FALSE ARGUMENTS AND SCRIPTURE PERVERSIONS

R. L. WHPTESIDE

With the ideas some have, I do not see how they have any grounds for urging aliens to repent. We have been told that aliens are not in Covenant with God—are not under his law, and therefore the Lord takes no notice of what they do. If this be true, they violate no law, and are therefore not sinners. Where then is there grounds for urging them to repent? Repent of what? It was put this way in a sermon I heard: “When a man becomes a Christian he obligates himself to do right.” And that is saying that a man is under no obligation to do right till he becomes a Christian. If an alien is under no obligation to do right, then he commits no sin in failing to do right—he commits no sin in matter ‘what evil he does. He would be under no obligation even to believe in God or the Lord Jesus Christ, and would have no sins to repent of. Can you think of a more vicious doctrine? It sounds like some of the phases of Russellism. Here is the way Scofield’s Bible states the doctrine: “Acts is in two chief parts: In the first section, 1:1-9, Peter is the prominent personage, Jerusalem is the center, and the ministry to the Jews. Already in covenant relations with Jehovah, they had sinned in rejecting Jesus as the Christ. The preaching, therefore, was directed to that point, and repentance (i.e. a change of mind) was demanded— In the second division (10:1-28,31) Paul is prominent, a new center is established at Antioch, and the ministry is chiefly to Gentiles who, as ‘strangers from the covenants of promise’ (Eph. 2:12), had but to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ ‘to be saved.” These are strange statements, but consistent with the notion that aliens are not responsible to God for what they do, It is plainly implied that, if the Jews had not been in covenant relations with God, they would not have needed to repent of crucifying Jesus! And the Gentiles had no sins to repent of, then they had none from which ‘to be saved. Besides, no Jew today was ever in covenant relations with God, as had been the Jews to whom Peter preached; for that covenant had been nailed to the cross. If Scofield were correct, neither Jew nor Gentile would now need to repent. But Scofield’s Bible and God’s Bible do not agree, Jesus said that repentance should be preached ‘among all nations. And when Peter explained his preaching to Gentiles, the brethren at Jerusalem “held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life.” And Paul told the Athenians that God now “commandeth men that they should all ev
where repent." It is a pity that a man who Professes to be a teacher of God's word will ignore plain statements of the Scriptures because he cannot fit them into a fanciful theory. Of course, repentance in the passages mentioned includes more than a mere change of mind.

As to the condition of the Gentiles, there is little difference between Scofield and Pastor Russell. In a debate with a Russellite several years ago, one of the propositions I affirmed and he denied was, that baptism was for the remission of sins to Jew and Gentile alike. He readily granted that baptism to Jews was for the remission of sins, but denied that any Gentile was ever baptized for the remission of sins. Even so, it is easy to see that both Scofield and the Russellite were more consistent on that point than brethren who contend that baptism is for the remission of alien sins, and yet contend that the alien, not being under any law to God, violated no law of God. But brethren who so contend are as wrong on this point as Scofield and Russell. Paul speaks of "sinners of the Gentiles." (Gal. 2:15). If the theory were correct, 'we might well repeat Paul's question, "Then how shall God judge the world?" The Jews had been intrusted with the oracles of God, but had made such poor use of their blessings, that Paul makes this observation concerning them and Gentiles: "What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we before laid to the charge of both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." (Rom. 3:1-9). And to see the degrading sins into which Gentiles had fallen read Rom. 1:18-32. And the Jews were no better--"all under sin." Jesus came to save sinners, not to make sinners; the gospel is God's power to save sinners, not to make sinners of those who hear it. Think on these things.

How came Cornelius to need salvation? One writer said that Cornelius was "doubtlessly serving the God of his fathers under patriarchy." But patriarchy was not a religion, nor a form of worship, but a form of government. However if the head of the family or clan worshiped Jehovah, he was the priest and prophet for the family or clan; but some of them, like Laban, worshiped idols. Again: "The Patriarchal Dispensation did not end at Sinai except to the descendants of Abraham..." While the off-spring of Abraham was amenable to God under the law of Moses, Gentiles, to whom Moses' law was never given, could serve him under the law that had been in effect since Eden was lost to Adam land Eve." But many of the descendants of Abraham were not included in the covenant made at Sinai. The word dispensation occurs a few times in the New Testament, but never in the sense we attach to it when we speak of the three dispensations.

So far as we know Abel was the first one to offer a God-appointed sacrifice, and it does not appear that he was the head of a family or clan. He was therefore not a patriarch, and it is certain that he did not pass on to Cain or any other what God had revealed to him. I do not think anyone will contend that the commands to Osin and Abel were recorded for the guidance of following generations. It seems that the head of a family or clan, if he worshiped God, received revelations direct from God, just as did Abel. Joshua said to Israel, "Your fathers dwelt of old time beyond the river, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods." (Joshua 24:2; see also verses 14, 15). The quotation is from the American Standard Version. So Abraham came from idol-worshiping patriarchs, "Fathers" would include at least his father and grandfather, and perhaps farther back; and so he did not learn true worship from them. God spoke to him as he did to others before his time. You will search in vain for any line of true worshipers from creation to Abraham, and on down to Cornelius. And I have seen no indication that any directions for patriarchal government or worship was ever written for their guidance. If it were banded down by word of mouth, it would be perverted beyond recognition in a few generations. That Cornelius was ruler, prophet, and priest for his family or clan is a mere guess, with no hint...
on which to base a guess.

Cornelius may have learned about the true God from the Jews. It seems that he-kept the Jewish hour of prayer. Many Gentiles did learn about God from the Jews. We do know that Cornelius knew much about the life, teaching, and miracles of Christ. Who knows but that Cornelius was the centurion present at the crucifixion of Jesus? Remember this: A man cannot make a guess without some basis for his guess, and he cannot believe without evidence.

Here is a strange statement from our writer: “We firmly believe that Cornelius was not a sinner until the appearance of the angel with instructions that brought him and the entire Gentile world in covenant relations with Christ. Inspiration records, without correction, the statement of the man that had been healed of his blindness by the Lord (John 9:13), ‘How we know that God heareth not sinners. God, then, will not hear a sinner, but he did hear and answer the prayers of the Roman centurion, Therefore the man was not a sinner at the time his prayers were ascending unto the throne of God.’ The Jewish authorities said Jesus was a sinner, but they knew he was not an alien—th;ey knew he was in the covenant. The man born blind knew Jesus was not an alien; and to make his language apply to an alien is inexcusable. Saul of Tarsus prayed before he became a ‘Christian-prayed’ while he was still an alien, and the Lord was pleased in that he did pray. At that time he was still an alien, but not an alien sinner. An alien who has sincerely repented is not then an alien sinner, though he may not yet have been pardoned. That was the condition of Saul during the three days and nights he fasted and prayed. Nor was Cornelius sinning when he was praying for more light. If you will notice the answer he got you will know what he was praying for. The ‘angel told Cornelius that his prayer was heard; “Send therefore to Joppa, and call unto thee Simon, who is surnamed Peter,” “who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house.”

I do not think I ever read a more startling notion by any brother than that the visit of the angel to Cornelius made Cornelius a sinner and brought the entire Gentile world into covenant relations with Christ. He was righteous till the angel spoke to him and that turned him into a sinner! ‘How come? Did not Cornelius immediately set about doing what the angel told him to do? What sin did he commit? The visit of an angel turned a righteous man into a sinner, and also the entire Gentile world became sinners! Another strange thing—a righteous man prayed and was heard, but the prayer was answered after he became a sinner.
The question of what and who to fellowship with is a perplexing problem fraught with many dangers. In the solution to the problem there are certain Scriptures which serve as guidelines, and the danger lies in ignoring the Scripture. If we follow the Scripture we will be unquestionably right, but if we extend our fellowship beyond Scriptural bounds we get into the realm of darkness.

The word fellowship is from the Greek “koinonia” which Thayer defines: “fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, intercourse.” Webster defines fellowship: “state of being a fellow or associate; community of interest, activity, feeling; friendliness, comradeship; any union or association, esp. a company of equals or friends.” There is fellowship when people are united in working to accomplish a certain purpose or reach a certain goal. There is no fellowship between antagonistic parties. People may work together in fellowship in numberless activities. Political fellowship is when the members of a political party are working together for the election of the candidates of the party. Civic fellowship is when citizens of the community are working together to accomplish a definite goal for their community. Criminal fellowship is when a gang of outlaws are working together to break the law and perpetuate a crime. So the naked word fellowship does not indicate the goal toward which the fellowship is directed nor the kind of fellowship that is meant.

Christian fellowship means the working together of Christians to reach Christian goals. There can’t be no Christian fellowship where there are no Christians, there may be fellowship but it is not Christian fellowship. In the Scripture the word Christian is used as a noun only, and denotes a person who has believed on the Lord, repented of sins, confessed faith in Christ, and been baptized for the remission of sins. There can be no Christian fellowship, if the person has not obeyed the gospel to become a Christian. In common vernacular the word Christian is also used as an adjective to show specifically that an item is part of the religious and teaching of Christ. If doctrine is in truth in harmony with what Christ taught, it is said to be Christian doctrine. If a teaching is untrue, out of harmony with what Jesus taught, it is said to be unChristian. The New Testament is the standard and source of all that can properly be called Christian. If a religious notion is not found in the New Testament, or is contrary to the New Testament, it is unChristian. So in the phrase “Christian fellowship,” the word Christian puts a limit on the word fellowship. If you extend the fellowship beyond the limits of the word Christian, you just do not have Christian fellowship.

In genuine Christian fellowship the first and paramount purpose is to have fellowship with God and the Lord Jesus Christ. I John 1:3 “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” Many claim fellowship with the Lord, but who in reality are not in fellowship with him. I John 1:6-7 “If we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” This shows that Christian fellowship is not just a working arrangement and agreement among men, it is with God. This passage teaches that if we will seek and maintain fellowship with God, that our fellowship with men will in a large measure take care of itself. Christ is the center of Christian fellowship, and all who are united to him are thereby united with each other. All who work in fellowship with his will are working in fellowship with each other.

Many have misplaced their fellowship; they emphasize and seek fellowship with men, without regard to fellowship with Christ. (Fellowship built on human friendship, human doctrine, human practice is not Christian fellowship because it leaves Christ out. Notice that there is forbidden fellowship. Eph. 5:11 “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them,” 2 Cor. 6:14 “Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness?” What is the consequence of holding forbidden fellowship with ‘darkness? I John 1:6 “If we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.” When one forms a fellowship with a person, doctrine, or practice that is inimical to Christ, such a one forfeits his fellowship with Christ. This establishes the point, that some fellowship is not Christian fellowship. There are many things that I do not want fellowship with, because such fellowship would destroy my fellowship with Christ.

1) I want no fellowship with denominationalism. Jesus prayed, “Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word: that they may be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee. that they also may be one in us that the world
may believe that thou didst send me.” (John 17:20-21). The division inherent in denominationalism is contrary to the will and prayer of Christ, and if I form a fellowship ‘with that which is inimical to Christ I forfeit my fellowship with Christ, I do not regard denominationalists as Christians, because they have not obeyed the gospel; therefore I cannot have Christian fellowship with them. Some preachers do fellowship denominational preachers and call on them to lead prayers ‘etc., but such fellowship is not Christ-like fellowship.

(2) I want no fellowship with digressive instrumental music. Paul said, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and ‘admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God” (Col.3:16). In order to use the instrument and fellowship the digressives, one must stretch his fellowship beyond the word of Christ. I certainly do not want to break fellowship with Christ, just to gain fellowship with the digressives. In recent years some preachers among us arranged and entered fellowship meetings with the digressives; in such meetings they walked in darkness because they certainly had no light from Christ to direct them in that course. When the digressives give up their unchristian instruments and have fellowship with Christ, I will try to be right there and have fellowship with them at the same time.

(3) I want no fellowship with premillennialism. Paul said, “Who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love” (Col.1:13). Premillennialism denies the establishment and existence of the kingdom and the fulness of Christ as king. I certainly do not want to fellowship a Christ dethroning doctrine because it is not compatible with fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Some brethren have shed floods of crocodile tears over the fact that every one did not get out the mantle of fellowship to throw over the premillennialists. It is true that there is a fellowship built up around premillennialism, but it is not Christian fellowship and I want no part of it.

(4) I want no fellowship with defections from the church nor schemes which destroy the simplicity of the gospel. Eph.1:22-23 “And he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” The church is the fulness of ‘Christ, and I want no fellowship with any defect that corrupts the organization of the church or makes the church subservient to a human institution. Rom.1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; and the confession that is in Christ first, and also to the Greek.” I want no fellowship with any missionary scheme that puts the emphasis on anything other than the gospel of Christ.

In conclusion remember to be careful with fellowship, and be sure it is centered in Christ and his word. If we extend fellowship beyond the light of Christ into realms of darkness, we break fellowship with Christ.

AN EPIDEMIC

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“And the Spirit of Jehovah began to move him.” Judges 13:25. There is a continual moving and shifting of views on points of obedience, but those actions are not directed by the Spirit of Jehovah. There seems to be a “Movement Mania” that has developed into an incurable epidemic. When once one is affected with it no (amount of tender loving care or strong medicine or rebuke seem to stay its onward stride. Unless the diseased organ is quickly removed roots and all, “Movement Mania” will soon develop into “Promoters Phobia.” The victim has then reached a place where he fears to take the prescription prescribed by the Great Physician. He also holds fears for the people who are satisfied taking the undiluted medicine prescribed by the ‘Savior of mankind.

The first signs or symptoms of this “mania” are a few “unsound” words. The victim is soon overcome by his statements, especially if he receives a little sympathy from another who is (afflicted with the same ailment. Be it in the same congregation or from “far away places,” there is perfect unity among ‘them. He begins to call for money to help support the “baby monster” that he has dreamed into being. As proof that his “dream” is scriptural he will refer you to another idea that is being “sponsored” which is as absurd as his. Or he may garble some statement of a pioneer to claim his support. It seems that two wrongs are both right if they have the right promoters!!

Encampments, rallies, lodges, rest homes, homecomings, money drives for schools, orphan homes, endowments, etc. have camped beside the church treasury and each promoter is there justifying his claim on the ground that other movements have been accepted and therefore his is a worthy enterprise.

The “Movement Mania” has struck in many different communities, If it is cured in one (Continued on page 10)
The second chapter of Titus records Paul’s admonition to Titus. In this admonition we note that Paul is no little concerned about the way and manner in which one speaks and acts toward the doctrine of Christ. It is agreed that words are but the expression of ideas; “As a man thinketh so is he.” The heart is the seat of one’s thoughts. Words are the channel through which these thoughts are expressed. By what a man says we are able to know what he thinks concerning anything; provided, of course, he is an honest man. Sometimes when one finds himself in a hard place doctrinally he will complain that he is misunderstood. It still remains a fact though, that the only way we have of knowing what one thinks is by what he says. Surely we should be table to express ourselves and if our words do not correctly represent what we ‘think, we should not use such words. However, I am convinced that it is not always a case of being misunderstood but rather of being understood, correctly. He is a noble soul who is willing, when having conveyed a wrong thought by what he says, to retract such a statement and make the correct one rather than accuse all others of being void of understanding.

I have before me an advertisement of “YOUTH INSTITUTE ON THE BIBLE” in which there appears a ‘SPECIAL NOTE’ reading “Ministers and Sunday School Teachers are encouraged to publicize this meeting in THEIR LOCAL CHURCHES and to encourage their high school age young people to attend and to participate in the speech events.—(emp. mine)

When speaking concerning the doctrine of Christ, Paul ‘would encourage sound speech. He further says; “showing uncorruption”. Corruption is a nasty thing and when speaking of that which has to do with the doctrine of Christ Paul does not want one to use words that smack of corruption or rottenness; but to use the opposite, “sound speech”. The matter of ownership of the church is important and with respect to the doctrine of Christ holds a place of prime importance. We have labored, for tho these many years, to get people to recognize that the church belongs to Christ. It is not ours in any sense. And yet the writer of this announcement would have ‘the ministers and the Sunday School teachers (sounds rather official) to publicize this meeting in THEIR local churches, I am never alarmed when one of the denominational world uses such an expression; we rather expect it of them. But from preachers and <teachers, and no doubt the one who wrote this was both, to use such an expression is inexcusable. What are they trying to do? Help the sects to win the fight and convince all that it is *your church*, “my church”, “our church” etc.?

What is this “YOUTH INSTITUTE ON THE BIBLE” anyway? I have read extensively in the Bible and never ran across such a thing to my knowledge. Maybe it is there wrapped up in some of the simplicity of the Bible and I just didn’t show enough intelligence to recognize it. It is to be, I think, a discussion of the Bible, Most of the subjects announced seem to be vitally connected with the Bible. Perhaps there might be one exception “Bible Baseball Game”. I’m not so sure about this. Could be that the reign of the Cleveland Indians as champions of the baseball world is nearing an end: out of this might arise a new champion. I do know that a good many congregations have become baseball conscious and have provided a church team to compete with the denominations. Another example of acting in a strange way toward the church and the doctrine of Christ. I know of at least one instance where certain members of a certain congregation could not remain for a night service because ‘they just had to get back’ for the game in which THEIR team was playing; but with little chance of winning because the preacher wouldn’t be there to play, I notice that in this “YOUTH INSTITUTE ON THE BIBLE” there is to be an awarding of prizes to winners in certain events. It is possible that this would not constitute gambling but it is far from “sound speech” when connected with the doctrine of Christ. However, this seems to be a function of a college and not of the church. I am most certain that the sponsors of same would so contend and that it was within their right to stage a “YOUTH INSTITUTE ON THE BIBLE” if they so desire. A college or any organization may have such right if in so exercising such right they do not infringe on the doctrine of Christ or the church. Our criticism of such action is on the ground that almost without exception the church is involved. They say it is not a church affair nor a function of the church BUT they are always concerned about the church coming to their rescue in the matter of support. They want preachers to make strong announcements of their activities and encourage the youth to support them. So it is with Tanda Lodge and some other organizations. They tell us it is not a part of the church and they do not ask the church to take care of it; however, they do not hesitate to send out written requests to churches and members at large asking for liberal contributions. Not only do the outsiders (Continued on page 16)
"MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER"

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The title of this article is a quotation from Jesus 'when He drove from the temple them that bought and sold. On two occasions Jesus drove from the temple those who did not have proper respect for the house of worship. (John 2 and Matt. 21) Although there is a great deal of likeness between them they are not the same occasion. Once Jesus said: "You have made it a den of thieves." The other: 'Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise.'

Since there is nothing in the New Testament just to take up space, there is a grand purpose for the Holy Spirit's preserving this thing for our learning. That purpose is that we may have proper respect for things dedicated to the service and worship of God. Although we all know there is a world of difference (between the "meeting house" and the church of our Lord, there are many examples given to teach us to respect the "house of prayer."

The position I am taking is not the one taken by all my preaching brethren, even some of my close friends, but it is the position which I believe to be safe and right, and is, therefore, the position I shall hold until some Scripture be given to prove it wrong. I find a certain 'amount of satisfaction in opposing anything I believe to be contrary to the truth of God.

A LOOK AT THE TEMPLE AND TABERNACLE

(and applications made)

When God led the people into the wilderness, away from the idolatry of Egypt He ordered them to build Him a house. In Exodus 25:8 He called his house a sanctuary-a holy, dedicated place. This fact alone suggests that it was to be used for a special purpose-the worship of God. In Lev.17:4-6 God spake of this sanctuary as a "place of sacrifice ond worship." In Lev. 8:10 Moses takes the oil of dedication and dedicated not only the tabernacle, but the furnishings as well. Why did he so do? Did this ceremony change the building so far as one could see? No! 'Why, 'then, the ceremony? God desired that all get the significance of this sanctified, dedicated place of the Lord. All will recall that all that was done in, and concerning the tabernacle must be according to the command of the Lord. In Lev. 10, when Nadab and Abihu would use "strange fire," contrary to the command of the Lord, they paid for their folly with their lives. The same is true of Uzzah, in his touching the Ark. 2 Sam. 6:5-6. We have so long applied these things to denominational error that most of us think the Holy Spirit placed these on record for that purpose, only. Concerning the former error God said: "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me and before all the people I will be glorified."

Sure! there is condemnation in these for denominational error, but the people with whom God 'was then dealing were not in denominational error. Let's not overlook the lesson there for ourselves.

When we come to study the temple the first thing that impresses us is that it surpassed the tabernacle almost beyond our conception. In I Chron. 17:11-12 it was made known that Solomon was to 'build the Temple. God called it a "house of God," and He was speaking of the temple. In I Chron.28:10 it too, was called a sanctuary. When this temple was finished it was dedicated to the worship of God. Solomon, in his prayer of dedication, spake of it several times as "The Lord's house," "a place of prayer and sacrifice, worship." In 2 Chron. 7:16 God accepts this temple as "His house." and "hallowed it." In Ezek. 43:2 we learn the temple was "sanctified" Ezek. 42:13-14 it was "sacred," "but," says someone, the meeting house is not sanctified! Could you prove that? I have heard of their being "dedicated" even by men. But if we should agree that the meeting house is not sanctified, don’t forget the things that made the temple sacred, sanctified. Have you ever asked yourself why they were? When God appeared to Moses in the burning bush He told Moses that the ground around there was holy. How came that part of a sheep-pasture holy? It had not been before. Why was it then? Why was it not there after? You can see the why, It was, then, dedicated to the service of God. The presence of God, the Glory of God was 'there.

ABUSE AND MISUSE OF DEDICATED THINGS

While Israel was wandering in the wilderness they were to keep holy 'the Sabbath which God had "hallowed." That day was no different from any other day except that God had commanded that it be kept "holy." God hallowed it, God also made it clear that failure to respect the sacredness of that day was punishable by death. In Num. 15:32-36 there is a sad account of a poor fellow who reasoned that it was no different from any other day, in any sense. He died for polluting the Sabbath of the Lord.

We learn from Ezek. 44:5-9 that to bring the uncircumcised into the temple was to pollute it. In Acts 21:28-29 Paul was charged, by a prejudiced mob, of committing such a sin. He was not guilty; lbut this account informs us that, even though their religious convictions were shallow, they knew it was for them to
show respect for the house of God.

When Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem (2 Kings 24 & 25) he 'took from the temple the vessels which were used in the services and carried them away into Babylon where they were placed in the palace. About fifty years later Belshazzar is reigning instead of Nebuchadnezzar. While entertaining a thousand of his lords and ladies (so 'they were called) he sent for those vessels and commanded they be used in the drunkenness and revelry. Isn't there something 'significant to the fact that at that moment appeared the hand writing on the wall? Suppose I ask why this sudden condemnation? Was it because they were 'drinking? Was it, purely, because they had no regard for right? Was it because 'they did not respect the Lord? No, these were not the reasons. They were a people who had ever been given to such sins. If you desire the real answer 'to the question listen to Daniel when he is giving the King the meaning of the hand writing. "- - - And 'thou, his son, 0 Belshazzar hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them- -" Is there any guessing about the matter? I am stating that it is a dangerous thing to use for some earthly purpose the things that have been dedicated to the service of the Lord.

Yes, I agree, these things were sacred. And again I ask why 'were they sacred? The temple and tabernacle and their furnishings were sacred for some two or three reasons, Because of the presence of the Lord. Because of the blood or, the sacrifices. I learn from Matt. 18:20 that "Where two or three are gathered together- -" the Lord is there in the midst of them. We can't see (Him). Neither could Moses see Him in the bush, but He was there, and even the ground about was, 'therefore, holy. In Acts 10:33 Cornelius said: "- - - we are all here present before God- -" I know there is a sense in which we are always present before God, but when we come to the Lord, when we come to worship etc. we are present with the Lord in an unusual way. In the 'Hebrew letter the Apostle, or writer goes into detail to make us see how much more were the things of the new covenant than anything under the old: The Mediator, the Law, the Sacrifice, the Promises, the Priesthood, etc. In the Tabernacle there went the blood of bulls and goats "which could not 'take away sin," while in the meeting house we have the emblems of the blood of the Lord which can, in no manner, be compared to the blood of bulls and goats, so far as its atonement is concerned.

MEETING HOUSE NOT A SOCIAL NOR RECREATIONAL CENTER
(and should not be used as such)

The time has come when one can go into some meeting houses and find anything from a modern kitchen to a morgue. Anything one desires to do he can find the means in some of our modern meeting houses. Take exercise, play ping-pong, read magazines, listen to the radio, or even the organ, piano (for special occasions, however) cook and eat a meal, take a nap, play pool, or well, what do you want to do? If we don't have it we'll put it in.

I know, by observation, if by no other means, that these things have no place in a house of worship, I list a few reasons why I say these things should never be in the place of worship. First, they divide brethren. Yes, there are a great many who still insist on doing things as they should be done-according to the Scriptures. They will not endorse the above. When they stand for the truth as they should a division is likely to follow. I was on a lecture, not a thousand miles from Arlington, and less than a hundred years ago, and while being shown through their new building wherein are many of the things mentioned above, I asked my guide, and brother, "Well, just what do you really think about all this?" He dropped his eyes to the floor and answered: "Perhaps it is all very well, but I do know we have lost some of the best members this congregation ever had just because of these very things," I could get no more out of him. That was 'enough. If a thing were perfectly alright in itself, yet is a matter of expediency, it becomes sinful when its introduction causes a division among brethren. A preacher friend, and a good fellow, I know, told me some time ago that he could not get along with the eldership where he was preaching. They 'were, as he put it, "good men," but they did not like it when he conducted a Halloween party in the church building. Division is sinful and when 'things, not involving doctrinal truth, cause divisions, then the things are sinful.

Second, perhaps this should have been first, but I am not trying to list these in order of their importance, 'these things rob the services of the church of its spirituality. It is little wonder that so many fail to be impressed with the spiritual significance of the worship services. When a congregation tries to compete with everything from a cafe to an undertaking establishment it is bound to have its effect on all, both young and old. Paul rebuked the Corinthians for their misuse of the Lord's Supper—some became drunk, land others 'showed disrespect by bringing their ordinary meals to the place of worship. In this rebuke Paul asked a question. "Will you hear it? "What? have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye
the church of God, and shame them that have not? What? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. (1 Cor. 11:22) True, I know they were not discerning the Lord's body and blood. But what of the question: "Have you not houses in which 'to eat and drink?" All of us who have pointed out the reasonable inference, what about the reasonable inference here? I have no better sense than to think the apostle is inferring 'that such is not to be done in the place of worship, — eating an ordinary meal.

Third, these things lower the activities of the congregation 'to a sectarian level. I know one should not shrink from doing a thing just because 'the sects are doing it. I also know there is no reason FOR doing a thing just because they are. As for the 'things I'm mentioning, some would not be the least out of place in any sectarian church in 'the country. It should be impossible for 'the world 'to see any likeness between the church of our Lord and Sectarianism.

Fourth, this is all unfair to your youth. It is a good thing some of us have "our young people." Any 'time one 'desires to bring something unscriptural into the affairs of the church, we hear: "We must do something for our young folk." I say this young folk problem, which is not really a problem, at least of the church, as a church, is all unfair to 'the young people. Some have talked about this so long 'they have made 'the youth in the congregations over the land think they ARE a problem to the church. The greatest problem of the young folk of our day, if there is any problem, 'is the parents. I get tired of this asking the leadership of the church: 'What is the church doing for my children?" 'What are you doing? If it is true that the church is not doing anything, it is still up with a good many parents in the church. Don't misunderstand, I think it is a fine thing for Christian parents, to get together, as Christian parents, and provide things of a wholesome nature for the young folk, I think we should bring, and keep them together. I think we should be willing to spend ourselves, and our means toward that end. As Christian parents we should do this. But let us not try to shift our God-given responsibilities as parents, to the leadership of the church. The church is not a social institution. When one becomes a parent, he just then becomes responsible for his child, socially, as well as 'every other way. If caring for the young, socially, were a problem of the church, then, that man who is not a member of the church, but who has a house full of children, would have no such responsibility at all. What are you doing for your children? Father has his work, his golf, his club, his fishing, his lodge. Mother has about the same crowded program. Her housework, (which must not include caring for children) her circle, bridge, tea, shopping and too, she must spend a day or so a month in some meeting learning how to bring up her children, 'while some other mothers are at home, or some other suitable place doing just that, while her own are tucked away in the picture show or roaming the streets. If we are really too busy to care for our children, live with them, play with them, take an interest in their interest etc. then, we are too busy to have children. If the best we can provide for our children, socially is the auto ride, the road house, dance floor, bathing pool, and the picture theatre; 'there is no need to try to dress up the meeting house and attract them, and at the same time maintain in them a respect for the house of the Lord.

I have a world of confidence in our young folk, I think they are the finest yet. They are doing well 'considering the examples set before some of them. The dishonest, and profane fathers, the cocktail-sipping, dancing, cursing, smoking mothers have no right to expect anything better of their children. But the young folk have no problem to the church, they have been made the "goat" when something is being done that is not in keeping with the Word of God. Our youth will have just as much interest in worship services 'today as they ever did if we will keep the meeting places "places of prayer."

PROMOTERS IN THE FIELD

Yes, this, like every other sin has its promoters, I think, however, most are engaged in it quite unconsciously. First, there are the over-enthusiastic teachers and preachers, Those with more zeal than knowledge. If we can take over the responsibility of the children that will please the busy parents, and we shall be in demand. We get concerned about our young folk and insist that this or that be done in order to "save them." We persuade the elders, and here it is. In the many years I have been preaching I have met more unreasonable preachers, in matters of this sort, than elders and deacons. I once preached for a church where there was a very fine young lady who taught one of the classes. She got so much concerned with the young folk that, without the permission, or the knowledge, of the leadership, she took the class, all dressed up as spooks and goblins, to the meeting house and conducted a Halloween party. Yes, the intentions of such enthusiastic workers may all be very good, but they must be controlled by those who have knowledge along with the zeal. Others who are promoting this sin are the thoughtless parents. As already mentioned we have led them to believe that the responsibility of caring for their children is to be given to the leadership of the church. Their first,
and perhaps last, thought is that something is being done for children, with little, or no consideration for whether that thing is in keeping with the wishes of the Lord.

Finally, often this is promoted by the leadership. Not that 'they desire to do anything that is not proper, but they, doubtless, have not given such matters 'the proper amount of thought. They have not discovered that such is not in keeping with the purpose for which the meeting house was erected. They desire to have peace and are willing to pay the price of cheating the services, and the place itself in order to have that peace.

If Christian parents desire 'to contribute of their funds to provide things of a social, recreational nature for youth, and even to build a house in which such is to be done, that will be well and good. Such a move might well have the endorsement of all. But when the leadership of the congregation raises a sum of money to build a "house of worship," and then uses twenty-five percent of that money in providing these social and recreational things, it is nothing less than obtaining money under false pretense.

The buyers and sellers of Jesus' day were not engaged in an illegitimate business but they were doing business in the name of religion, and in the "house of prayer." There is no real evidence that they were dishonest, as some have ventured. Jesus did say: "- - - you have made it a den of thieves - - -," but some scholars, including Adam Clarke, suggest that they were thieves in that they were not serving souls in the temple as they pretended to be, and the very nature of their business in the temple robbed it of its dignity. There can be no question that Jesus was speaking of the temple when he used the term "house" in the passages mentioned. "You have made it- - -" Their business there did not pollute the "family" of God, but, rather, 'His temple.

If we would have all to respect the "house of the Lord," whether the family of the temple, let's keep the place of worship a "house of prayer."

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The third principle is this: Does it have a weakening influence on others, and will it become a stumbling block to them? A lot of people say to me, “I do not care what others think about what I do.” If you care what is right, and you are a Christian, then you do care what they think, because you care what the affect of what you do is upon another. Paul taught that if a man can eat meat that has been sacrificed unto idols, and it did not violate his conscience, then it was not wrong for him to eat it. He could eat it with a good conscience, nothing wrong involved in it. Yet if when he ate that meat he caused another brother to stumble and violate his conscience, by so doing it would be wrong for him to do it. Let me read the passage. The word of God is plain on it if we can simply get it before us. In I Cor. 10, I read from the 23rd verse. The Apostle Paul said, “All things are lawful; but not all things edify. All things are lawful, but not all things edify. Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor’s good. Whatever is sold in the shambles, eat, asking no question for conscience sake; for the earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof. If one of them that believe not biddeth you to a feast, and ye are disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake: conscience, I say, not thine own, but the other’s; for why is my liberty judged by another conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give no occasion of stumbling, either to Jews or to Greeks, or to the church of God: even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved.” (I Cor. 10:23-33)

Paul said, “I am not talking about my own conscience, but the conscience of the other. Do not lead the other man to offend his own conscience.” Now turn with me back to I Cor. 8, this time verse 7: “Howbeit there is not in all men that knowledge: but some, being used Until now to the idol, eat as of a thing sacrificed unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But food will not condemn us unto God: if we eat not, are we the worse; nor, if we eat, are we the better.” It is a matter of indifference. You do not have to do it. You are not any better if you do it, or any worse if you do not do it. It is a matter of utter indifference. You are at liberty to eat it if it doesn’t violate your conscience, but do not let this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. “For if any man see thee which hath knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not the conscience of him that is with thee be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols?” He will see you eating, and he will say, “There is a man that knows. Maybe I am wrong when I think that it is wrong to eat meat, and I will just go ahead and eat it (because my brother is eating it).” You embolden and encourage him to violate his own conscience by your example. That is what he is talking about. “Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died.” When you sin so against the brethren, and would weaken their conscience, you sin against Christ. “Wherefore,” (here is the way a Christian feels about a thing like that) “If meat causes my brother to offend, I will eat no more meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend,” Now that passage is often misapplied. It doesn’t mean what a lot of people try to make it mean. A lot of people try to make that passage mean this: We will just use Brother Moody for an example. We’ll say that Brother W. S. Moody thinks it is wrong to chew gum. Some people do. I knew a preacher one time that did. We will say that he does. I think it is all right. It would be wrong for Brother Moody to chew it. He thinks it is wrong. That is the only reason why it would be wrong. There is no other principle involved in it, but it would be wrong for him because he would violate his conscience if he did it. It would be all right for me, because it would not violate mine. But if I chewed gum before Brother Moody, setting an example, and he looked at me and said: “Now there is Brother Cogdill. He is chewing gum. I think it is wrong to chew gum, but I do not know. I guess if he does I can, and he ought to know.” So with a question in his heart he goes right ahead and chews gum. I have lead him to violate his conscience, haven’t I? I have lead him to do the thing that he is not persuaded is right. I have lead him to violate his conscience. The Bible teaches that is a sin. Who is the cause of it? I am. By my example. That is what Paul is talking about here. I cannot afford to lead another brother into sin. But here is the way a lot of people want to apply that thing. They say, “Now Brother Moody thinks it is wrong to chew gum. If you chew gum he will become offended at you. He will take offense at your chewing gum, therefore you cannot chew gum because Brother Moody thinks it is wrong for you to chew gum, and he will become of-
fended if you do.” That is not what the passage teaches. It does not say to “offend.” It says “cause my brother to offend.” To offend what? To offend his own conscience by doing the thing, by following the example I have set. That is what the passage is teaching. Otherwise, it would make a God out of every crank on earth, wouldn’t it? If you just had to quit doing things because somebody thought you ought not do it, and that is what the passage teaches, then it makes a God out of every crank in the country, and you would have to go (around trying to please people wherever you went, You just could not live a Christian life on that basis.

But you cannot afford by your example to lead another to offend his own conscience. So I cannot by exercising my liberty in the chewing of gum, I cannot afford to encourage Brother Moody to do it in violation of his conscience. Now I might be able to teach him, and show him that it is not wrong, that there isn’t any principle involved in it, and help him to become strong where he is weak in that respect, so that he might engage in it. That might be different, That would be a different proposition. But as long as his conscience is weakened, as long as he violates his conscience in doing it, if I lead him by my example to go ahead and do the thing, thinking that it is wrong, violating his own conscience when he does it, I have led him into sin. That is what the Bible teaches about it. I am telling you what Paul said about it, and it ‘applies to anything, I don’t care what the example is, whether it applies to chewing gum, or anything else. It does not make any difference. Let me give you for sake of clarity on that point, and forgetting about the personal thing involved, a little personal experience that will demonstrate that. I went one time in the town of Greenville, Texas, where I lived, to see a picture show. It was a good one I thought. It was the old story by Wallace, Ben Hur. I enjoyed it. I did not see anything in the world in it that I thought was vile, ugly, suggestive, or hurtful in any way. If there was anything wrong about it I was unable to discern it, I am sure that there are a good many pictures of that caliber that have been made back through the years. I am sure of another thing. I am sure of the fact that a whole lot of them are not conducive to anything that is worthwhile. I am sure of that too. I have seen some where the moving picture industry would, for the sake, purely and only, of injecting an advertisement into the middle of it for the liquor industry, put a drinking scene in it when there was no cause for it, no excuse under heaven, Surrounding it with everything sophisticated, and everything elite, and everything conducive and encouraging, and just make a liquor drinking scene out of it. The moving picture industry has become one of the greatest advertisements for liquor drinking that there is on the face of the earth, and there cannot be any question about that. They will inject a scene like that into an otherwise innocent and harmless picture without the least excuse under heaven for doing it. There is another thing while I am talking on that point. The moving picture industry owned by the Jews has become the greatest medium of Catholic propaganda in this country, and that cannot be denied. If you do not think so you just take stock of some of the Catholic pictures that have been made that teach Catholic traditions and doctrines, and give them prominence, and glorify them and clothe them with respectability. If you do not think so you just keep your eyes open the next time you go to see one. And the newsreel: if any opportunity is afforded to give any kind of religion any sort of notice and credit at all, it will be Catholicism, If they put a Protestant scene in it it will be for the purpose of ridicule. It is never on any other basis. “Going My Way,” was the name of one, wasn’t it? ‘Was that the Bing Crosby picture? I did not see it. I heard about it. I know about it. Bing Crosby himself was educated for a Catholic priest, the whole family Catholics. He played a part that became him, and one that he sincerely believed in, No wonder that he could act in it sincerely, and it was a high handed piece of Catholic propaganda. About two years ago when I was coming back from Kentucky, I missed a train connection in New Orleans on the way to Houston. I was there for several hours, and as I went through the city, walking around between trains, I noticed a picture, “The Song of Bernadette,” I had heard a little bit about it. A certain star was in it, I believe her name was Jennifer Jones. I decided that I would go in and see the picture. I went in and sat down. I stayed as long as I could stand it, and it soon became so revolting to me because of the downright Catholic propaganda that I could not stand it any longer. I had to get up and walk out. That is just one of the examples, It is entirely obvious to anyone who stops to think about it. The Catholics have control over it, and they are using it in every possible way for their own glorification, for their own good, and have at every chance ‘where the occasion was present, discredited every other kind of religion. But there is another thing that the motion picture industry is responsible for, the average picture is so based upon sensuality, and so full of things that are sensual that it could not possibly be conducive to anything righteous and good upon the part of anybody, either young or old, Somebody may say, “Well, I got a good moral out of it.” Well, you might fish a good biscuit out of a slopbucket, but that would be a poor place to go for one. If you want moral I would not advise that sort of a place to find them. Moving pictures within themselves are
not wrong. It is the wrong that is made out of them. They should be educational and they should be helpful, and they should certainly be innocent recreation and entertainment. Sometimes I have seen pictures that I thought were, and were as wholesome as any book that you could read, or any paper that you could read. Of course, what can be said for the motion picture industry along that line can be said for the daily newspaper. A lot of them are so full of filth and rubbish and things of that kind that you can't get any good out of it, and you would be a lot better off if you did not fill your mind with things of this kind. There is a lot of the literature that is found on the average magazine rack and the drug store rack that is too filthy and rotten for any person who respects himself and the truth to allow it even to come into his home. We all know that is so.

Everything in the world that becomes an advantage to the devil in allowing him to get into our hearts and minds is wrong. I went to see this picture at Greenville, thinking that I had not done anything wrong, or that I was not violating any principle, and if I did, I don't know what it was, But you know there 'was a woman in the congregation who came to me after that, and I am telling you the story purely for the purpose of getting the reaction that came from it. She said, "You know my circumstances, Brother Cogdill. I am a widow, and I sew for a living. I have a boy about eleven year's old. In the first place, I do not have the money to let my boy go to the picture show as often as he would like to go. In the second place, I do not think that it would be good for him to see a lot of pictures that he wants to see, and go as often as he wants to go. I have tried to curb and direct and discourage him to some extent along that line, and restrain him from it for his own good. He has argued with me all the time that I am too strict about the matter, and that I am old fogey and old fashioned about it, and rather narrow minded, But the other day he was down in town and he saw you go to the picture show. He came home and said to me, 'Mother, I've told you all the time that you were strict about something, and now I know that you are. I saw Brother Cogdill go, and he would not have gone if there is anything wrong about it!'"

Now he didn't stop to think about the kind of picture that I went to see, He didn't stop to weigh anything connected with it. He was justifying himself in wanting to go three or four times a 'week to see just any kind of a picture that came along, no matter what kind it was, how suggestive, how vulgar, or how evil it might be. It was all right for him to go see them because I went to see the one. Now I will just grant you that in seeing the one picture I did not do anything wrong whatsoever, yet if my going to see that one picture led somebody to see one that would be 'bad for him, my example was heading in the 'wrong direction, wasn't it? Could you deny that? Would you do it? If by my example I was perfectly innocent in the thing I did, and the attending circumstances were of such a nature that it contributed to someone else doing wrong, then I am doing wrong in the example I set. That is what Paul is talking about in this passage. I cannot afford by my example and through my influence, even in the exercise of something that I might be at liberty to do, I cannot afford to destroy somebody else; for when I do, however innocently it may have been done, I am responsible for the harm that is wrought. I have to guard my influence and that is true of every Christian.

The next principle is: Is it destructive to your body? Now a lot of people come to me and say, "Preacher, I want to know do you think it is 'wrong to do this, or wrong to do that?" Sometimes they ask me about the use of tobacco. Is it wrong to use tobacco? Or wrong to dip snuff? Or wrong to smoke cigarettes? Is it wrong to do such? Well, I think this principle might help us to determine something along that line. What is it? Is it harmful to your body? Did you know that when you do a thing that is harmful to your body that you have sinned in the sight of God? That is what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches that if you are a Christian your body belongs to the Lord. Paul said, "Ye are a temple of the living God; therefore, glorify God in your bodies." Your body belongs unto God as well as your soul. You have not the right to engage in anything. I care not what the practice is, if it is harmful to you. Of course, what harms one person may not harm another. That is readily accepted. I cannot eat cucumbers, I just cannot digest them. I found that out. I just cannot eat them because they are harmful to me, poisonous to my body, and it is wrong for me to do it. Well, I need to eliminate those practices that I know are harmful to me, and within the realm of good Christian judgment exercise myself to the very best of my ability in such a way as to insure the continued strength of my body that I might be able to serve God with it, and do all the good that I can while I live in the world.

The passage on that principle is I Cor. 6:19-20. "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body." Then again: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (I Cor.10:31) And it is
wrong for a man to sit down at the table and gorge himself with food enough to be harmful to him, eat something that he knows is harmful to him, or engage in any other practice that he knows is destructive to his physical strength. You sin when you do it. If you are doing something that is harmful to your body, then you just remember that God condemns the man that knowingly practices a thing of that kind, and it is sinful in God’s sight.

Principle number five: Does it conflict with your duty as a Christian? People sometimes ask me, "Is it wrong to be a member of this, or wrong to belong to that?" I might answer that question by simply asking you this question: will it conflict with your duty as a Christian? You do not have any right to put yourself under any circumstance, you do not have the right to form any kind of an alliance, you do not have the right to get yourself into any sort of a position where anybody can interfere with your duty to God, because your duty to God comes first. "But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt.6:33) Then again: "No soldier on service entanglethe himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier." Sometimes people say to me about fraternal organizations, "Do you think that a Christian can belong to a fraternal organization?". A particular one, or any of them, it doesn’t matter. Of course, there are some objectionable features in some of them that you might not find in others. I’ll tell you this: I do not see how a man who is a Christian, who believes with all of his heart in the Lord Jesus Christ, who wears the name of Christ and is trying to honor the name of Christ can be a member of a fraternal organization in which prayers are offered that cannot be offered in the name of Christ. I cannot reconcile that, and I don’t believe any other Christian can. Aside from those special considerations: Anything wrong with a fraternal order? Question: Does it interfere with your duty as a Christian? When the time comes that you have to choose between the fraternity and Christ, the fraternity and the church, your duty to the Lord or your duty to the other, what kind of a choice would you make? What would be your attitude about it? Would you put the fraternity above the church? If you do, it is wrong. There isn’t any doubt about it. A principle would be violated. It Tim. 2:4, “No soldier on service entangleteth himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier.” When a soldier is in the United States Army he just has to bring his other business to a close. Paul refers that very point and applies that principle to the church of the living God. Who needs to be anything but a Christian? There is all of the good in Christianity that you can find in anything on earth, and there is none of the bad in it that you can find in all of the rest of them. Why be anything but just a Christian? Christ is an all-sufficient Savior, the church an all-sufficient institution, the word of God an all-sufficient revelation. Christianity ought to be enough, if we make out of it what God ‘intends for it to be.

Another principle: Does it create an inordinate fleshly appetite? Does it do that? You know the Bible teaches that Christians ought to exercise self-control. “Set. your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness which is idolatry; for which things sake cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.” A Christian is to be governed by the will of Christ, subject to the authority of Christ, and not to live on a fleshly basis, satisfying the appetites of the flesh. Titus 2:11-13, "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in the present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” Did you notice that “denying ungodliness and worldly lusts?” Self-control is one of the cardinal requirements of Christianity. I cannot afford to lose the control of my body. I cannot afford to lose the control of my body. I cannot afford to cultivate any kind of an appetite that will get the control and mastery of me, neither can you. Sometimes people ask, ‘Is it wrong to do this thing over here?’ Well, that might be determined by this very principle. The principle is: will it cultivate an inordinate, fleshly appetite. For instance, if a man takes a shot of morphine, or some other kind of dope, for some purpose, he likes the effect of it, and he readily agrees to another, and another, and another, and another. The first thing you know he has become a dope fiend, so addicted to it that he has lost control of himself. Morphine is not the only thing that will do it. Liquor will do it. I have seen strong men, otherwise, cry like babies because they could not quit the liquor habit. I have had them cry land tell me, “Brother Cogdill, I would like to be a Christian, I would like to be saved. I would like to be in the church, but I cannot quit drinking liquor.” It had eaten away their will until manhood was gone, and the ability to do the thing that they really wanted to do was gone. They actually didn’t have the power of self-will and self-control to the point that they could do that which
they deep down in their hearts wanted to do. I
would be ashamed to admit, have to admit, that I
had a habit that I couldn’t break. I do not care
whether it is drinking coffee for breakfast or
smoking a cigar after dinner. It would not
make any difference. You think about a
man who professes to be a Christian and to
live a Christian life, and he in the possession
of himself and his faculties and able to control
himself and direct his life, think about a man
ike that to be weasly and measly enough to have
to admit that “I just can’t quit it.” The
tobacco habit, the coffee habit, any other kind
of a habit. “I just can’t quit it. It controls me.
It is the master I just can’t quit it.” I’d be
like the old man: I’d quit it every once in a
while, anyway, just to be sure that I could, if
for no other reason. The thing that gets that
kind of control over you is a mighty dangerous
thing. You ought to beware of it. I don’t care
what it is.

The next principle: Will it bring you under
weakening association and influence? Here’s
the passage. I Thess. 5:21-22, “Prove all things;
hold fast that which is good; abstain from every
form of evil.” Again in I Cor. 15:33, “Evil
companionships corrupt good morals.” The principle:
“Evil companionships corrupt good morals.”
You know a man cannot just constantly asso-
ciate with evil without being affected by it. I
don’t care how revolting cursing is to you, you
can listen to it until it gets to where it sounds
all right. Sin is a process of education. Right-
eousness is a process of education, and you can
create yourself to sin, or you can educate your-
self to do right. Certainly you can! You need
to be careful about the influences that are
being brought to bear upon your heart and life,
careful that you are not submitting yourself
constantly to influences and associations that
will destroy you and bring you into captivity
to sin. “Evil companionships corrupt good mor-
als.” I feel sorry for the man who tries to live
the Christian life with the predominant influence
of his life coming from the devil, and the devil’s
crowd. He just has a mighty hard time. In fact,
he just cannot make a success of it. What
you need in order to live a Christian life is to
have your friendships, and to have your asso-
ciations and your ties with those who are in
the Lord, respect the truth, respect the church,
that are trying to do right, and will help you
to try to do the thing that is right, rather than
forming your ties and connections with those
who do not respect the Lord, and care nothing
about his church, or about heaven or your soul.

The final principle in this lesson: Does it bring
upon you an unequal yoke and place you at a
disadvantage in serving the Lord? We go back
to II Cor. 6:14, “Be not unequally yoked with
unbelievers.” To what does that apply? It
applies to anything, business, marriage, or so-
cial affairs. It applies to any kind of a relation-
ship that you can form, that places you under
obligation to somebody else who doesn’t care
anything about the Lord, and doesn’t care any-
thing about the church so that they can interfere
with your duties as a Christian. People say
to me once in awhile, “Is it wrong to marry
outside of the church? Is it wrong for a Christian
to marry a person who isn’t a Christian?”
There is one answer to that question that I can
be positive about. That answer is this: When-
ever a person, if he is a Christian, tries to serve
one Lord, marries a person who isn’t a Chris-
tian, and allows that person who isn’t a Christ-
ian, to interfere with his duty to Christ, that is
wrong. That is wrong, and you can’t go to
heaven and permit that. You can just be positive
about it. A person who is a Christian united
with one who isn’t a Christian that permits
that relationship to interfere with his duty to the
Lord cannot be pleasing in the sight of God in
doing wrong. It is an unequal yoke, Now
if you can keep it upon such a basis where that
isn’t true it would be another problem. There
would be some other question about it, but
that is the major consideration, and about that
I can be positive. When you allow your companion
to interfere with your duty to God in any respect
you are displeasing God. Christianity requires
that you put the Lord first.

What can I do, and what can’t I do? Number
one: Does it destroy your identity as a Christian
by causing you to be regarded as of the world?
If it does it is wrong. Number two: Is the
practice questionable in your own mind and
therefore an offense to your own conscience?
If so it is wrong. Number three: Does it have
a weakening influence on others and will it be-
come a stumbling block to them? If it leads
another into sin then it is wrong. About that
you can be positive. Number four: Is it de-
structive to your body? If it is then it is wrong.
Number five: Does it conflict with your duty
as a Christian? If so then it is wrong. Six:
Does it cultivate an inordinate fleshly appetite?
If so then it is wrong. Seven: Does it bring
you under weakening association and influence?
If it does then it is wrong. Number eight:
Does it bring upon you an unequal yoke and
place you at a disadvantage in serving the Lord?
If so then you better stay out of that kind of
a relationship. Now there you have some of the
principles of the word of God, not all of them,
but as many as we will have time to discuss
and perhaps more than we should have talked
about. It gives you an idea of what the Bible
teaches, and how the Bible deals with this
problem. If you will get these principles down
and make your own personal application of
them you will not have to be running around
to some preacher asking him what he thinks about something, God has given you the way of finding out for yourself whether it is right or whether it is wrong.

But will you remember with me that the first thing that Christianity demands of you is that you separate yourself from the world. The gospel is a call, it is an invitation to leave the world behind, and to come and enlist in the army of the Lord Jesus Christ, to separate yourself from sin, its love, its practice, and its guilt, and through obedience to the gospel to be one of the called out body of the Lord, the church of the living God, honor him by the life that you live and by the service that you render, and to be honored by him when he comes again to receive those unto himself who loved his appearing. Will you become a Christian? Will you give yourself to ‘God? Will you come out of the world and be separate, be a member of the called out body of the church of the Lord, obey the truth? May God help you to come while tonight we invite and urge that you do so. Let us stand and sing the song of invitation!

SOUND SPEECH

(Continued from page 6)

get the idea that it is part of the church but worse the members of the churches in part get the same idea. Such implications are not in harmony with Paul’s admonition to use sound speech and action.

Further: What about the actions of a gospel preacher when he engages in all kinds of union activities staged by the denominations? Allowing (perhaps I should say desiring) himself to be advertised as featured speaker in sunrise easter services and other denominational union activities. Is it again true that God’s people in part are desirous of being like the nations about them? Brethren, it is difficult enough at best to sell the world on the idea that we stand on New Testament principles and contend for the authority of Christ without the aid of preachers in the churches acting in such a way as to support the cause of the denominations. We need, once again, to “Seek for the old paths, and walk therein”. It is no disgrace to be accused of being antiquated when such accusations come because of our stand for New Testament principles. We should rather glory in that we are a “peculiar people” and are known as people who stand for the ancient gospel “once delivered to the saints”. Such activities are herein described are neither good nor necessary. The church has grown and prospered for centuries without them. Congregations now are able to grow and do the bidding of the Lord without them. We still have many people who are willing to let the old Jerusalem Truth prevail; who want the church to stand for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus unmixed with denominational error; either in speech or action. Let it be so.

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