

THE BIBLE TEACHER

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Published by Church of Christ, Box 3815,
New Delhi-110049

Pleading For The Restoration Of Pure New Testament Christianity

Vol. 16

August 1985

No. 4

EDITORIAL



T.V., Video, And Such Like

All along there have been those who have opposed everything that had anything to do with film or movies. This developed years ago when movies were first introduced. Prior to that time, films were something like filmstrips are. One could see only one scene at a time. Then when the actors and actresses could not only move about, but they could also talk and be heard, then these people thought that this was surely the work of Satan. Their argument was strengthened when, in some parts of the world, the theater where these films were shown, were turned into places for young men and women to go to sit in the dark and express their affection toward one another.

Of course with the passing of time, and with the growth and wide outreach of the film industry, then the majority have come to accept motion pictures, and I am especially speaking of believers in Christ. Surely, just because a film moves, or has its performers moving, that does not make it wrong. Neither does it become wrong just because they are able to speak. Now it is another

thing when it comes to what they are doing, what they are saying, and the place the film may be seen. Be it understood therefore that as believers in Christ, we fully accept the idea of films, moving films, talking pictures, colored movies, and such like, and we believe that they can be used as effective tools in the Lord's work, and we so use them. But that does not mean that we can endorse all films, movies, or whatever, or that we would encourage people in general to go to all theaters for entertainment. Because of the subject matter, language, the message being conveyed, or the place where it is being shown, then many films should be boycotted by Christians. In other words, going to films is like a lot of other things. You have to use good judgment about what you go to see, what you would want your family to see, whether you would want your friends seeing you going to see that picture, etc.

Now if you just come out and say that you are opposed to films altogether then that means that you would be opposed to Christian films, educational films that are used in schools, news films and many other informative and entertaining pictures that would appear on your TV set. You see then, it is a dangerous thing to make a broad statement like, "I am opposed to all films." The point is that there are good things and bad things in everything. Film can be used as a tool for good or it can be used to promote evil. We as Christians must accept the good and reject the bad. When we look at things in that perspective then the people around us accept us as reasonable and logical thinking people even though we are Christians. If we become radical and fanatical and reject everything, then most will reject us.

Then there is TV, Video, and such like. Right now here in India these seem to be sweeping the country. TV has been mainly limited to the large cities, and to those who could afford the expensive sets, but with the development of the industry, and with more relay stations going up, then the smaller cities, villages, and so on, are now, more and more, able to see TV. Also, with more TV sets being produced, both black and white and colored, and with such keen competition for business, then the sets will be coming down so that more can afford them. TV then is the big thing here for the future and it is going to revolutionize this

country. It is going to make it possible for the average person to have entertainment in his home, to become acquainted with the world, to have the news, to keep up with sports, to know more about his own country, people of other states, and other languages, to be better informed on politics, history, job opportunities, and such like. He will therefore become more knowledgeable, more educated, and no doubt this will be the means of changing his lifestyle in various ways. So what we see happening here in India at this time is something that is different and unique, and that which can have far reaching effects on everyone.

Now, is all of this for good or bad? Like in anything else, some of it is good and some of it is bad. The good would be in the realm of wholesome entertainment, being kept informed, educational programs that are made available, and keeping up with what is going on in the rest of the world. Some of the bad things would include that of buying TV sets at the expense of doing without food, clothing, or other needs for the family. It is always sad to see a TV antennae standing over a little hut when you know that they need many other things before thinking about going into debt to buy a TV set. We have Christians who can come up with the money for a TV set when their contribution to the Lord is so small that you would think that they were beggars. Then another bad thing about TV is that many people bow before their set as though it is their god instead of letting TV serve them. They spend all of their time before it. They will stay away from worship or gospel meetings to see a movie or some favourite programme. This is very bad, and because of it the Lord's work is hurt to that extent. Some even reason that we cannot have meetings at certain times because of TV movies. They argue that if meetings are held then that many of the people will not come. It is always sad anytime that we allow anything to come before the Lord and his work. It is also sad anytime we have to plan our meetings and work so that it will not conflict with something like TV. Finally, there is the bad influence that can come through TV. Speech, one's conduct, marriage, manners, and other things can be affected by what he sees others doing right there in his own home on the TV screen. No doubt there are many other bad

things about TV, but good or bad, we must learn to live with it because it is here to stay.

Along with TV, there is the madness over the Video machine. These are being sold in the country, brought in from other countries, and video libraries have popped up everywhere. Old movies, new movies, sports, and everything you can think of is being made available. Many homes have been turned into cinema halls. Restaurants and hotels use them to attract customers. There is no doubt some good that come from the use of videos but there is also a lot of bad that come from them. In the first place, the price is prohibitive. Next, the craze over them, and such a waste of time, is unbelievable. And finally, subject matter may be shown that is not good for adults, not to mention children.

Now what are we as Christians going to do about all of this? Again, as already stated, these things are here, and we must learn to deal with them. We cannot completely condemn them since some of our brethren in some parts of the world are using TV, Video, and such like, to proclaim the gospel of Christ. A thing may not be bad and wrong within itself, and usually is not, but it is how it is used as to whether it is good or bad. We must learn to use these things in a good way, to accept the good about them and to reject all the bad.

We must remember to put first things first. TV, and such like, is fine, but TV is not God. It will not save us and take us to heaven. A good thing can become a bad thing if we misuse it. Christ said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33). That means then that God, worship, his work, and our giving to him, must come before TV or anything else. Christ also said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matthew 6:24).

If we are going to use TV in a responsible way then we must have the ability to control it. In that case, we ought to be able to

turn it on but we should likewise be able to turn it off. We lived without it before it came along, and we can live without it now. The thing that we must watch about ourselves is that we never lose control of ourselves, our thinking, our time, our relationship to God, and our influence for good. Now if we can do that then we can keep TV, and many other things, under control and use it for good.

Please think about these things and pray over them. You already know to some extent just what influence these modern means of communication are having on your life. Are you pleased or displeased? Are you in control or are you being controlled? Are you allowing them to lead you away from the Lord? If so, then you need to take the necessary steps to regain control over your life, and to live then in such a way that you can stay in control, that is, with the help of the Lord. By all means, do that now while there is still time.



**associate
editorial**

Camel And The Rich Man

Can you imagine, a camel going out of the eye of a needle? This is not only difficult but is impossible, in fact. But, then, can you imagine a man who trusts in his riches on earth and one who loves his possessions on earth more than God and the salvation of his soul, goes into heaven to inherit the eternal life? Once Jesus has said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." While it sounds much astonishing, this is, however, a great truth, in fact. By reading the following story we can understand why Jesus said this.

Once a certain man had approached Jesus to ask what he should do to inherit eternal life in heaven? This man lived then under the Old Testament Law of Moses. So, Jesus reminded him of the commandments of God, such as, do not commit adultery, do not steal do not murder, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honour your father and your mother. The man in reply said to Jesus that all these things I have observed from my youth. Now Jesus had compassion on him because He knew that there was some thing else seriously wrong with the man, and He said to him, "One thing you lack : Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me." When the man heard this he was very sad, his countenance fell, and he went away grieved, because he was very rich and had great possessions. As Jesus watched the man going away, he turned and said to his disciples, who were with him, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." The disciples were greatly astonished when they heard this, and they began to say among themselves, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus told them, however, "With men it is not possible but with God it is possible because with God all things are possible".

Here, in the foregoing story, we have before us a man who possessed a fine moral character. Men would reckon him to be a religious man and a man of integrity. He was a good an honest man, as men would see him.

Too, he was concerned about his soul. He was not seeking, as generally men do, more wealth, power or honour, but he was interested in the eternal life in heaven. However, according to the Lord, who sees not the outside but the inside of a person, he lacked ONE thing—he loved his money and possessions too much! And, although he wished to enter heaven, but not at the cost of his dear wealth! Certainly, he wanted to go to heaven, as most all people do, but at the same time he wanted to hold on to his possessions. But it was impossible. Because no man can serve two masters at the same

time. Eternal life in heaven can be had only by full submission to God and His commandments. One must be willing to give up every thing which obstructs him from doing what God says. What about you ?

Are you concerned about your soul ? Do you really want to enter heaven and have eternal life after this life on earth is over ? Remember, with God, all things are possible. Whatever sins you might have in you, He is able to forgive you and give you a new life in His Son Jesus Christ. He wants you to turn from your sins, from every single sin, because even one sin can keep you from entering heaven. And He wants that if you have anything in your life which you hold most dear to you, which you love more than God, then you should put it off from your life. This is because unless God has first place in your life you cannot follow Him all the way. But if God will have first place in ones life then he will do whatever He says.

God loves all men whom He has created after His own image. He wants to save all from sin. In Jesus Christ He came down on earth from heaven. He showed to man the way of salvation and said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man can come to the Father except through Me." To save man from sin He died on the cross, to propitiate for man's sins. God now command that all who wants to be saved from sin and want to enter heaven and inherit eternal life must believe in Jesus Christ and must be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Christ commands to every one, "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Revelation 2:10)

Will you gladly receive God's message, or will you go away sorrowful ?

The Inspiration Of The Bible

Steve Williams

Why do Christians use the Bible ? Why do we not accept other religious books as equal ? Why do Christians say the Bible

is the only written revelation of God to man ?

There are many evidences and proofs that Christians have that the Bible and the Bible only is God's written word. In this brief article we will look at only one type of argument. We will notice places where men thought the Bible was in error, but it turned out that the Bible was correct.

Back in the 1800's some men said Moses could not have written the first five books of the Old Testament. Their argument was that people during Moses' time did not even know how to write. Since then archaeologists have found whole libraries that pre-date Moses. Law codes similar to the law of Moses have been found. Some still do not accept Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch but they no longer say Moses could not have known how to write.

Another supposed mistake of the Bible was in Genesis 13. Where Lot and Abraham go their separate ways, Lot goes in the direction of the cities of the valley. Some said this was a mistake. They said there were no cities in the valley during this period of time. They claimed the valley was very sparsely populated. Since then an archaeologist named Nelson Gleuck studied this valley and found evidence of some 70 cities, some as old as 3,000 B.C. Again the supposed mistake of the Bible was not a mistake.

In the book of Daniel we find another supposed mistake of the Bible. The Bible in Daniel lists Belshazzar as the last king of Babylon. Some said this was a mistake because Babylonian records listed Nebonius as the last king. Since then further discoveries have revealed that Nebonius retired to Arabia during the last part of his reign and left the affairs of his kingdom to his oldest son—Belshazzar. Thus the Bible was not really in error.

At one time many writers said the Bible stories about the patriarchs were fiction. It was claimed that there was no evidence of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob. Further it was claimed that the customs found in their stories were unknown anywhere—thus, their stories were thought to be fictional. Since then, though, archaeologists have discovered whole nations and cultures of people

who practiced customs similar to what we read in the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We have even found other people with similar or identical names. Now no Bible scholar dares to claim that the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are fictional.

Yet another supposed mistake of the Bible is found in Isaiah 20:1. Here we read about a man named Sargon. His name was unknown anywhere else in ancient literature except here. Many claimed the Bible made a mistake here. In 1843, however, archaeologists found the palace of Sargon at Khorsabad. They found his royal records and discovered that he was a king from 722 to 705 B.C. Now he is one of the best known Assyrian kings.

In Luke 3:1 we are told that John the Baptist began his ministry during the days of "Lysanius the tetrarch of Abilene". This was long regarded as a mistake since the only Lysanius known to anyone was a king, not a tetrarch. Also this Lysanius was killed in 36 B.C., long before John the Baptist was even born. Since then, however, a Greek inscription has been found in the territory of Abilene telling of a *tetrarch* named Lisanius who ruled from A.D. 14 to 29. It turns out that the Bible was right once again.

Many other examples could be offered, and many other proofs of the Bible and Christianity can be produced. This is only one example of why Christians accept the Bible as God's word, as his revelation in written form.

Four Spiritual Principles

Donald R. Nims

Christians are called a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. (1 Peter 2:9). We are a people who have turned the world upside down. (Acts 17:6). Our names have been written in the lamb's book of life. (Revelation 21:27). What this is saying is that as Christians we are a unique people. We are different because Jesus was different. Our distinctiveness lies in our perception, interpretation, and application of certain

spiritual principles inherent in the Bible. These spiritual principles help us to govern our lives in this world as we make ready for the next. Paul's epistle to the Romans is written in part to explore these principles. Let us examine four of them :

CHOICE OF A NEW LIFE

We choose to live a new life. (Romans 5:20-6:4). Paul taught that Jews who had become Christians had been liberated from the rigors of a legalistic religion. But was this freedom a license to sin? "God forbid!"

Our freedom in Christ is not to choose the world. Our freedom is to live in this world and yet choose Christ. The question should be, can we handle this freedom? Do we often find ourselves conducting our lives as if we were challenging God to take away this freedom? Please note that the admonition, "walk in newness of life," comes immediately after and as a result of our baptism. This statement represents the commitment we made at that time to live in Christ. Have we forgotten that commitment? As Christians we choose therefore, to each moment as if we had just been baptized.

WALK AFTER THE SPIRIT

We walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. (Romans 8:1-8). When we walk after the Spirit our mind is set upon God. (Galatians 5:16). When we walk after the Spirit we walk in the light. (1 John 1:7). We walk as Jesus himself walked. (1 John 2:6).

Paul taught that when we walk after the Spirit we are governed by the Spirit. (Romans 8:15-17). We let the Spirit of God, through the word, direct our lives. "The Spirit itself bareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Romans 8:16). We are then able to say "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28).

THE IMAGE OF CHRIST

We reflect the image of Christ. (Romans 12:1-8). The word

transform is translated transfiguration in Matthew 17:2. "And his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." From the Greek, "metamorphoo," transfigure means to change into another form. Jesus appeared in his glorified state as a way of convincing and convicting his followers of his true nature.

When we become Christians we are changed in character and conduct as a way of convincing and convicting the world of our true faith.

Our faith enables to set our "affection on things above, not on things on the earth." (Colossians 3:2). The image of Christ is reflected in our faith that enables us to stand against the world. We are only a few on the face of a world of lost souls; but we have the faith that by the preaching "of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God," (2 Corinthians 4:4), "all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9).

LIVE NOT UNTO OURSELVES

We live not unto ourselves. (Romans 14:13-18). The world tells us that if someone has a problem, whether it be emotional or physical, it is his problem. Paul is telling us, as Christians it is our problem. It is a spiritual principle that we are our brother's keeper. This passage may be a contrast between the strong and the weak but not between the good and the bad. The beauty of Christianity is that we give strength and accept weakness. (Romans 12:15).

The Bible does not clearly condemn or condone some things concerning human behaviour. The issue is how my actions affect my brother. As Paul comments, "use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." (Galatians 5:13). If there is any question as to the affect of my behaviour in regards to my brother, it is I that must change. (Romans 14:22-23). The question is not one of legality but of one's precious soul. "Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit but the profit of many that they may be saved." (1 Corinthians 10:33).

Christianity is distinguished not by the rules or a series of "thou shalt nots" but by principles or universal guidelines to

making life's decisions. As I move away from the narrow spectrum of my own little world into the world of my brother, I move closer to him and at the same time I move closer to Jesus who died for all of us.

Who Is My Enemy ?

John Waddey

A lawyer once asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" (Luke 10:29). It would be appropriate today to ask, "And who is my *enemy*?" I say this because many brethren evidence confusion about who it is they are to make war upon. The tragedy of this is self-evident. It was a confederate soldier who shot General Stoneall Jackson and fatally pierced the heart of the Confederacy. There have been terrible mistakes in combat where pilots staffed their own comrades. In Vietnam, frustrated, angry soldiers killed their own officers. The liberal news media and politicians and many young people blamed the American government for Communistic invasion of South Vietnam. By their misguided efforts, millions of Asians were condemned to a life of Communist oppression.

In our brotherhood, vast amounts of energy, print and sermon time are devoted to attacking fellow-Christians. Not all of those targeted for rebuke are guilty of grave moral offenses or of clear-cut doctrinal error. More often, their offense is a new or different methodology, a judgment-call different from the traditional, or a failure to be as vehemently opposed to some man or issue as the inquisitor himself is. We see papers dedicated to an endless parade of victims to be stoned for non-conformity; lectureships devoted to thrashing the brotherhood, preachers who are totally committed to crusading against some brotherhood project, practice, methodology or personality. There are preachers who repeatedly flail the ears of their congregation with harsh accusations, dire warnings, hostile attacks and ugly innuendos about fellow-Christians in other places.

The effects of such negative, hyper-critical preaching and writing is devastating to the faith and zeal of the average brother.

Some young converts and weak brethren will turn away from the church in disgust when subjected to such abusive teaching. They reason that if the church is filled with such evil things and brethren, they want no part of it. Others who became Christians in search of peace and loving fellowship in a world of strife, hatred and conflict, will leave with heavy hearts to continue their search elsewhere. Their quest for peace is not a faulty one. Jesus did offer such. (Matthew 11:28-30; Philippians 4:7-9).

Some brethren who are inundated with this "whipping-post" preaching become suspicious and doubtful of every other brother and congregation's soundness. Falsely believing that they are the only "faithful brethren" left, they become proud, exclusive separatists like the Pharisees. Jude condemned disciples of his day "who make separations" as "sensual, not having the Spirit" (verse 19). I occasionally hear from a poor, deluded brother who fancies himself the only faithful preacher left in the world. The Lord's rebuke to Elijah is appropriate for such narrow thinkers. When the prophet thought "I, even I only, am left" the Lord reminded him there were yet "seven thousand knees which have not bowed to Baal . . ." (I Kings 19:14, 18). God yet has seven thousand faithful ones.

Another reaction to a constant diet of carping, critical preaching is for a congregation to totally "turn off" their ears to the negative speaker. Everyone familiar with God's book knows that there is more to Christ's religion than griping. They deal with their misery by ignoring the source of the irritation. Even when the negative preacher has some genuine, needed warning, his people pay no attention to it. That is why we sometimes see a congregation swing from an ultra conservative stance to a very liberal or worldly posture. They had been accosted so often with the dire warning that they grew insensitive and a real threat overcame them.

There are times when a weary congregation will grow so disgusted with the din and clamor of the professional critic that they demand his resignation. After two or three such forced

resignations, it is common for the brotherhood critic to give up preaching. —With a final blast, he alleges that “no one loves the truth anymore” or “there are no sound churches left.” In reality, he has only himself to blame for his predicament.

Long years of observation have shown that each generation produces its brotherhood “muckrakers,” “crepe hangers,” “prophets of doom” and “axwielders.” Such men rarely build great churches or accomplish any notable works for God. Seldom do they pioneer the gospel in new and difficult fields. Rarely do they win many to Christ. Not often do they stay in the Lord’s work for a lifetime, for they eventually burn all their bridges and turn on every friend.

It is also observed that after the brotherhood “saviors” have blown through as a spent whirlwind, those brethren they bitterly assailed are usually found patiently doing God’s work; saving souls, building congregations, preparing men for eternity.

Let it be said that there is a time to *mark* a factious man (Titus 3:10); to *rebuke* a flagrant sinner (I Timothy 5:20); and to *withdraw* from a persistent sinner. (I Corinthians 5:1-5). There is also a time to exhort, to edify and console. (I Corinthians 14:3). It is a mark of wisdom to know when to do the needed thing.

In raising children, we have seen the results of children constantly subjected to criticism, cynicism and negativism. It is an evil kind of verbal child abuse that will adversely affect the child for a lifetime. So will that kind of preaching affect a group of God’s people. Preachers, “Try your own selves, whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves . . .” lest ye be reprobate. (II Corinthians 13:5).

Christians must not be blind to those who would recruit them to their personal cause or issue. Some still preach Christ of envy and strife, seeking to raise up affliction for fellow preachers, schools or good works. (Philippians 1:15-17). Sadly, many folks sincerely lend aid and comfort to some brother with an ax to grind, only to discover later that it was some less noble, personal issue which was the true root of contention.

Paul's admonition can serve us all well : "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable... just,...pure,...lovely.. of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things...and the God of peace shall be with you." (Philippians 4:8-9). "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Galatians 5:15). The devil and his angels are our great enemies; with few exceptions, it is not any brother in Christ. Let us "love the brotherhood" (I Peter 2:17) and let us resist the devil. (James 4:7).

Sanctification Or Holiness

W.A. Holley

What is *sanctification* ? "To set apart to a sacred purpose or to a religious use : consecrate". (*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 8th edition*). Thayer says, "Set apart for God," Bagster says, "Separate from common condition and use." The Lord ordered Moses to "sanctify" and "set apart" the firstborn. (Exodus 13:2, 12). The seventh day was "sanctified". (Genesis 2:3). Jesus was "sanctified" even though no sin was ever attached to him. (John 10:36).

What is *holiness* ? It signifies one's separation to God and one's conduct befitting the one so separated. Actually, "holiness" translated in the King James Version (Romans 6:19, 22; I Thessalonians 4:7; I Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 12:14) is always translated "sanctification" in the American Standard Version. Thus, holiness or sanctification is that state into which true believers are called through God's word, and in which they begin their Christian course and so pursue it. Hence, it is a mistake to argue that "holiness" is one thing, and that "sanctification" is another.

At this point it will help clarify our discussion, if we can come to understand what "sanctification or holiness" is not. The false doctrine of the "second definite work of grace" states that the sinner is saved at an altar of prayer (the first blessing); but he must return to the altar for God to pardon his "inbred sin" or

“original sin”, (the second blessing). This contention is false, since no person is born a sinner! There is no such thing as “hereditary total depravity” taught in God’s holy Word!! Question: What happens when one is regenerated or saved at the mourners’ bench, but dies before he (supposedly) is “sanctified” by the Holy Spirit?? Would he be half in heaven and half in hell?? Answer, please!!

Sanctification can not be the removal of “Adamic sin” by Holy Spirit baptism. While one may suffer the *consequēces* of Adam’s sin, he cannot suffer the *guilt* of Adam’s sin, for he has not committed the same sin Adam committed. The guilt of sin cannot be inherited (Ezekiel 18:20; I John 3:4). Again, Adam was not made totally depraved; but he sinned, nevertheless. (Genesis 3:1ff). If Adam were depraved, where did his depravity come from? He “was the son of God”. (Luke 3:38)! If Holy Spirit baptism removes the “carnal nature,” how can we account for Peter’s sin? Acts 2:1-4 with Galatians 2:11ff). Paul’s flesh had to be controlled by Paul even though he had been baptized in the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 9:27). Sinless perfection is nowhere taught in the Bible for mortal men; rather, the Christian life is a “fight” for all. (I Timothy 6:12) *Repentance* corrects any mistakes a Christian, might make. (II Peter 3:9; I John 1:6-10).

All children of God are sanctified and holy so long as they remain faithful to Christ. This conclusion is shown to be true in I Peter 2:2, 5, 9-10. The Israelites were holy, but not sinlessly perfect. (Deuteronomy 14:1-2; I Corinthians 10:1-13). Sinners are sanctified by the blood of Christ, when they are baptized into him (Hebrews 10:14; Ephesians 5:26), not by Holy Ghost baptism. Hence, when one has his sins washed away through obedience to God’s will (Revelation 7:14; Acts 22:16), there are no sins left to be removed by Holy Ghost baptism. Let it be noted that one is made white at conversion (Revelation 7:14; Acts 2:38; 3:19); hence, one does not need Holy Spirit baptism—no Holy Spirit baptism is promised to believers today! All miraculous works of the New Testament have served their purpose and have ceased. Mark 16:19-20; Hebrews 2:1-4; I Corinthians 13:8-13).

We should learn that all who believe in Christ, repent of their sins, confess the name of Jesus before men, and are baptized into Christ, are sanctified then—not before; not after. Note, “the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized” (Acts 18:8); but later Paul addressed them as “saints”. (I Corinthians 1:1-2; cf. 6:11). Thus the Corinthian brethren were “sanctified;” but they had not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. A passage often misused by those who contend for a “second definite work of grace” is: “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly . . .” But notice the word is W-H-O-L-L-Y, not “holy.” What does the word “wholly” mean? It means completely, entirely. Our entire being, in all of its three-fold nature—body, soul, and spirit—should be fit to be preserved, in truth and righteousness (II Corinthians 7:1; see James 1:4).

Sanctification is a progressive work. To remain sanctified, one must keep working at it. The Corinthians were sanctified (I Corinthians 1:1-2; 6:11), but they were not perfect! (II Corinthians 7:1). The Hebrew writer addressed his readers as “holy brethren”—(Hebrews 3:1); but they were far from perfection. (Hebrews 6:1, 11-12; 12:14). Those who are “born again” are holy (I Peter 1:22-23; 2:2, 9); but they must continue to grow. (II Peter 3:18). Holiness consists of abstaining from evil. (I Thessalonians 4:3-8). But one can cease to be sanctified. (Hebrews 10:24-29).

Sanctification or holiness is a way of life for the child of God. “Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord”. (Hebrews 12:14, ASV). We are sanctified through the truth, when we believe and obey it. (John 17:17; I Peter 1:22-23). The sanctified will receive an eternal inheritance. (Acts 20:32).

Dear reader : If Adamic nature must be cleansed (which I do not grant), it would have to be cleansed by the blood of Christ, for the blood of Christ “cleanseth from all sin”. (I John 1:7). The Holy Spirit is not blood—He never shed any blood; and we are not cleansed from any sin by baptism of the Holy Spirit!

Earthly Wisdom Personified

ED. Casteel

Wisdom may be aquired from God if we ask in faith. (James 1:5). But many never ask; therefore, they never receive. All the wisdom that they have is "earthly, sensual, and devilish". (James 3:15). As Godly wisdom, that is from above, has its manifestations in the forms of peace, gentleness, and good fruits, etc., (James 3:17): earthly wisdom likewise is personified. As James enters his discussion of chapter four he shows the characteristics of earthly wisdom.

Wars And Fightings (1-2)

Certainly James is not speaking of literal wars with carnal weapons, but rather has in mind troubles that might well exist in the churches. The word *fightings*: is used by Paul to describe his conflict in Macedonia, "Our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears". (2 Cor. 7:5). The problem that James is addressing is a spiritual one caused by the "pleasures that war in your members." Men will always have fightings as long as his mind is set upon worldly things instead of setting his mind "on things above". (Col. 3:2). The apostle Paul fought this inward battle, and described it by saying, "I buffett my body, and bring it unto bondage; lest by any means, after I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected". (I Cor. 9:27, A.S V.)

The struggle exist because of our lusts and our covetous attitudes. We can not blame another and certainly we can not blame God. (James 1:13-15). We covet, we desire to obtain that which we can not have; therefore, we fight and wage internal war.

Neglect Of Prayer (2-3)

When wisdom is earthly, and not from above, then prayers are not answered as we would hope. Understand that God hears and answers prayers. He will answer the prayer of the righteous (Psa. 145:18), the penitent (Luke 18:14), those who "ask in his name" (John 14:13), those who "ask believing" (Mark 11:24); and

those which are "according to God's will". (I John 5:14). But of this person, he has not received because he has not asked. Second, some ask but receive not because their prayers are self-centered, "that ye may consume it upon your lusts". (James 4:3-pleasures-A.S.V.). When prayers are made centered upon earthly things what areas of the prayer are omitted? Here we would find no prayer for forgiveness, no prayer for the welfare of others, either physical or spiritual, the prayer is simply for me and mine. Earthly wisdom limits the ability of our prayers to be answered.

Desire For Friendship Of The World (4)

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin". (1 John 1:7). Where earthly wisdom abounds friendship and fellowship is had with the world and not God. In fact, we become enemy of God. (James 4:4).

These people were not necessarily, though possibly, living in physical adultery. James had in mind that they were living in spiritual adultery. This same idea is expressed by Paul when he wrote both the churches at Corinth and Rome. (2 Cor. 11:2 and Romans 7:1-6). Also John to the church at Thyatira, who had suffered the prophet Jezebel "which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to committ fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols", said, "I will cast her in a bed, and them that committ adultery with her into great tribulation". (Rev. 2:20-21). When we leave God and his service and go back to the world, like Demas (2 Tim. 4:9), then we are guilty of spiritual adultery.

Envy (5)

The scriptures plainly show that man is envious. Envy is a feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantages or prosperity of others. James is teaching so strongly that God does not give us a spirit to envy instead, God gives us grace. For God, "resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." When the wise sage of old considered the things that

God hated, the first mentioned was "a proud look". (Prov. 6:17). While God hates pride he gives grace to the humble. The prayful, penitent of Luke 18 manifest his humility when he said, "God be merciful to me a sinner". (Luke 18:13). When we have a mind like that is found in Christ we too will be humble. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross". (Phil. 2:8).

When we strive to be like Christ, manifesting humility, we also have to learn the lesson of contentment. Envy enters as we see someone else getting a new car, a new house, or even a new dress, but I didn't get anything. Paul said, "not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." (Phil. 4:11). This is a hard lesson to learn, but it must be learned. The lesson is made much easier when we know that "our citizenship is in heaven."

Call To Repent (8-10)

Man can not remain as a sinner separated from God and expect to receive his blessings. He may be laughing now, but the laughter will be turned into mourning. The rich man of Luke 16 had all the good things of life : clothing of purple and linen, a great banquet table, truly he "fared sumptuously every day". (Luke 16:19-21). But his laughter was turned into mourning for "he lifted up his eyes in torments". (16:23). He cried (16:24), he even prayed (16:27), but all to no avail. As James declared, "Go to now ye rich man, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you". (5:1).

Rich or poor when man lives his life allowing the wisdom of the world to control his life and be personified through his life truly he must repent. James says : "draw nigh to God, cleanse your hands, purify your heart, and humble yourselves in the sight of God". Until he does this he will remain having no hope, and without God in the world". (Eph. 2:12). Earthly wisdom brings the loss of the eternal soul. Therefore, we need to leave it and seek the wisdom that is from above.

May A Christian Gamble ?

Max Patterson

Gambling is defined as "To play or game for money or other stakes." It is an unnatural and artificial risk taking. It is a situation in which a risk is created purely for the purpose of taking a risk. Below are a number of reasons why it is Scripturally and otherwise unwise and wrong to gamble :

1. Many people get psychologically hooked. There are Gamblers' Anonymous groups all over the country presently. Since there is always the possibility of getting hooked, it, like alcohol, is a very dangerous thing to get involved in.
2. It is an attempt to get something for nothing. There is no such thing ! Whenever someone gets something for nothing, someone got nothing for something.
3. It is not labour, a fair exchange, or a gift. (Gen. 3:19; Eph. 4:28). These are the ways we are told to get gain.
4. Its associates, deceit and dishonestly are condemned. (Rom. 12:17).
5. On a large scale (auto, dog, horse racing) it plays into the hands of the crime syndicate in the country.
6. It encourages a reckless approach to life.
7. It encourages a callousness to the interests and well-being of others. On a number of occasions I have personally observed the above two items.
8. It promotes covetousness, that is, one who basically desires to have what someone else has. Frankly, I know of no better illustration to show what is condemned in the Bible in the word for covetousness, than gambling.
9. We are commanded to "Love thy neighbour." Gambling uses one's neighbour.

10. Gambling is morally wrong because it denies the integrity of work.
11. The Biblical work ethic is the principle of fair exchange. (Luke 19:11-27).
12. Gambling has been called "robbery by consent." Therefore, it is a form of stealing.
13. The history of gambling shows that it brings poverty, crime, corruption, demoralization of moral and ethical standards, and misery.
14. No gambler wants the other fellow to do to him what he is trying to do to them. Compare Matthew 7:12.

In the light of these principles, it seems amazing to me that many of us are guilty of possibly starting our kids on the gambling road by cake walks, bingo games, raffle tickets, and carnival type gambling games, often under the guise of "going for a good cause." A fellow preacher friend of mine has a brother who has spent a great number of years in jail because he started out "flipping nickels." He became obsessed with it, and one act led to another until he landed in jail.

A lady tried to sell me a raffle ticket one day. I said, "I can't buy that because I don't believe in gambling." She replied, "Brother-----bought one." My answer to that is this "brother-----is not the Bible that guides my life."

Can You Recommend Your Religion?

Dennis Gullede

As a young person growing to maturity you will encounter few questions more important than the one which heads this article. The reason is because in the religious realm we are prone to take too much for granted. We feel safe as long as a religion (any religion) claims to be the religion of Christ. When a person

feels safe in this way he may be compelled by a zeal without knowledge to recommend that which is actually false.

In this article we are not asking, Can you recommend religion? as if just any religion we might want to recommend is alright. Truth compels us to admit that there are many false prophet in the world (1 John 4:1); that denominationalism is doomed (Matt. 15:13), and that the only course of absolute safety is to walk in the old paths of New Testament Christianity.

Let us reflect on the question, Can you recommend your religion? Everyday we either recommend or renounce the religion of Christ. Our fidelity or treason to the cause of Christ is as widespread as our influence in that we are known to others by the fruits we bear. (Matt. 7:16). In light of this, let us approach our question in three ways :

Can You Recommend Your Religion In Light Of The Bible ?

This is the only proper place to begin if we are to recommend the religion of which we are a part. Truly we can say that if we fail here we fail everywhere else. Actually, we have two questions here : (1) Can you prove your religion from the Scriptures, giving book-chapter-and-verse for the church to which you belong? (2 Cor. 13:5); and, (2) Does God approve of your religion? If you can honestly answer yes to the first inquiry, then, the same answer will automatically follow for the second. However, if you stumble at the first question you cannot possibly force the second into the affirmative.

It is at this point that honest and inquisitive young people will demand proof for what they are told religiously. It is at this point that intelligent young people will make the same demands for evidence that they do in every other realm of life. They will not and cannot accept a second hand religion, that is, believing something simply because such is what they have always been taught. They will search the Scriptures in order to follow after truth. (Acts 17:11).

Can You Recommend Your Religion By The Way You Live ?

If you can answer yes to the first question, then, there is no reason why your answer should not be the same for this one. Do your life and religion compliment one another ? They should ! As Christians we are new creatures, and our lives are daily evidence to that fact. (2 Cor. 5:17). If not, something is sadly amiss ! Heaven demands that we adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. (Titus 2:10).

It is plain truth that one's faith is shown in his deeds. James wrote, show me thy faith. (James 2:14, 18). Faith is something we show to others by the way we live. Faith is shown in works of obedience to the will of God. (James 2:18). Faith is shown by living a life of purity in a world that is far from encouraging such. (James 1:27; 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17). Can you by the way you live recommend your religion ?

Can You Recommend Your Religion By The Way You Support It ?

If you can offer a yes response to the first two questions, then, can there be any reason why your answer to this one should be any different ? If you, young reader, are a member of the Lord's church the best recommendation you can give that holy institution is your loyal support. The apostle Paul was an ardent supporter of what he believed in. When he laboured in infidelity, he supported it with all his being. (Phil. 3:4-6). When he cast off his unbelieving ways in obedience to the gospel, he turned his support in the proper direction. (2 Cor. 4:13).

Do you recommend the Lord's church by your support of it ? Out of 168 hours in the week, how many do you give for the Lord ? Do you support the programs of work in the local congregation of which you are a member ? Do you appreciate strong, bold, faithful Bible preaching ? Do you support the work of the church with contributions from the money you make from your work ? If not, why not ? You cannot recommend the religion of Christ as you should if you do not support it in the various ways the Bible teaches you must.

The Mark Of The Beast

Clifford Dixon

In Revelation 13 we have the picture of two beasts. In verses 1-10 the first is described. He had seven heads and ten horns, and received his power, seat, and authority from the dragon. The dragon is described in Revelation 12:9 as the Devil, so to receive authority and power from the dragon is to receive it from the Devil. One of his heads was wounded to death but healed and all the world wondered after the beast. Here was given him power to continue forty two months and he blasphemed God, and made war against the saints. Bible Scholars of the historical inclination are prone to identify this head of the beast as the reconstituted Roman Empire under the papal power. Then in Revelation 13:11-18 a second beast is described as coming out of the earth and being given the power of the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. This second beast had two horns like a lamb and the voice of the dragon. This no doubt refers to false religion that took the name of Christ but really taught the doctrine of the Devil. Such was, and is, a mighty political power that holds a tremendous power in the affairs of this world. As such, "He causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom, Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred three-score and six." (Rev. 13:16-18). Of late we have had much said about the mark of the beast and a coming period of great tribulation. Let us notice some things about this.

1. The book of Revelation was written before the end of the first century of things that would shortly come to pass. So we must look for fulfillment of this from that time forward. Satan uses two tools to overcome Christians and the cause of Christ: 1). Human governments antagonistic to Christianity; and, 2). False religions opposed to the Lord's way. These two beasts of Revelation 13 pictures each of these oppositions. The first beast refers

to the persecutions the Roman government heaped upon the church and Christians. The second, the persecutions of the apostate religion wielded against the church and Christians as can be seen during the period of the dark ages.

2. The receiving of the mark of the beast does not refer to a computer number to acceptance of the doctrines and submitting to the dictates of the false religion. This number is called the number of a man denoting that this is doctrine of man, not the Lord. Pressure was put on men to accept false ways or else be ostracised. Any opposing the authority of such men were excommunicated and often killed. No one could teach unless he accepted the doctrines of this religion.

3. We do not have to be concerned about the mark of the beast today because history has already recorded such a period whether it be a time of Emperor worship or the time when Papal power was at its peak. We now have the freedom to worship according to the dictates of our conscience. The acceptance of such a mark would be at our own choice to follow the Devil rather than the Lord. The characteristics of those that overcame Satan in the past can be imitated by us today and we will be assured of not going astray after false religions. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." (Rev. 12:11). How did they overcome him? (1) By the blood of the Lamb. The Lamb of God shed his blood in his death. (John 11:34). We get into his death by being baptized into it (Rom. 6:3). We are buried in baptism and arise to walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:4). We stay in contact with the blood by walking in the light. (1 John 1:7). (2) We can overcome him by the "word of their testimony" which are the inspired scriptures. The apostles and those they laid hands upon were inspired to give us the full gospel which is a complete guide in religion. (John 16:13, 14; 1 Cor. 2:9-13; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17). We need to continue in the word (John 8:31, 32). They loved not their lives unto death. We should resolve to be faithful to the Lord even if it meant death. (Rev. 2:10). We will thus be safeguarded from the mark of the beast.

Preacher, Try To Please The Lord

(Author Unknown)

When I preach, there are some who say
They could listen to me preach all day.

Others think I preach too long;
And some think I go about it wrong.

Some say my sermon is much too deep;
To others, it's shallow, and they go to sleep.

Some report that I hold them spell-bound,
While others squirm, and look around.

Some speak of me as an 'orator';
But others feel I'm a perfect 'bore'!

Some believe I have no light;
And others think I preach just right.

Some affirm that I'm too bold;
Others wink, and say I'm cold.

Some used to say I was much too young;
Now others declare my spring has sprung!

Some folks tell I have met "success;"
Others think my work is a "mess."

Some have said my pay is too low
When they discovered the pace I go;

Still others say it is above the peak :
"Why, he only works three hours a week!"

From all of this, 'tis plain to see
That as a preacher, I'm up a tree.

Condemned if I do, condemned if I don't !
Criticized if I will, criticized if I won't !

I can't please men of such discord :
So, I'll just keep trying to please my Lord !

"I Can't Make It Without It"

Dan Jenkins

There are words that are used so often in one particular way it seems strange to hear them used in another context. This happened recently when I was talking to a fellow-Christian and he said, "I just can't make it without it."

You hear those words used by those addicted to drugs, including alcohol. The decadence of our permissive society is probably best exemplified by the widespread use and acceptance of narcotics. It is not just the admitted alcoholic who "just can't make it without it;" it is that person who daily must have the business martini, or evening cocktail, or the person who stops on the way home to get a six-pack. It is not just the heroin addict that craves drugs. It is often the individual who is into "social drugs."

There is also that individual who is filled with rage who seemingly can't get through a day without an outward display of his wrath. Think of the sins associated with such intemperance: evil speech, hate, malice, strife, wife-beatings and child abuse. Far too many are enslaved by sin.

Christianity is designed to free us from the bondage of sin. It is designed to make it possible for us to "get through the day without it." We have been freed from sin to become servants of righteousness. (Romans 6:22).

Oh, by the way, the Christian I was talking to was not discussing any of the above *sins*. It was strange, but so refreshing, to hear him use these words in reference to—*prayer*! Brethren, to what are you addicted?