher too, and a good man, came over to my meeting with some of his diet ideas. He ate vegetables and meat was poison to him, just on general principles, he just had “scrupulous scruples agin it.” He wouldn’t eat it, but he
had sense enough not to try to keep me from eating it, so as to be scriptural and all that, This good brother with his diet ideas got it in his mind that ice tea isn't fit for a hog to drink, and that coffee is not only poison but sinful, and that was one of his main sermons, I followed him in a meeting, smoking my pipe, I went home for lunch with one of the elders of the church. He told me that his wife reacted rather quickly to suggestions, and got the idea when she heard Bro. So and So preaching about tea and coffee being such a sin, that she had better quit. She had been drinking it all her life, and when she quit she got sick, and her nerves went bad, and she finally went to bed, but she wouldn't drink any coffee. This elder got tired of the foolishness, and went to the kitchen and made a pot of coffee. He took a cup and sat down by the bed and said, "Drink this. Forget about that foolishness, that preacher is not running this end of the line any longer".

You know, instead of emphasizing the fundamental principles of the gospel, some preachers are trying to turn the church into a set of Holy Rollers, Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons and Mennonites, or what have you, and some of us are not going to stand for it as long as we've got barbed tongues and sharpened pencils. The brethren generally have got enough sense not to stand for that sort of foolishness. There 'is not much difference between a fan-a-tic and a lun-a-tic-they are both tics. If they want to run in a gang to themselves, all right, but we don't need the church put before the public caricatured as a set of hobbyists, fanatics and extremists.

THE FIRST CHURCH

In considering the experiences of the early church, you'll find in the Jerusalem church essentially all of these problems and how to deal with such matters. Let's take half a dozen problems. First of all, three thousand people were added in one day and the first congregation of disciples, known as the church, came into existence—three thousand of them, and three thousand people, newly converted, brought together into the communion was a problem to begin with. Not only that, a short time later the number increased to five-thousand, and the record says "the word of God increased and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly". They multiplied. Well, there was the problem of growth. How are you going to keep a church in line that grows like that? Well, I'll tell you how they did it. You know the 42nd verse of the second chapter says "they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread and prayers". The Apostles were busy indoctrinating the people. The only thing that held them in line was teaching, making them acquainted with the principles, the fundamentals of the gospel. They were right there in the white heat of the faith as it was being burned by specific teaching into their souls by the apostles and their helpers.

Later, the problems increased. There was murmuring and a trouble over the use of funds. The apostles said that they could not forsake the word of God and serve tables, and appointed men for this business, Business was important, but it wasn't as important as preaching the gospel. Nowadays a church thinks that it can deal with all its problems by calling a preacher who is a wonder on wheels. They expect him to do all the visiting, and they expect him to hear all the calls for distress; they expect him to do the work of the elders, and some members of the church expect him to be sitting on their doorstep when they go to bed, and be there by the time they get up in the morning. In New Testament times preachers were preachers. That is a big job, and the apostles told them to select others to look after such matters while they preached the word. That is a big job in itself. They took care of the growth of the church through teaching, through this indoctrinating the people, and all through the New Testament you find that had to be done. The Scriptures are inspired of God, and are profitable for teaching, for instruction, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

The trouble today is that some churches are growing in numbers in various ways, people moving in, or coming in from various sources—growing in numbers, without either the quality or the quantity of the preaching to take care of the growth, to consolidate it. The growth of a church requires a lot of plain Bible preaching, plenty of good sound doctrine, "As ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and grounded and established in your faith." Some people are not rooted and grounded. They are just up in the air, roaming the skies, falling for any fool notion that comes along, because they are not taught.

MONEY

The Jerusalem church had the problem of finances. It takes money to run the right kind of a church, doing the right kind of work; it takes a whole lot of money. But there is only one source of income for the church, only one place the money can come from where God will bless the work that it does. The members of the church must go down into their pockets and give it. In the Jerusalem church there was an emergency that demanded funds. They met the emergency by selling houses and lands and bringing the money and laying it at the apostles feet,
I find such an outburst of spontaneous generosity and liberality that probably never 'was and never will be seen in any other church. They did it not because of the demands of the law, they did it through the spirit of generosity. When a man loves the church and the salvation of souls more than he does his money and his material comforts, he displays the primary fruits of conversion. Here is the law on the matter. "Upon the first day of the week, let each one of you lay by him in store as he may prosper." In the II Corinthians letter I find the apostle, putting emphasis on these matters. Among other things, he said this; "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

I never did like the idea of using corkscrew methods to get money out of people. If the church has a program that is scriptural, and leaders who are wide awake, who plan work, put it before the congregation, the members of the church will give if they have it. If they don't have it, they are not supposed to give it, and giving is to be done by equality. A man will talk about fellowship in the church. Fellowship means partnership, and if you don't do your part of the giving, if you don't do your part of the attending, if you don't bear your part of the responsibility, what you have 'in the church is not fellowship at all.

**DISCIPLINE**

In this Jerusalem church there was the problem of discipline. Somebody must be responsible for people staying in line, land it is the duty of the 'elders of the church to exercise discipline where such discipline is required. An elder's character is such that when he approaches somebody who is amenable to discipline, he knows that what he is doing is for his good, and not for selfish power or dominance.

The church in Jerusalem was going along pretty good, and the people were giving. Barnabas sold a piece of land and brought the money and gave it to the apostles to be used. His liberality was applauded. Ananias and Sapphira saw what had happened, and to buy the favor and applause that Barnabas had won in an unselfish sacrifice in giving, they sold their land, pretending to give it all when giving only a part. Ananias and Sapphira were both struck dead. You know, if the Holy Spirit still operated on liars in a fashion like that it might take care of some of our problems now. But God doesn't settle all of his accounts at the present, there's a future. 'We need today to recognize that there are matters of discipline in the church. I remember a case one time where there was a woman, and she was a good woman, who talked too much. A lot of agitation started. One of the sensible, dependable, elders in that congregation, who knew his business, took her off to one side, and said, "You're a good woman, but you're talking too much", and he gave her some good advice. She cried like she was heartbroken. He told her nothing would be said to anybody about his rebuke—it was strictly private. It got results. That is the kind of discipline we need. We need elders in the church that can do that. When somebody in a congregation is crosswise and are about to get things all in a mess, they need talking to—and if they can't take it, why, make them take it.

The church is more important than any one person in it. I've heard of churches dividing over preachers. There is not a preacher this side of heaven that is worth that much. You know Paul said, "Who is Paul, and who is Apollo, but ministers through whom ye believed." And Paul said himself he did not preach himself, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and a servant for Christ's sake. If there is anybody in the church who doesn't think more of the church than he does his own pride, if he doesn't think more of the church of Christ than he does his own selfish ambitions, until he changes, or unless he changes, he has no business in the church.

**DISCORD**

There arose a murmuring among certain people in the church at Jerusalem, from the provinces, the Grecian Jews, because they said their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Well, whether they were or not, or whether intentional or not, that didn't make too much difference, there was the problem, and the church was about to divide over 'it. The apostles called the multitude of the disciples together and put the problem before 'them, explained the situation; and had them to select men to correct the irregularity. We need men like that with plenty of good sense and loyalty to look after all affairs of the church. When that problem 'was resolved in a righteous way, 'immediately it is said that "the word of God increased and the number of disciples in Jerusalem multiplied exceedingly, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith".

**PERSECUTION**

Then there was the problem of persecution. Sometimes people think that we couldn't stand persecution today. I'm not wanting persecution but, you know, persecution would test the "wood, hay and stubble," and if we haven't got a lot of wood, hay and stubble built in on the foundation, or stacked pretty close around it, I'm mistaken.

When Stephen disputed with the Libertines—"and they were not able to withstand the wisdom
and the ‘Spirit by which he spake,’” well, when men that big and that important can’t meet an issue, you know what happens don’t you? They determined to down Stephen by fair means or foul, and they suborned men, that is they bribed witnesses, and brought Stephen before the council, and made charges against Stephen, partly true. They put just enough of the truth in a great big lie to make it plausible, and when they made their charges, they asked Stephen to speak. He knew he had a packed jury. He knew what the consequences would be. I don’t think Stephen was under the illusion that he would ever make another speech, but there were some men back in those days who thought more of the truth and the gospel than they did their lives. We have ‘some men today who are so concerned about their standing that they will compromise the truth for the sake of their reputation. I’m glad I haven’t got a reputation. I lost mine a long time ago, and didn’t go back to look for it. I propose to say what I think ought to be said, and what God wants said, anywhere, any time, regardless of what anybody thinks, and when I change my mind, I’ll do something else besides preach. Stephen stood there and very calmly reviewed the history of Israel, from its glorious establishment by the authority of God and under his providence right through the dismal and pitiful history of apostasy, treachery and compromise, until finally he said, “Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears; ye do always resist the Holy Spirit, as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed them that showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers; ye who received the law as it was ordained by angels, and kept it not”. You know, they gnashed on him with their teeth, rushed him outside the city and stoned him to death. There was the first martyr, That’s the way they met persecution. They obeyed God rather than men., and what they could not take care of, he did.

‘CONFLICT’

The problem of controversy came up. You know, you can’t keep controversy down among a free people. The Catholics don’t have any controversy, but who wants to be one. One time a member of the rotary club made a speech on why we needed a good strong republican party in the state of Texas. He was from Iowa, a popular man, and a smart fellow. You know now tolerance is supposed to be a major virtue, even in politics. But old Bill Newberry was there, an old Democrat, hard as nails, and he said, “Well, I guess, maybe, it would be all right, but who wants to be one.”

There is no controversy among the Catholics---but who wants to be one? There is not any controversy where there is centralized authority. In totalitarian states there is no controversy but we are a free people, and we say what we please when we please. They had controversy in New Testament times. The Judaizers trailed Paul all over the empire, hounded his every step, and some of them turned up in Antioch and pretended that they were in fellowship with the church in Jerusalem, and represented the views of the church there, and had apostolic benediction. Paul was a nice man, and had the spirit of Christ, and he did things that pleased the Master, and here is what happened. “And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and question with them”—no small dissension With them, that means they had a pretty big row. They said, “Let’s go to Jerusalem with this.” Paul wouldn’t do it at first because it looked like a surrender of his own claims to be an apostle. But in the second chapter of Galatians, he said, “I went by revelation”. The Lord told him, Paul, to go, and let the matter be settled there. Paul went, went to Jerusalem, went with Barnabas and with certain other of the brethren, and they had a private meeting of those that were of repute, and came to an agreement on the matter, It wasn’t their agreement. They came to an understanding of what the Holy Spirit taught in the matter, The apostles and the elders brought the church together; Peter made a speech, Paul and Barnabas told how the Lord had blessed their work, and James made a speech that knocked the modern theory of premillennialism into a cocked hat, showing that if Christ is not now reigning on David’s throne, there is not a Gentile on earth who is subject to the gospel, or can be saved, They drew up a decree which was not the judgment of the church, but what the Holy Spirit revealed, condemning the Judaizers, who were subverting the doctrine, and the controversy was settled. It never would have been settled by the soft non-combatant spirit that we are hearing extolled today.

SOFTNESS

It is tragic land surprising how little a great host of people know about the church and its work, about the plan of salvation and its essential features. Well, you can’t blame some of them. Preachers are partly responsible for it. I picked up a program of George Pepperdine College. A friend of mine was going to deliver a series of addresses, over there where they are supposed to be educating preachers and leaders and teachers in the church in fundamentals, and they spend a whole annual lectureship on love, courtship and marriage. I picked up a program of David Lipscomb College, and their program for a whole lectureship was on such things as honesty, and ethics and things of that sort. What’s the matter with that? I’ll tell you, a
Methodist can beat any of them lecturing on those things. When the church quits emphasizing doctrine and merely teaches morals, it abandons the very source of those things they grow out of the fundamentals. If a man is not indoctrinated, there is no soil in which those things may germinate and grow. The church needs re-indoctrinating, and that means positive, hard preaching that will certainly expose and destroy error in every form. Of course that will be hard on some of the preachers, but I've gotten used to it, it doesn't make a bit of difference to me, I like it. When I preach a sermon that somebody doesn't fall over about, I think there is something the matter with it.

ORGANIZATIONS

Re-emphasis on the autonomy of the church, the organization of the church, the mission of the church, and the all-sufficiency of the church in organization is imperative. There is nothing in the New Testament bigger than the local congregation. The local congregation is the body of Christ in its community, and it selects its field, it selects and supports its workers, it raises its money, it runs its own business without interference from anybody. When somebody tells me that the life of the church, or even the prosperity of the church, depends on some institution that somebody has built, of a private character, well, that doesn't register with me or anybody else that knows anything about the New Testament. A man can serve humanity by establishing and maintaining a school on right principles and teaching the Bible, and he can contribute a lot to the education and development of character, and all that, but when he tries to assume that a college or anything else has a monopoly on Christian education, well, he has the thing backwards. It is the church's business to engage in Christian education. It is to teach in its capacity as a local congregation, in its Bible school work, and in all of its educational program. When I read about the schools furnishing 95% of the preachers and the elders of the church, well, that is just not so. If it hadn't been for the background and training that most of them got in the home and in the church, the schools never would have heard of them. We need to emphasize the sufficiency of the church. There 'is not anything big enough and important enough to overshadow the Bible place that the church occupies, Nothing that threatens its independence, or in any way minimizes its importance can be allowed. Some of the schools have got so big, and become so enormous, with millions of dollars behind them, boasting of furnishing the church with this, that, or the other that they are head into digression. Not that there 'was anything wrong with the 'school idea, in its right sphere, but it got too big and so important that it furnished preachers for all the churches, in departments of religion that were hotbeds of modernism and heresies, and which the preachers carried right into the churches. That's a matter of history. We are not going to let that history be repeated, if we have to kill a few schools, or put them 'in their place.

When a false teacher threatens the 'integrity of the church in its doctrine, in its worship, in its organization, or threatens it in any way, it is my business, whether anybody else does or not, as far as I'm concerned, to mark him and oppose him to the extent that he threatens the church. Too many brethren are putting everything else ahead of the church. The church gets the tail end of their consideration in time, in interest, and in money. I hope that some of the things I have said will stir up some interest and some thought. Let's dedicate our lives to making the church in our generation what God wants it to be by "Contending for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."

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We hope to have these five articles by Brother Cled Wallace that have been printed in the Banner in print very soon in booklet form. If you desire a copy let us have your order.
OUT OF THE FRYING PAN INTO THE FIFE

JAMES W. ADAMS

Out of the frying pan into the fire is a very apt description of the Japanese work to this moment. From the standpoint of soundness, the more the movement develops the more muddled it becomes. This article proposes to highlight the movement to date with special emphasis on recent developments.

THE BEGINNING OF THE MOVEMENT

The present movement to evangelize Japan had its origin in Chicago, Illinois, with Brother O. D. Bixler a self-styled premillennialist. It was sponsored by two congregations acting jointly as a supervisory board, Cornell Avenue and Brookfield. Both of these congregations are open to question with reference to their soundness on the premillennial doctrine. The leaders of these two congregations who constituted the supervisory board of the "missionary" movement were for the most part premillennialists or their sympathizers as has been pointed out in a previous article. Operating under the supervisory board was an administrative board composed of members of about five different congregations. This board also was honeycombed with premillennialists and their sympathizers. Each of these boards had its respective treasurer, so it is safe to conclude that they were fully organized. In all of its essential features, therefore, this movement was an embryonic missionary society, to say nothing of its being filled with premillennialists and their sympathizers. Added to these was the fact that the movement proposed work that is no part of the mission of the New Testament church, namely; establishing and operating hospitals; underwriting food industries; establishing and operating schools and colleges. For these reasons, the movement thus launched was opposed by loyal brethren and made little progress.

THE SECOND PHASE OF DEVELOPMENT

At this point, the Chicago churches, weeping over unjust persecution, as they put it, magnanimously laid the movement on the broad shoulders of Union Avenue church in Memphis, Tennessee. That is, they requested that Union Avenue assume the responsibility along with its preacher, Brother E: W. McMillan, of directing and promoting the work. A survey of the work including a visit to Japan was made by Brother McMillan resulting in the assuming of the responsibility of directing and promoting the educational phase of the work by him and Union Avenue church. An interesting sidelight is the fact that at almost the very date of Cornell's turning to Union Avenue, Brother Bixler was in Louisville, Kentucky circulating among the premillennial churches of that city in the interest of his movement.

After Brother McMillan's visit to Japan, it was announced through the papers that Union Avenue and Brother McMillan were responsible only for the religious and educational aspects of the work and that Brother Bixler was still in charge of the medical phase of the movement. Further, it was urged that contributions be sent to Brother Bixler by loyal members of the church for that work. Two things were indicated by this announcement: (1) The work was to retain its premillennial connection; (2) The work was to retain its institutional objectives—hospitals, colleges, etc.

Another interesting development was with reference to Brother Bixler. At Abilene Christian College, Abilene, Texas, he bowed out of the Japanese work and turned it over to loyal brethren. This was hailed widely as the most unselfish gesture of the age. Later, however, Brother Bixler came back in the Firm Foundation and other papers pleading for a place in the Japanese work.

Because of the unscriptural objectives of the movement with reference to building and maintaining institutions and its retaining premillennial connections, it was still opposed by many. About this time, Brother R. C. Cannon, supposedly sound on the premillennial issue, was appointed representative missionary to replace Brother Bixler. It was then suggested by the Bible Banner that, inasmuch as Brother Cannon was known to few and in view of the premillennial reputation of the Japanese work, Brother Cannon should make known his views concerning premillennialism. In the meantime, Brother McMillan was travelling throughout the brotherhood seeking funds from individuals and churches for the building of a school in Japan thus keeping alive the institutional angle of the work. These developments bring us to

THE PRESENT SITUATION

At this point, the work in Japan has not developed so as to enable one to have much hope for its soundness. All recent revelations but indicate that it continues to have its original characteristics. That you may be able to see that such is true, we shall note some recent reports from the work.

The statement from the workers in Japan. The following statement appeared in the Firm Foundation from the workers now on the field:

Tokyo, Japan.

Dear Brother McMillan:

We whose names appear at the close of this statement, understand that the premillennial
issue is being somewhat injected into the brethren's thinking in the States to the extent that some are asking about the beliefs of the missionaries in Japan on that subject.

Though we are not in sympathy with any extreme which might be always demanding of others that they "declare themselves" on every issue, we do believe that those who trust us in Japan to teach the pure gospel of Christ have a right to know our beliefs on teachings which have occasioned strife in America.

We are not as old as some others in preaching, therefore we do not claim to know as much as some others on the subject. We, therefore, would regard it as a religious tragedy for the premillennial issue to be ever introduced in Japan. The personal beliefs of each of us, however, within the limits of our study, are that the premillennial doctrine is a departure from the Bible teachings on the kingdom of Christ. We would expect to oppose the introduction of premillennial teachings in Japan as false doctrinally and unrighteous from the viewpoint of wisdom and peace here.

We recognize that, to some, the sending of this statement could seem like the signing of a creed. Though we are as much opposed as any one could be to all tendencies toward creed making, we sign the statement together as a convenience, and we send it home for good understanding there, because as already said, brethren there have a right to know our beliefs and what they are supporting. You may use this statement in whatever way may seem best in serving the cause of Christ there and over here.

Fraternally yours,
R. C. and Norma Cannon
Logan and Madeline Fox
Joseph and Rosa Belle Cannon
Virgil and Lou Lawyer
Harry Robert and Gerrie Fox
Charles and Norma Doyle

A few remarks are necessary on the statements of the letter above. You will note that it is written apologetically. The writers of the letter seem to be pleading for understanding and forgiveness from some party or parties for "declaring themselves" or appearing to "sign a creed" on the ground that they have to satisfy some cantankerous brethren in the States. Why should anyone have to apologize to anybody for expressing his views concerning truth and error? Another thing should be considered by the writers of the letter, namely; that there are thousands of preachers who have never been asked to "declare themselves". Why? For the Simple reason that they have always acted so as to avoid suspicion. Their stand is known!

Paragraph three of the letter above should also be noted. The writers plead limit of knowledge on the premillennial and 'Kingdom of Christ' question due to age. In a letter which Brother McMillan wrote in connection with the above, he states that their ages are from 22—35. It occurs to me that Foy E. Wallace Jr. was but little older than the oldest of these people when he met Neal at Winchester, Ky. and J. Frank Norris in Fort Worth in debate on the Question. Too, all of these folk are, I believe, former students and graduates of "Our Bible colleges"—the only place where one can get 'a Christian education'. Is it possible that a "ministerial student" can graduate from one of "our Bible Colleges" with a "Christian Education" after four years of study in its "Bible Department" and not learn enough about the kingdom or premillennialism to be absolutely certain that he does not believe the latter. Oh, but you say, "The letter says that these young people do not believe it." But you are wrong. Read again! The letter says "within the limits of our study". The necessary inference from such a statement is that these young people are not certain whether they do or do not believe premillennialism. The strange thing to me is that intelligent Christians with good educations can write so much and say so little. In one paragraph, these "missionaries" could have said, "We do not believe premillennialism. We do not propose to fellowship premillennialists. We will most certainly oppose the doctrine wherever and whenever it may arise." Positive, unequivocal statements that are to the point carry conviction and beget confidence. Apologetic, verbose, ambiguous, and qualified statements such as the letter in question contains perpetuate suspicion and make for a total lack of confidence. Another thing worthy of note is the fact that it is said, "We would regard it a tragedy for the premillennial issue to be ever introduced here". Question: Is it the premillennial issue that does the harm or is it premillennialism? If the doctrine were taught, would these people make an "issue" of it? They say, "We would expect to". What do they mean when they say "expect to"? Such weak statements have marked the Japanese work from the beginning. This being true, can the brotherhood have any confidence in the soundness of that in which it is investing its money?

The Representative Missionary. Considerable emphasis has been made regarding the soundness of this man, Brother R. C. Cannon. I have in my files a letter from a school mate of his in days gone by assuring me of his personal confidence in Brother Cannon’s soundness. Others indicate that he is under the influence of some of our West Coast “liberals”. Jimmie Love11 put him forward as his man for Representative Missionary several months ago, and that is certainly no recommendation of his soundness. I do not know him, therefore, just do not know. However, the following excerpt from the Gospel Defender of June 1948 makes me wonder:

Editorial (Jack Hardcastle, Long Beach, Calif., Editor)

I have sat in a number of “preacher’s meet-
ings" during the past two years and have heard many different subjects discussed. One subject which seemed never to be exhausted was "Worship". As might be expected when so many preachers have opportunity to express themselves, many different thoughts, some good and some subject to question, were presented from time to time. I heard R. C. Cannon, who now is "Representative Missionary for the Churches of Christ" in Japan, take the position that the church should make use of symbols and imagery: the cross, pictures of Jesus, the saints and martyrs, for the purpose of encouraging the "worship experience" in the congregation.

If this statement is accurate and I have no reason to believe that it is not, Brother Cannon may need to "declare himself" on things other than premillennialism. I doubt that an intelligent Japanese would see much difference in an image of Buddha and a statue or picture of Jesus.

Louisville Bible Conference. Another recent and interesting development is an article in the Louisville Times, Louisville, Ky., September 3, 1948. It follows:

Ministers from nine states and a missionary from Japan are to attend a five-day Bible conference opening here Monday night under the sponsorship of the Church of Christ.

The missionary is Orville D. Bixler, formerly of Louisville. He served in Japan many years before World War II and returned there after the war.

States to be represented at the conference include Kentucky, Michigan, Indiana, Tennessee, Florida, Louisiana, Texas, Iowa, and Arkansas.

Sessions from 10 a.m. until noon and from 2 until 4 p.m. are scheduled at Shawnee Church of Christ, 41st and Michigan. Evening sessions are from 7:30 until 9:30 at Portland Church of Christ, 2500 Portland.

It would be interesting indeed to have a list of those preachers who attended this premillennial Bible conference. Brother Bixler who has lately denied being a "real premillennialist" you will note was the featured individual present. I wonder if 'some of those who have been featuring and defending him in Texas were those present from the state? Brother Bixler fellowships and labors with American premillennialists, then wants us to fellowship him in Japan and give him a place in the work, Brother McMillan and others urge us to send him our money and propose to work with and fellowship him on the Japanese field. The 'sad thing is that some are falling in with the scheme. 'Well, you can have it. I don't want it. It's too rank for me'.

Arcadia California Brochure. The final development is an expensive brochure received in the mails from the "Arcadia, California Church of Christ" pleading for $125,000 with which to buy a building in Tokyo, Japan to be used as operations center for the "Tokyo Christian Effort". Accompanying the brochure is a letter saying that if one does not give to the purchasing of this building, he is not a Good Samaritan. The thing that interests me about the matter is the fact that among other things the building is to be a center for social contacts and physicians. This like all other reports from Japan and those promoting the Japanese work 'indicates that the original objective of Bixler's movement remains the ideal of the movement today-a highly organized institutional program. Brethren, can the church as such scripturally establish, own, and operate colleges, schools, hospitals, and recreational centers? I deny that this is the mission of the New Testament church. Such is and ever has been the denominational program in religion. Such is and ever has been the program of our digressive brethren. PREACHERS AND FAITHFUL MEMBERS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST, ARE YOU READY FOR A GROUP OF HIGH PRESSURE SALES MEN AMONG US TO LAUNCH THE CHURCH UPON THE ROAD OF DENOMINATIONAL AND DIGRESSIVE ERROR?

Some of us are not willing that it should be so, and therefore expect to oppose it so long as we have power to speak and write. Give Japan the gospel? To be sure, but not on the basis that some propose to do it. If it cannot be done on a scriptural basis, what has been accomplished when it is done? Brother Bixler's missionary scheme moves on, but it is out of the frying pan into the fire and "the latter end is worse with them than the beginning".

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SOME OLD DOCTRINES RESTATED AND EXAMINED

R. L. WHITESIDE

The Holy Spirit in Conversion

Some religious groups are putting renewed emphasis on the doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion. And some put great stress on the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual gifts. They seem to prefer to say “Holy Ghost” rather than Holy Spirit; perhaps they prefer Holy Ghost, because it sounds more mysterious, weird, and ghostly than Holy Spirit, and therefore more suitable to their peculiar brand of religion.

The Holy Spirit is an intelligent, speaking Being. The word person is not a very suitable word to apply to the Holy Spirit; for the Latin word from which it came was a stage, or theater word—“a mask (used by actors), a personage, part, or person.” Later ‘any human being was a person: and then the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were said to be persons. For want of a ‘better word we all use the word person in speaking of either the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit; but we need to realize that each one of these heavenly Beings has a distinct work to do. A failure to recognize this has involved some people in much confusion. If you ever attended meetings in which they prayed long and loud for mourners, you likely heard them pray indiscriminately for God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit to “come down and stave these mourners.”

There is an analogy between the first creation and the new, or spiritual creation. In Hebrews 1:1-2 we read, “God, having of old time spoken unto the Fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds.”

God planned, the Son executed the plans. (See also John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16). The Spirit was the finisher, the organizer, bringing order out of chaos. In the beginning it is said that “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” The marginal reading is more significant: for “moved upon,” it has “was brooding upon.”

Job 26:13: “By his Spirit the heavens are garnished.”

Psalms 104:30: “Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground.”

In bringing into existence and operation this great scheme of human redemption each member of the Godhead performed in creating the world. It was done according to the Father’s plan. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him.” (John 3:16-17). “For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” (John 6:38). In his prayer Jesus said, “I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do.” (John 17:4).

“But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8). But the ‘death of Jesus left the disciples in despair, and even his resurrection left them in darkness ‘as to the significance of all that went before. And after he ascended, they knew not what blessings to the world were made possible by his life, death, resurrection, and ascension. How was this spiritual darkness to be removed? If they remembered what Jesus had told them, they had grounds for hope that light would come.

But because I have spoken these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if 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 they believe not on me; of righteousness, 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, and shall declare unto you the things that are to come. (John 16:8-13).

Before Jesus ascended, he commissioned his apostles to preach to the whole world, but charged them to tarry in Jerusalem until they were clothed with power from on high. (Luke 24:45-49). He also said to them, “Ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence.” (Acts 1:5). Still in the dark, “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.” (Acts 1:6-8).

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 beh-
gan to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:1-4).

A great multitude came together. Then [Peter, being filled with the Holy Spirit, preached to them, as the Spirit gave him utterance, proving to them that they, by the hand of lawless men, had crucified the Messiah, and closed with these words: “Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.” But they were still in the dark, for Peter had not told them what to do about it. So they, being pricked in their heart, said unto Peter land the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” They realized that they must do something. Peter did not tell them, as many false guides do today, that there was nothing they could do. “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.” Now the plan of salvation had been completed, and these sinners had been told how to come into possession of its blessings. The next move was theirs and Peter exhorted them to make that move, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” The responsibility was now theirs; would they save themselves by obeying the Holy Spirit? “They then that received his word were baptized; and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls.”

Read carefully Acts 2: here you learn how the Holy Spirit operates in the conversion of sinners. Of course we need not expect such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on preachers today as came upon the apostles. That was God’s way of revealing the gospel of Christ; without it they could not have preached the gospel, but the gospel has been fully revealed, and we have it recorded in the Bible. The multitude was not present when the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit. When the people came together the apostles preached the gospel to them, or rather the Holy Spirit took possession of the vocal organs of the apostles and used them to speak to the people. Hence the Holy Spirit was operating on them by means of his words. By means of his words he brought conviction to many, and they asked what to do. The Holy Spirit told them plainly what to do, and they did it, The Holy Spirit did not say, “You must be regenerated,” or, “You must be converted.” The Holy Spirit told them what to do; and when they followed the leading of the Holy Spirit—when they obeyed the words of the Holy Spirit, they were regenerated, born again, became new creatures, were converted. The gospel preached on that day was, and is, God’s power for saving people. As the gospel is God’s power for saving people, then a direct operation of the Spirit is not his power for saving people. It is true that the Spirit quickens, that is, gives life; but how? “This is my comfort in my afflictions; for thy word hath quickened me.” (Psalms 119:50,93). With those who respect what the Spirit says, statements like these end all controversy as to how the Spirit quickens; but strange it is, that those who talk loudest about the Spirit pay little attention to what the Spirit says.

Now read carefully and thoughtfully the parable of the sower, recorded in Matt. 13:3-23; Mark 4:3-20; Luke 8:4-15. “The seed is the word of God,” and the human heart is the soil. Life is in the seed; to germinate, the seed must be sown in the soil. That is why the gospel must be preached to all sinners; for there can be no spiritual life in them, till the seed is sown in their hearts. But it has been argued that the soil has to be prepared; and it is assumed that the soil is prepared by a direct operation of the Spirit, though such operation is not even hinted at in the parable or in the explanation Jesus himself gave of the parable. Stranger still, it is assumed that this preparation of the soil puts life in the soil. The fact is, you may put your soil in a perfect state of cultivation, but there is no life in it till the seed is planted. And even if there were such a thing as a direct operation of the Spirit on the sinner’s heart, the seed, the word of God, must be sown in it to produce spiritual life—no seed, no life. Besides, the Lord holds every intelligent being responsible for the condition of his heart. “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” (Prov. 4:23). In explaining to his disciples why he spoke in parables, Jesus said concerning the people to whom he had spoken, “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.” Their heart waxed gross, they closed their eyes; they were not born in such condition. If the sinner closes the eyes of his understanding and refuses to receive this spiritual seed, the word of God, then he alone is to blame. “Wherefore putting away all filthiness and over-flowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.” (James 1:21). The Lord does not say, “I will take all filthiness and wickedness out of your heart so that you can receive the implanted word”; the individual is to put these things away himself, and receive the word. When Paul and Silas preached at Berea, the Bereans “were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, ‘examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so.” (Acts 17:11). They laid aside everything that might

(Continued on Page 15)
THE BIBLE BANNER

RELIGIOUS PROFESSORS

WALLACE W. THOMPSON

The Christian profession is the highest calling on earth. We are admonished to "hold fast" our profession. Timothy is said to have "professed a good profession before many witnesses." The Bible is God's perfect revealed and inspired Word. Thus, it becomes us to mold our lives thereby. We have a perfect guide. The Bible is not "a treatise on philosophy. The Sacred Text is not a text book on any science, though often it predated discoveries of science. The Inspired Record deals with God as the Creator, Lawgiver, Preserver of earth, the heavens and man. Depicted in this perfect revelation is the "fall of man" and the consequences of sin that followed. Man's blighted hopes and perilous plight is described on page after page. The eternal purpose of God to save man from his doom, through the Savior, is unfolded by the Holy Spirit. The humility of the Lord, leaving the throne to receive the thorns, is an expression of Divine love working in our behalf. The sacrifice of the cross, the coldness of the tomb, and the guard of the ignorant are real soul-stirring facts. The glorious resurrection of the Lord was witnessed by more than five-hundred, it was not a thing done in the dark. Every item of the gospel is an undisputed fact. The Bible is not a book of opinions, notions or ideas, but a correlation of eternal truths. Part to part, and plan to plan, purpose to purpose, as thread to thread and stitch to stitch completes a garment. God's Word is related and entwined. Accept it all or completely reject it!

FOOLISH PROFESSORS

There was a time when the Gentiles knew God, but "they glorified him ntw as God." In antiquity's dim past, the idols of the "Eastern Land" were numerous. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into a lie." From the account of Romans 1, out of a professed wisdom grew a multitude of sins, the people became fools. If such beset them, the same is at least possible to befall us. The Pharisees were professors of religion, but by their traditions they made "void" the word of God. Christian is the highest name one can wear or position one can occupy. There were apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, evangelists in the New Testament church, but nowhere do we read where they had a peculiar title, a prefix to their name. There are some today who covet such titles, but Christ shunned them, refused to wear such. It would be enlightening indeed if we had a record where Paul was introduced as Dr. Paul, or where Peter was spoken of as Dr. Peter. This is the difference between human and divine wisdom. Divine wisdom is free of pomp and pride, while human wisdom vaults upon pride's pedestal.

MODERNISM AT ITS BEST

Modernism refuses the (ancient literature and attempts to explain everything and make every-thing conform to present thinking or acting. If modernistic teachers can get the student thinking in terms as "that is your theory" or "this is your idea" or "that is his notion" it does not take long to implant the thought that maybe God has "opinions, ideas, notions, and theories" thus discrediting the Bible. Another teaching so inseparable from the modernist is the good sounding statement of "free-thinking." A synonym of "free-thinker" is "skeptic, unbeliever, infidel." The Bible nowhere describes this 'teaching as being helpful. God's ways are higher than man's ways, God's thoughts are higher than man's thoughts. God has given every man the freedom of choice, to accept or reject, but has not given him the freedom of thought in matters of religion. Another idea of the "modernist" is that "truth is a growing thing." This teaching is as far as the East from the West, being true. Truth is perfect. It is the truth which makes men free, that is, gives release from sin (John 8:32). We no longer "know in part", but the whole law and plan has been completed. It is quite true that we cannot reach into the fathomless depths of the bound-less beyond and comprehend the infinite. But the truth that saves, cleanses, frees, 'is perfectly revealed and can be perfectly understood. There can be no clouds of doubt and uncertainty to mar and smear the horizon of the mind. Simple, trusting, child-like faith accepts the word of God. As the apostle said, "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:69). It is impossible to be "pure in heart" and not be "true in heart." To be pure is to be "free from moral defilement or guilt: innocent, guileless, chaste." A "good conscience" is not sufficient to save. One's "feelings" in matters religious is not a standard of acceptance. Anyone can follow his "vision of truth in loving obedience," but that is not God's directions. One must follow the "Lord's voice" of the truth. "If the blind lead the blind they both fall into the ditch." Perhaps some have forgotten that "grace and truth" was made known by Jesus Christ. It is still true that "revealed things belong to us and our children for ever, that we may do all the words of
law." There are things hidden that man cannot find out, these things "belong to the Lord our God." There is coming an occasion when God "will bring to light the hidden things." But it is an insult to Jehovah and man to say that we cannot know and understand the "revealed truth of God."

**DARK AGES**

The Book which contains the history of man, and the story of salvation extended by the Christ is, forsooth, "the light of the world." Take the pure truth of Jehovah from man 'and the world will be plunged into an abyss of darkness. In the 'wake of "new learning and higher criticism" must follow clouds of doubt and swirls of sorrow. The gaunt spectre of spiritual famine stalked the land when the Bible was chained to the priestly (?) few. But, when it was released and passed to the common man, light began to break across the horizon, the shadows of night fled away and the beams of truth and sunlight illumined the mind. The shadows of infidelity have persistently darkened the religious world, and will continue until everyone throws aside the creeds of men and accepts the truth of God. A country "that adopts a constitution of laws and then breaks nearly every law in that constitution is untrue to its pledge, encourages bands of lawbreakers. In comparison, a religion that accepts the Bible as being true, adopts its laws and regulations in voice, then in turn forms a creed that permits its adherents to violate and break the statutes of God, simply is nothing short of counterfeit, fraudulent, and spurious religion designed in favor of the devil. Anyone that allegedly upholds the Bible with one hand, and with the other elevates error to the same height is at least a hypocrite, and by thus doing is a professor of infidelity, rather than truth.

**KNOW YOU ARE RIGHT**

There is absolutely no need for a person to be wrong when the right is within his grasp. There is no sensible reason one can offer for being wrong religiously. God has abundantly sacrificed and made known the eternal truths of righteousness. If it is impossible to select the right way, then the Bible is not the product of God. If the Bible had erred as often as man, then we would have a right to doubt and hesitate. But the evidence supporting the Bible is so weighty there is no excuse for doubting its correctness and uprightness. With every dig of the pick and spade the Bible story is being by the science of archeology confirmed. The earth is crying out God's truths, even as the "heavens declare the glory of God." Science has come to acknowledge the proof of Bible statement: spokrn centuries before science discovered the facts. This is internal evidence that the Bible is true. The Bible is our oldest history book, we cannot afford to discard it. Many of the historical accounts in the Bible are supported by ancient history. We cannot afford to doubt God's word, but we can by it know we are right and then go ahead! If we cannot by the Bible "know we are right", is there any other medium by which we can find it out?

**CONCLUSION**

Let us refuse to be swayed by the wisdom of man, let us refrain from teaching anything or believing anything that contradicts the word of 'God. Be it resolved that we 'will never accept the modern ideas of evolution of either creation or truth, but let our faith rest upon the bulwarks of testimony that God "created the heavens and the earth" and that He "revealed" the truth to us. Let us relegate ideas to the background and stand upon a "thus saith the Lord." Let us not in religion express our "opinions", but let us cry for "the old paths where is the good way and walk therein." Let us not be double-minded, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, but let our "eye be single" that the 'whole body may be full of light. And when anyone expresses his "theory" and advances it rather than the word of God, may we realize that such reasoning is sheer folly. Never minimize the teachings of the Bible. They are heaven-revealed and God-inspired. I stand in reverential awe before the revealed statutes and humbly submit to their wonderful teaching. The way is plain, so plain that a "wayfaring man though a fool cannot err therein." While some would crush truth and let it lie fallen in the street, let us lift high its glorious banner and proclaim its virtues!

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Now this scribe is not much surprised at World Vision being a party to the scheme of promoting this song book. We have never been able to find the line of demarcation between the Boll camp and the World Vision redoubt any way. But what does come as a surprise is to see the Firm Foundation and Christian Chronicle advertising this book.

It seems to me that when brethren walk disorderly and have gone out from us because they are not of us, that the punishment for such evil doers is to be administered "by the many." We want to see the Boll faction return to the faith, and they are welcome if and when they renounce their 'heresy, confess their sins, and come home. If we are to help them do that we must cease the fellowship.

It is not a question of the merits of the song book. And 'even if it was as scriptural as the great Commission, it is an associate of that which is inimical to the doctrine of Christ. We cannot consistently refuse the devils m eat while we eat his stew.

'Have brethren so soon forgotten the efforts made through the Boll-Jorgenson combination to sweep the church into digression? They were thwarted and localized, and identified as the enemies of the cross of Christ; and now for any "loyal" congregation preacher or editor to do, say, or act in any way as to allow the infiltration of their heresies back into the churches, through any medium, is to build up that which has been torn down, and thus prove themselves a transgressor.

It is a proven danger to have anything at all to do with that "stuff" known as pre-millennialism. Wherever it is even "let alone" the church soon loses its militant unity. And wherever you find a church using "Great Songs of the Church," you find a fruitful field of softism, non-aggression and indifference toward the exposing of errors.

In the love of Christ's cause I beseech the churches to "mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

SOME OLD DOCTRINES...

(Continued from page 12)

hinder their receiving the word. "Many of them therefore believed." (v. 12). "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently; having been (begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth. For, all flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass; The grass withereth, and the flower falleth; but the word of the Lord abideth forever. And this is the word of good tidings which was preached unto you." (1 Peter 1:22-25). The word which abides forever, the word by which these brethren had been begotten, was the word which had been preached to them; it is an incorruptible seed. It is the Implanted word of James 1:21, the word sown in the heart. The only seed therefore that produces Christians is the word of God, which was announced through men that preached the gospel by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven. (See I Peter 1:12). This word lives and abides; it has life in it—it lives, and therefore can impart life to the heart in which it is sown. If the word of God did not have life in it, it would not be seed. Those who claim that the sinner must have life imparted to him by a direct 'work of the Spirit before he can receive the word cannot regard the word as seed. We are told by some that the word is food for the Christian, but cannot put life into a sinner; but the truth is, it is both seed and food. The direct operation theory contradicts the statement that the word is seed.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...."

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