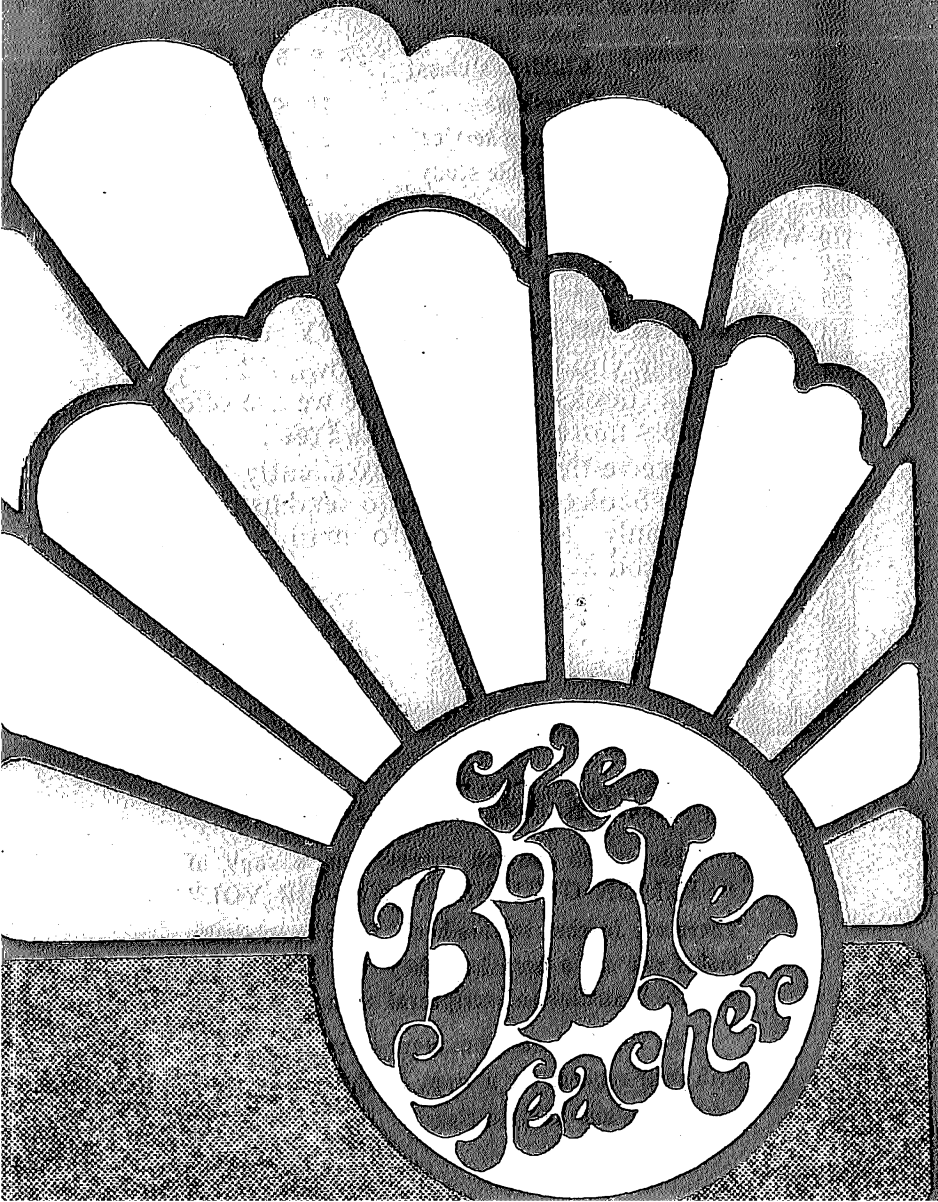


THE BIBLE TEACHER



YOU ARE INVITED

To attend the services of the *church of Christ* which meets at :

**E-10/B, Defence Colony
(Near Andrewsganj Bus Stop)
New Delhi.**

Schedule of Services -

Sunday—	Bible Study)	...	9.30 A.M
	Children's class)		
	Worship	10.00 A.M.
	Evening service	5.30 P.M.
Wednesday—	Bible study	...	6.00 P.M.

FREE OFFER !

RECEIVE MORE THAN FORTY BOOKS !

To help you to build your own library of Christian books at your home we are offering our readers more than 40 books **Free !**

To receive this offer of excellently written Christian books we ask you to send us by M.O. Rs. 10/- only to help us to mail you these books. Send at :

Church of Christ
Box 3815
(C-22, N.D.S.E. II)
New Delhi-110049.

Book Of The Month

This month you can request for a copy of
"SERMON OUTLINES JUST FOR YOU"

There are lessons in this book for you to study, and if you are a preacher they will help you to prepare beautiful and scriptural sermons.

You should send a postage stamp of 25 paise with your request for a copy of this book. Write your name and address clear.

THE BIBLE TEACHER

Editor :

J. C. CHOATE

Associate Editor :

SUNNY DAVID

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

Pleading for the restoration of pure New Testament Christianity

Vol. 9

October 1978

No. 6



Family Planning

The world's population is growing at an alarming rate. It has reached the point where the average person is not only aware of it but must feel some responsibility of doing something about it. This is especially true here in India where it is said that in the next century this country will have more people than any other nation in the world, and that includes China.

To deal with the problem then most countries have inaugurated a Family Planning program. This program is well known throughout India since it is advertized on the sides of buses, walls, hoarding boards, in the cinema houses, and so on. Clinics have been set up to handle and help all of those who wish to cooperate with this plan to limit the size of their families.

Family planning has not been too effective here to date, and evidently is not looked upon as playing a great role in the future to hold down the growth of families since it is predicted that India's population will more than double by 2,000 and will finally out number all other countries with its masses of people. One of the reasons it has not been effective is because there are so many minority groups who look upon it as being a means of finally wiping them out while larger groups

continue to grow. Another reason for it being so unpopular is because of those in authority have in numerous instances forced men in particular to be sterilized..

Perhaps the main reason why Family Planning has not been as successful as it might have been is because of sheer ignorance on the part of the majority of the people, just not knowing what to do.

Sometimes the question is asked if the church of Christ believes in Family Planning. Please be assured that the church does not have an earthly head to speak out for or against something. The Lord's church consists of many congregations and each congregation is made up of many members. (Romans 16 : 16 ; 1 Corinthians 12 : 20). Christ is the head of the church (Ephesians 1 : 22,23 ; Ephesians 5 : 23 ; Colossians 1 : 18), and therefore he is the spokesman for the church (Matthew 28 : 18 ; Matthew 17 : 5 ; Hebrews 1 : 1,2), and it is up to the church, or congregations, or members, to respect him, take heed to the things he has had to say, and to obey his will. (Hebrews 5 : 8,9). The church therefore does not make profound statements to govern its members. Rather, each member must make up his or her mind about such matters, based on what the Lord has said or has not said, and when enough of its members do this, with the result of them coming to believe the same thing, then this produces unity.

While the church therefore cannot give an official and binding statement on family planning. I think I can say that enough of us would agree to the point where I can say that we definitely believe in, and practice family planning.

It should go without saying then that the Lord has not said, "Thou shalt practice family planning." Neither has he said, "Thou shalt not use family planning." I believe that the word of God does lay down some definite principles that would certainly encourage it.

First, God said to man and woman that they should multiply and replenish the earth (Genesis 1 : 28), but he did not mean that they should over-populate the earth. Second,

it is possible that a man and a woman can produce a much larger number of children than even those couples who have a large number of children. Therefore, even those with large families had to make a decision not to have more. If they could do this, then why can't others decide to have even fewer children? Surely life consists of more than just seeing how many children we can bring into the world. Third, the health of the mother must be considered. (1 Corinthians 3 : 16,17). In some case-it might be better for her not to have any children. Fourth, the Bible teaches that one must be able to provide for his children and if he does not then he is worse than an infidel, (1 Timothy 5 : 8). We would conclude from this that a man must decide on how many children he can support before he has a family. For most parents that would certainly limit the number of children that they could have. What a shame to bring children into the world and then force society to care for them by housing, clothing, feeding, and educating them or for them to be left to roam the streets and countryside as beggars and thieves. And no doubt there are other reasons why the number of children should be kept to a minimum.

It is not that we don't love children. That is the whole point. We would limit the number of children because we do love them and we want to adequately care for their needs physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. It is not that we want to commit wrong in practicing family planning. Rather, we feel that we would commit wrong if we did not practice it.

We do not believe that abortion is the solution to the population problem. This is dealing with the problem after it is already too late. This is taking life and we have not right to do that. But there are several legitimate ways of dealing with this matter. Those ways would be moral, reasonable, and would in no way oppose God's law. First, a person may choose not to marry. (Matthew 19 : 12 ; 1 Corinthians 7 : 8,9). This would be valid of course only if that person chose to remain morally pure. Second, the married couple could refrain altogether from sex. This would have to be mutually agreed

to but in most cases this would not be an ideal solution. (1 Corinthians 7 : 5). Neither would it be natural for most couples. (1 Corinthians 7 : 2). One of the main purposes for marriage is to bring a man and woman together in a lawful, scriptural union whereby the sex crave may be satisfied. (1 Corinthians 7 : 3—5). This would also suggest that marriage is not altogether for the purpose of producing children. Therefore, for most people we must go on to other alternatives. Third, there would be the rhythm method for the couple to work with. This is where the wife recognizes her fertile period each month and consequently the time that she must abstain from having any sexual relations with her husband if pregnancy is to be prevented. There are other times of the month that she is free from the risk of pregnancy. Those who do not prefer to use artificial preventives usually use this system. It is fairly safe, that is, in preventing pregnancy, especially when closely observed and followed but there can always be slip-ups and this is the main problem in dealing with this method. Fourth, the husband may have a vasectomy or be sterilized. In other cases it may be the wife who will volunteer to be sterilized. This of course would generally be done after the couple have the number of children that they want. Some object to such sterilization on the basis that circumstances could change whereby other children would be wanted. For instance, if the husband or wife died then the surviving partner might choose to marry again, and in that case, they could be in a situation where they would want children. This could be done only where both are fertile. Fifth, and final, there are artificial contraceptives for both men and women that enable a couple to limit the size of their family. As long as these are not harmful to the health of the wife or the husband, then there is no reason why they shouldn't use these to limit the number of children they have and likewise to limit the population of their country and the over-all population of the world. For example, where would the world be today had these contraceptives not been used for the last several years? For sure, not one at this point is being forced to use them but if the world's population continues to grow during the next quarter of a century as it has during the past quarter of

a century then it may become a must for all to use them for the simple reason of survival if for no other reasons.

Family Planning therefore gives the married couple an alternative to have children or not to have children. If they choose to have children then they can plan their family by pre-determining how many children they will have, and when they will have them. They can make these decisions on the basis of their health, income, their ability to provide for their children, the population, stability, and political conditions existing in their country and in their part of the world.

I would then like to commend Family Planning to you under the conditions outlined in this article. Surely we want the best for our children and by planning our families this can be made possible. Surely this is the better way to have and care for our children. For further information please consult your doctor or check with a Family Planning Clinic near you.



**associate
editorial**

How To Prepare To Meet Our God ?

In our last issue of The Bible Teacher in an article, in associate editorial, we had seen the urgent necessity of preparing ourselves to meet our Creator, God. Because there is no annihilation of the soul and God has appointed for man once to die and then face the judgment, (Luke 16 ; Hebrews 9 : 27), therefore man must in this life prepare himself to stand before the judgment of the Lord. The seriousness of this is seen in the fact that there is much emphasis given in the scripture on this subject. Apostle Paul says, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at (*overlooked*) ;

but now commandeth all men every where to repent : because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained ; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts 17 : 30,31).

The question is, however, How must man prepare himself to meet God ?

Since Christ has paid the ransom upon the cross for the sins of man, therefore when man humbly and obediently submit himself to the will of God, he is thus cleansed from his sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, (Matthew 26 : 28), and have the assurance to enter into the life eternal, the kingdom of God. (Matthew 7 : 21). Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life : no man cometh unto the Father but by me." (John 14 : 6).

Now, to be more specific, what is the will of God for man that he should do to prepare himself to meet God in judgment as a saved person ? The Bible says, God wants that man must hear Christ. (Matthew 17 : 5). Because God has given him all authority. After his death and resurrection, the record says, Christ declared, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth." (Matthew 28 : 18). Then in Hebrews 1 : 1,2 we have this record : "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." So we gather from this that we can only do God's will when we hear Christ. Also, at another place the scripture says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him : for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11 : 6). So to please God one must have faith. And in Romans 10 : 17 the inspired writer says, "So faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ." So evidently one must hear Christ.

Now, what has Christ said then man should do to be saved ? He said, we should believe in him. "Let not your heart be troubled" Christ said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." (John 14 : 1). In John 3 : 16 the record says,

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” Next, Christ ask man to repent, turn away from his sins. to do God’s will. This is what the record says, he said, “I tell you, no, but, unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.” (Luke 13 : 3). Then we have this record : Just before his ascension, he came to his chosen disciples and gave them this command, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptised shall be saved ; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.” (Mark 16 : 15,16). Later the Apostle Paul, writing to Christians, in his epistle said, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” (Galatians 3 : 26,27). Christ also said, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me.” (John 15 : 4).

So, in conclusion, what do we see man must do to be saved and thus prepare himself to meet the Lord in the judgment ? First, one should believe in Christ that Christ died for my sins to save me. Second, one must repent, that is, turn away from his sins to do the will of God. Third, one must be baptized (Immersed in water) for the forgiveness of sins. And fourth, one must abide in Christ, that is, continue to keep his commandments as revealed unto us in his New Testament. (John 15 : 10).

Are you prepared ? Now is your opportunity !

The Polluted City

by Dan Jenkins

“Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, to the oppressing city ! She obeyed not the voice ; she received not correction : she trusted not in the Lord ; she drew not near to God.” (Zephaniah 3 : 1, 2).

Such piercing words ! In just a few short years God’s wrathful vengeance was to be brought on Jerusalem. Her iniquities were to be brought to light as the Lord Searched

Jerusalem with torches (1 :12) ; she was about to be offered as "the Lord's sacrifice" (1:8) ; for "the great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly" (1 : 14). Why would God bring such on "the apple of His eye ?"

"She obeyed not the voice." The tombs of the prophets slain by her cried loudly to the ears of those who would listen. Judah didn't want the voice of the prophet heard among its citizens. Prophets were still in that city, but God calls them *her* prophets, not His (3:4). God still spoke to her, but she refused to hear.

"She received not correction." Like a run-away train, an unbridled child, the nation had gone from extreme to extreme, from excess to excess, from sin to sin. How can sin be stopped if one will not receive correction? "Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee" (Proverbs 9:8). But Judah was not wise, it scorned both reproof and the reprover. "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee." There was no hope for Jerusalem, she would not receive correction.

"She trusted not in the Lord." Read the closing chapters of II Kings and II Chronicles and look at the alliances made by Judah to try to stand. First with Egypt, then Syria, then Assyria ; she turned, but almost never to God. God was not tangible, not visible ; trust in Him demanded faith and Judah had little of that ! How could she since faith comes from hearing and she had stilled the voice of the prophets ! The nations were there, they were visible ; their chariots, soldiers, horses and armour could be counted—they demanded no faith. When the wrath of God came what use were they? How could such stand against the decree of an almighty God? When God's servant, Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 27 :6), came such physical help was of no use. It was too late, faith was needed many years before. It was true then as it is now. "The just shall live by faith," and Judah had not faith, she trusted not in the Lord.

"She drew not near to her God." God was there, He was able to help, He was willing to help, He longed to help ; but Jerusalem had no desire for him. She needed Him perhaps as never before in the history of the nation, yet she did not know it. She could have drawn near to Him with full assurance

that He would be there, yet she did not. He longed for her as did the Father for the prodigal son, but she would not come to Him. As an unfaithful wife she turned to other lovers, to gods of gold, silver, precious stones and images of wood. From him who had seeing eyes, hearing ears and helping hands she turned to dumb idols, blind and unable to help.

What about us today? Are we too failing to heed, despising correction, trusting in that material, visible things; failing to draw nigh to Him. If so let us learn again the lesson from the people of Zephaniah's day. Only ruin can come from such distress, a day of wasteness and a course and when it comes it will be "a day of trouble and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm..." (1:15, 16). It doesn't have to be such, the choice is our.

"But Stand In Awe"

By John Gipson

Many of us tend to think of God as a benevolent Santa Claus. He's going to shower us with gifts regardless of whether we have been naughty or nice. That's his business.

In the first century the apostle Paul issued a warning to the Gentile Christians against the dangers of pride and conceit. They knew that they had been grafted in the tree of Christ to take the place of the unbelieving Jews, who had been separated from the root. But many of them were not taking the time to consider that if the Jews had been broken off by God because of unbelief that the same thing could happen to them. Thus Paul says "...do not become proud, but stand in awe. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you."

Perhaps nothing is more needful in our own day than to "stand in awe" of God. Instead of doing this we tend to illegitimately strain the mercy of God. We have such a consciousness of spiritual freedom that it often degenerates into license of behaviour. And we preach the "goodness" of God

to such an extent that many have never learned of his "severity."

Have we never heard of the great flood which came upon the antediluvians? Do we willfully forget the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and how God's wrath burned against them? Can we not recall that the Canaanites were "spued out" of the land for their great wickedness? And what happened to Babylon and Nineveh, where civilization was a nest of vice? Or consider what God did to the temple in Jerusalem because its guardians profaned it. Will we not learn? How long will we stand in pride rather than in awe?

Give us the spirit of Jacob who said of Bethel, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I did not know it." "And he was afraid, and said, 'How awesome is this place'" (Gen. 28:17). We need to hear such words as: "God is clothed with terrible majesty" (Job 37:22); "Let all the earth fear the Lord, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him" (Psa. 33:8); "My heart stands in awe of thy words" (Psa. 119:161). When awe is present pride will be vanquished, for these two can never occupy the same ground.

Are We Afraid?

Ralph Wallis

It can be safely said that many people who need to see a doctor are actually afraid to go. Just a few days ago I was told that a certain person had been in very poor health for some time but had not consulted a physician because there was a great fear of what might be learned. Many of us may be inclined to follow this course, but I seriously doubt the wisdom in it. While it is true that no one enjoys bad news, it is equally true that when something is wrong we need to know it and, if possible, do something about it.

One cannot help wondering how many people there are with spiritual ills who are literally afraid to see the Great Physician and allow Him to diagnose their case. In visiting with people, it is often apparent that they are unhappy and insecure. Sometimes there is an admission that they know something is wrong

with "their" church or with their lives personally; yet when it is suggested that we go to Jesus and His Will for answers to our problems, there is an immediate shying away. We are not unmindful of the fact that knowing we are sick is at first hard to take, but as we have already stated, when something is wrong we need to know it. We should also know that for the healing of our physical ills there may or not be an effective remedy; spiritually, however, this is never a problem: Finding the courage to seek the Lord's remedy and apply it in His way may be for us the real test.

A few years past it was my privilege to assist an elderly lady in her obedience to the Gospel of Christ. She told me that she had been a member of a church for more than sixty years. Immediately after her baptism into Christ, while we were yet standing in the water, she said, "I have known I was wrong religiously for over fifty years." No doubt it took great courage for her to make such an admission and such a religious change, but she did it.

Yes, fear is a deadly sin which heads a list of sins in Rev. 21:8. All who come before the Lord in judgment guilty of these "Shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Don't be afraid to obey the Gospel of Christ and live a faithful life.

Stewardship of Talents

In New Testament times certain members of the church received, through the Holy Spirit, miraculous gifts, such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, the power to heal, interpret, etc. These Powers they were to use for the good of all. In reference to this, Peter says, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as *good stewards* of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:10).

We are not the recipients of supernatural gifts as they were but God now, as always, endows people with wonderful natural gifts or aptitudes along various lines. For instance, one has

the talent of a good singing voice; another has ability as a public speaker; and a third has a natural gift for counseling. The wise Eldership will watch for manifestations of such gifts and seek to encourage each person to use his gift to the service of God and man.

What is your gift? Have you dedicated it to the glory of God and the furtherance of that cause for which Jesus died? And having thus dedicated it, will you remain true to your vow and not take the gift back to use for yourself or for the world?

If you do not dedicate your gift and use it, you will be like the man who hid his talent in the earth and let it lie unused until his lord returned. "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 25:14-30).

FALSE SECURITY

By J.J. Turner

Recently I received a letter that disturbed me. It was from the insurance agency that I had my hospitalization insurance with. I was informed that the company covering my policy had gone broke, and that I had been without coverage for two months.

Reflecting back on the two months that I was without coverage, I remembered how secure I had felt during this period because I thought I was covered. In fact, on two occasions during these two months, I was approached by salesmen trying to sell me insurance. But I rejected because "I had good coverage." (I thought).

There is a spiritual lesson to be gained from this story. It reminds me of the false security people have relative to their eternal salvation. Thousands are walking about thinking they are covered by the blood of Jesus Christ. They feel secure, just as I felt about my insurance coverage. But in reality, according to the Scriptures, many of these persons are lost because they are outside of Christ.

Jesus refers to persons who thought that all was well in their life but in reality they were lost. In Matthew 7:21—23 we have such a case:

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

In one sweep Jesus removes their security. The things they held forth as the basis of their security were rejected by Jesus. He said, “...I NEVER knew you...” How tragic to find this out after it is too late to do any thing about it.

In my case, I was fortunate because I had time to secure appropriate coverage for my family. Spiritually speaking, there is still time for you to make sure that you have obeyed the Lord in the commandments that relate to salvation (Hebrews 5:8, 9). While you are alive there is time to “make your calling and election sure.” After death it will be too late. (Hebrews 9:27).

As members of the Body of Christ (i.e., Christians) we must “examine ourselves” to be sure that we are living faithfully in the Lord (Revelation 2:10). Our security is in the blood of Christ as we “walk in the light” (1 John 1:7). This is the ONLY true security in a day of uncertainties and insecurities. We must be careful, therefore, that we don’t forfeit it because of unfaithfulness (Galatians 5:4).

Don’t take your security for granted —Check it out—it may surprise you at the results. False security is like counterfeit money, it may get you by for awhile, but sooner or later it will let you down when its genuineness is examined. Don’t wait until it is too late. Have a security checkup today. You will be glad you did.

Church Discipline

by Ray Peters

There should be more teaching and preaching on church discipline. As one of the books on the subject of discipline is entitled, "The Forgotten Commandment," so it rightfully can be called. Yet, it is a plain command, "Now we command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us" (II Thess. 3:6). Nevertheless, we see that this is a neglected command. As a result of the neglect there have been many erroneous ideas that have arisen in connection with discipline. Some brethren feel that discipline is not possible, that it is impractical, and even unnecessary, or at least optional. A consequence of this attitude is seen when members quit attending the services of the church, their name is just dropped from the rolls, and brethren say, "Well, they have withdrawn themselves from us"! Nowhere, does the scripture intimate that members are disciplined when they stop coming and so-called "withdraw themselves." This is but an effort to shun the responsibility of disciplining those who need disciplining. Too often those who quit for a while decide to come back, they "slip in", never publicly repenting of their sinfulness and the first thing one knows, the brethren, if it is a man, have him leading in prayers and serving the Lord's Supper! But when discipline is practised by a congregation, scripturally and properly, some are always ready to criticize. "They didn't do it right, or, You should have visited more, and You all are so mean and cruel" and on and on ; and thereby making the sinner a martyr.

THE MEANING OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

It is doubtful if many really understand what the word "discipline" means. To some it may mean; to withdraw, an abusive use of power, or something that is not to be mentioned. The word "discipline" involves more than simply to "withdraw". A comprehensive definition of discipline is, "Training" which corrects, molds, strengthens ; "Control" gained by enforcing obedience to order ; "Development" by instruc-

tion and exercise. There are three key words involved in that definition: (1) Training (2) control (3) development. The Greek is "Paideia". In Heb. 12:4-11. It has the meaning of "training the soul of adults by holding in check the evil desires".

There are four thoughts that are involved in the application of discipline: (1) **Instruction** to the church and this instruction is based on God's word. (2) **Exhortations** that these instructions be obeyed (II Tim. 4:2). (3) **Rebuke and Admonition** that disobedience be turned away from. (4) **Punishment** in the form of correction if all of the previous have failed and the cause of sin is not turned from. The above elements are based upon the inspired statement of the Apostle Paul in II Tim. 3:16, 17. Discipline is that given by the members of the church to each other, it is designed to bring every member to completeness in God's sight. Discipline by the church begins in the classroom, training and developing, the young and old alike. The pulpit is very important as God's word is proclaimed to mold, to correct, and to strengthen members of the church. When one veers from this training and instruction, they are to be exhorted to return to these teachings, and if this fails, a stronger rebuke and admonition is employed, and if none of these are successful, then punishment in the form of withdrawal is administered.

BIBLE INSTANCES WHEN DISCIPLINE TO BE USED

Church discipline is to be administered at all times to all the members of the church. It primarily refers to training in the Christian life. (Matt. 28:20).

Correction means to restore one to an upright position of life and character. The new Testament sets forth several instances when correction must be exercised: (1) When a grievance against a brother who sins. (2) Go to him alone. (3) If not successful take one or two with you. (4) If these fail tell it to the church. (5) If all is for nought then count him as a "publican or heathen". Secondly, correction must be administered to those who corrupt the doctrine of Christ (Rom. 16:17, 18). This is the duty of Christians and is not optional. Thirdly, when one violates the commandments of God they need to be corrected. (1 Cor. 5:1-5). Paul, through inspiration, says, "To deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus". The

Corinthians, had conveniently overlooked and let the situation go on with no effort to admonish the brother and correct the situation. Paul says, "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." (verse 3). This serves as an example of any type of act which violates God's will. Lastly, those who fail to "abide by God's word". (II Thess 3:6) embraces all who fail to walk righteously. It includes those who are "negligent". On this we have been most negligent!! Many deliberately neglect the cause of Christ and seldom a word is said to them. This is especially true in regard to those that quit attending the services. This is a plain violation of Heb. 10:25 and is sinful, and if one does not repent after being visited and encouraged to return, the action of "withdrawal" is not optional but obligatory.

To some the final act in discipline, the withdrawing, may seem hard and un-Christian. It isn't, but rather is an act of love. It is an effort to save the soul of the sinner (I Cor. 5:5). Jesus had many "hard" sayings (John 6:60), and as a result "many" of the disciples left Him. Jesus did not change His sayings nor His tactics. Just because there are brethren who don't like "withdrawing" does not mean the Lord is going to change His command. Even if the one who is withdrawn from doesn't come back, it is still God's command and doesn't invalidate the practice of withdrawing.

REASONS WHY CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS NECESSARY

One of the main reasons is to maintain the purity of the church. The apostle Paul was admonishing the Corinthians about not practicing church discipline, set forth this principle that, "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (I Cor. 5:6). It is a principle of growth. Leaven spreads slowly but surely until influenced and affected the whole cake or whatever it is put in. The same principle holds true with sin. For this reason, God, through His word urges purity (II Cor. 7:1; Heb. 12:14). When sins are committed by members, and if they are not corrected or repentance is not obtained quickly, the effect of those sins are soon detected in the members. This influence may be by example or word of mouth. When one goes unreprieved of sin,

others may feel they can do likewise. Solomon stated in Eccl. 8:11, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil". Discipline is to be implemented right away lest it influences others and the one guilty of sin becomes hardened. The church has the responsibility to maintain purity. This principle is recognized in society because we have prisons for those that violate the laws of the land, and if they are not disciplined for wrong, then everyone else would go and do likewise; it is practiced in business with the practice of boycotting, because if a business is guilty of malpractice, people withdraw their business and do no business with that company; it is also observed by our nation and other nations in the practice of deportation, if a person becomes a naturalized citizen and then violates the standards of this country they can be expelled from the country. The same responsibility rests upon the church to reprove, admonish the sinner and then excommunicate if all efforts fail.

Another reason for church discipline is that the erring member might be saved. Paul stated, "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus". This clearly should be the motive behind discipline. When one is impenitent, fellowship must be withdrawn from them. Where words have failed, the "universal action" of the church often avails. This final step often shocks one into the realization of their sins and impresses upon them the need to repent. The withdrawal must be observed by the whole church, otherwise the procedure is ineffective. If only a few observe it, the sinner will think that some of the members are mad at him and will not repent. It is not a question of liking or disliking a certain person, but rather a principle of obeying the Lord and His commandments.

Discipline is necessary to maintain the respect of the world. This by no means suggests that the church of our Lord is to try and please the world. Peter stated, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). The apostle Paul observed, "Not as pleasing men, but God which trieth our hearts (I Thess.

2:4). There are many honest people in the world who know what is morally right and wrong. The church of our Lord Jesus Christ must have the respect of the world if it is to be a "converting" church. The church must set a good example to the eyes of the ever-present observator. Of course, examples aren't guides in religion, yet, one cannot deny the power of examples. Sin in the church causes the people to lose respect for Christ and his church. Paul rebuked the church at Corinth for allowing the sin of fornication to go unreproved and said, "such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife." Things were being done by this one who claimed to be a Christian that even the heathens wouldn't do. We cannot for one moment be conformed to the world, but we must be transformed. (Rom. 12:2). Therefore, the church must ever be vigilant and active to maintain purity and to "keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

THE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IN ADMINISTERING DISCIPLINE

First, an effective program of teaching and guidance in the service of the church. This involves having our classrooms in the educational work of the church occupied by teachers that are competent, qualified and sound in doctrine. A preacher who preaches the "whole" truth. All of this overseen by qualified elders. (I Tim. 3). The key to this program of teaching and guidance is to have elders or members to quickly encourage and admonish one of those at the first sign of negligence.

When the procedure of teaching, encouraging, and admonishing fails—withdrawal. In observing discipline (Gal. 6:1) is to be observed. The action of withdrawal is not to be the result of rumor, suspicions, or from listening to Pharisaical members. The word "overtaken" means, "to be caught at the scene, specific knowledge for reliable testimony". Pray that the impenitent will turn from their sins, but if one shows a hardness of heart and won't repent, we are not to pray the Lord will forgive the impenitent. (I John 5:16).

Fellowship is to be withdrawn if all effects of visiting,

reproving, exhorting, etc., fail. The scriptures do not require that we talk and reprove forever; Titus 3:10, "A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject". Warnings, rebukes, and exhortations sometimes are not strong enough measures for those set in their sinful ways, and it takes the stronger measure of withdrawal to shock them out of their lost condition.

Letters are to be sent to the ones to be "publicly" withdrawn from and also to other congregations informing them of the action. The other congregations are to honor and uphold the action and not welcome into fellowship and harbor the sinner, but rather rebuke him to go and make restitution of his wrongs with the congregation from which they were disciplined. There is and has been a problem in this area of discipline and as a result of this, congregations are not in fellowship and the sinner goes unreproved.

II Thess 3:14, 15 points out that there is more to withdrawal than getting up and announcing the withdrawal. Each member is to avoid association or fellowship with the person or persons. But if this person is a member of one's "fleshly" family, complete disassociation is impossible. Paul was referring to "spiritual" fellowship. At the same time those in the "fleshly" family should use every opportunity to encourage the withdrawn to repent and not let him or her feel that you condone his actions. The average person will repent before the measures are to be taken. If one repents the church is to accept him or her without ridicule or snobbery. II Cor. 2:7,8.

Words of Life

QUESTION : What is so good about the "Good News" that people keep talking about ?

ANSWER : First, for the Bad News ! (1) Satan is real and very active. (2) The world is full of problems caused by Satan. In one word it is called "Sin". (3) Not one of us has been able to live above sin—we are ALL sinful. (4) Where God dwells there is no room for Satan or sin. A place has been

prepared for Satan and his workers called Hell. (5) Death for all men is imminent and certain.

Man with all his inventiveness only gets deeper and deeper into trouble. And with all his medical and scientific knowledge he cannot make man better nor give one factual answer to life beyond the grave. This is a dark picture, but true.

However, the picture changes. There is light! There is Hope! This is what we call the "Good News". (1) Though Satan is very real and powerful, there is one more powerful—the Son of God has come into the world. He has the power (Matthew 28:18). (2) Though the world is full of sin, yet Jesus can save each person from sin—His blood can cleanse every sin and free every soul (I Peter 1:18-19). (3) Though we can never live so that we can stand justified before a sinless God, Jesus come to be our Justifier (Romans 3:23-25). (4) Heaven awaits those who are justified in Jesus (Philippians 3:20-21). (5) Death is no longer a tomb of fear (1 Corinthians 15). Because of Jesus' Resurrection we now have hope of real life beyond the grave, eternal in the heavens.

We have a Saviour who daily walks with us, bringing peace in the midst of suffering and afflicted. He is our High Priest who continually helps us and cleanses us. As our King He leads us and protects us. As our Prophet He speaks to us through His word. When our last enemy has been overcome the Good Shepherd will lead us through the Valley of the Shadow of Death—there we shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever.

THIS IS GOOD NEWS !

How can you have all of this ? Read the prescription of the Great Physician—(John 3:16; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:37-38; Romans 7:3-4 ; 10:9-10 ; Galatians 3:26-27). Follow directions carefully, the Physician knows best.

Worship—Fellowship With The Lord's Supper

By Shelby G. Floyd

Both the Jew and Gentile were to have fellowship in the spiritual things of the gospel. (Rom. 15:27). The Lord's supper is one of the "spiritual things" in which they fellowshiped.

During the time when Jesus ate the last supper with his disciples, he took the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine, and established a memorial meal commemorative of his death, burial and resurrection. He stated that he would not eat of those elements again until it would be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. (Lk. 22:14-30). When the kingdom of God was established, the members ate the Lord's supper on the first day of every week; they were steadfast in their fellowship with the breaking of bread. (Acts 2:42; 20:7).

In the church at Corinth, there were some who not only wanted to eat the Lord's supper, but they also wanted to have fellowship with idolatrous worship by eating at the table of devils. In order to correct this situation, Paul, taught them several things : first, he strongly urged them to flee from idolatry (cf. I Cor. 10:14) ; secondly, he stated that their communion with the blood and body of Jesus Christ pointed to their unity in the body of Christ, the church. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ ? For we being many are one bread, and one body : For we are all partakers of that one bread." (I Cor. 10:16-17).

When the members of the church of Christ meet together and Partake of the fruit of the vine and the unleavened bread, they have fellowship with the blood of Christ, and with the body of Christ. They have fellowship one with another and with God in eating the Lord's supper. In I Cor. 10:16, the word **communion** is found twice in reference to the blood and body of Jesus Christ. It is from the word **koinonia**, which means to have fellowship, association, communion, community, joint participation, and in I Cor. 10:16, it refers to our fellowship in the be-

benefits of Christ's death. (Thayer, p. 352). When we gather together and eat the Lord's supper, it reminds us of the salvation we enjoy because we have obeyed the gospel and received the benefits of the death of Christ. (Eph. 1:3,7).

First Cor. 10:17 states that all of the Corinthians were one bread and one body : the reason being, they were all partakers of that one bread. Those who are members of the church of Christ and who partake of the one bread in the Lord's supper are also one body. Therefore, fellowship with the Lord's supper points to the unity of worship and the unity of the body of Christ.

The word **partakers** in I Cor. 10:17, is from *metecho*, a present active indicative verb, and it means to eat the one bread; therefore, the members of the church who absent themselves from the services of the church on the first day of the week, and fail to eat the Lord's supper do not have fellowship with the body and with the blood of Christ as Christ intended for them to have. They are forsaking that fellowship by forsaking the assembling of themselves together ; and in failing to observe the Lord's supper, they fail to have fellowship with Jesus Christ in observing his death, burial and resurrection.

In the third place, Paul used Israel after the flesh to illustrate that all who eat the sacrifices of an altar are partakers in the worship of that altar. "Behold Israel after the flesh : are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar ?" (I Cor. 10:18). All of the Jews ate of their offerings and sacrifices of the altar, which indicated they were in fellowship with the worship of that altar. In I Cor. 10:18, the word **partakers** is from *koinonos*, and means that the Jews who ate of the sacrifices offered on the altar became partakers in the worship of the Jews. (cf. Thayer, p. 352). Therefore, if the Corinthians ate the sacrifices of the altars offered to heathen gods, demons or spirits, they were having fellowship with idolatrous worship, inasmuch as those who eat of the sacrifices are partakers of the worship involved in those sacrifices.

In the fourth place, Paul, emphatically affirms that a child of God cannot eat at the Lord's table and the table of devils. It

would be inconsistent for a child of God to do this, "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils." (I Cor. 10:20-21.) What Paul is simply teaching here is that no man can serve two masters. (Matt. 6:24.) Since man cannot serve two masters, neither can he be involved in the worship of God and the worship of idols and be pleasing to God. Paul's argument is simply that if one eats the sacrifices of heathen and idolatrous worship, then he fellowships that worship. And since the heathen believed that in offering sacrifices upon their altars they were propitiating the anger of evil spirits, for one to partake or eat of their sacrifices was to have fellowship with their worship, with their doctrine and with devils. In I Cor. 10:20, the word *fellowship* is from *koinonos*, and means to be a partaker or sharer in anything. In eating the sacrifices of idolatrous worship, they would have fellowship with devils because the devils were the object of the heathen worship just as God is the object of true worship. (cf. Thayer, p. 352).

In view of the above stated arguments, what can be said of those today who want to have fellowship with instrumental music in the denominations? To participate in denominational worship is to have fellowship with denominational worship. One cannot have fellowship with the Lord and with denominational worship.

An Open Letter

Dear Unisex,

Who are you? - Boy.....Girl.....Man.....Woman—I can't tell by your hair, apparel, vocation or language. It is Mrs..... Ms.....or just Person? I no longer can pick you out of the crowd.

I suppose I've lived too long : I can not only remember when hamburgers were a dime and cokes a nickle, but I can even remember when a woman looked like a woman and a man really resembled a man. Now with all our 'social progress,' I can only say, 'Hey, you !'

I'm now told that the word 'lib' means equal second to none. Women of the world are preaching the gospel of liberation. Freedom has become the watch-word of our nuclear age. You tell us that freedom through feminine lens means : 'Do your own thing ; breack the shackles of domestication ; crack the molds of ancient and antiquated structure ; liberate womankind from men, kids, parents and self-restraint ; break the barriers of domestic responsibility ; and soar..... fly.....go solitaire.'

You would have us believe that you can now soar to the stratosphere of emancipation individuality, and newness where the air is bouyant and beautiful. You tell us that in freedom's third heaven no male world can suffocate you with old traditions that impinge upon your rights. Your voice from freedom's ethereal dome pontificates 'no strings, no contacts, no molds, no conditions and no repercussions.'

Unisex-you may think you have snapped the old, tired, social chains of exploitation. You may now think you can have money, freedom, fulfillment and identity. But, there is one thing you can't have on your newly discovered mountain : **God.**

You see, God cut the original molds for humans. Jesus extolled God's loving wisdom when he asked, 'Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female ?' (Matt. 19 : 4) God could have decreed two men or two woman ; instead he made one of each. So the first humans were not all identical, ginger-bread men ; not identical paper-doll cut outs ; the male and female were equal, but different in nature and roles. These physical, emotional, and life-style differences were dictated from the beginning by a loving Creator and not by the mindless masses of a past

culture. Heaven implanted in woman her uniqueness and no 'enlightened age' can cross the barrier or change the rules of the game without loss.

Woman is uniquely woman. Look again at your power on earth! Woman is inherently endowed with feminine qualities of tenderness, beauty, charm, intuitiveness and sublimation. These hallmarks of womanhood are to be reflected in her hair (I Cor. 11:15), apparel (I Tim. 2:9-11), attitudes (I Pet. 3:1-8), submission (Eph. 5:23-25) and domestic role (I Tim. 5:14). Woman's unique, feminine qualities complement man's masculinity and provide her with refreshing fulfillment. Only when you reject your uniqueness will you fail!

God's imprimatur upon woman's unique nature, role and fulfillment is stamped on Timothy's teaching when he penned, "Let woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, not to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression." (I Tim. 2:11-14).

Woman's subordination is grounded upon the creation: 'Adam was first formed, then Eve.' It is further grounded upon the fall of our first parents: 'Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled.....' Thus, order of creation, history of sin and the innate nature of the sexes dictate the roles and relationships at the human level; no intellectual community nor social revolution proponents can successfully change the signals. Woman is different in her constitution and God's.

God's chain of command must not be broken "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God.....For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man; for neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." (I Cor. 11:3, 8-9) The Holy Spirit states a marvelous truth: ".....the head of the woman is the man."

Submission does not relegate woman to an inactive, insignificant doormat. To God submission is woman's glory. The example He gives is that of the church being subject to the rule of Christ. Far from being degrading, this is the church's glory. God didn't decree this law of wives being submissive to their husbands (Eph. 5 : 22-23) because he had a grudge against a woman ; on the contrary, He established this order for the protection of women and the harmony of the home. He means for a woman to be sheltered from the many physical, emotional and spiritual encounters of life. (I Pet. 3 : 7). Scripture knows nothing of the 50-50 democratic marriage. God's order is 100-100. The wife is 100% a wife-the husband is 100% a husband.

Unisex : The choice is yours. You can freely choose the submissive role of a woman. God honors not those who cling to their 'rights,' but those who choose freely to obey Him.

"A good wife.....is far more precious than jewels" (Pr. 31). Where a husband fulfills his loving role in God's order (Eph. 5 : 25) and is not harsh with his mate (Col. 3 : 19), then his wife's submission to him becomes a fountain of mutual love and devotion—a thing of surpassing moral and spiritual beauty.

In **A Man Called Peter**, Catherine Marshall tells how her late husband tended to put women on a pedestal. She quotes the following from one of his sermons : 'Modern girls argue that they have to earn an income, in order to establish a home, which would be impossible on their husband's income. That is sometimes the case, but it must always be viewed as a regrettable necessity, never as the normal or natural thing for a wife to have to do. The average woman, if she gives her full time to her home, her husband, her children.....if she tries to understand her husband's work.....to curb his egotism while, at the same time, building up his self-esteem, to kill his masculine conceit while encouraging all his hopes, to establish around the family a circle of true friends.....If she provides in the home a proper atmosphere of culture, of love, of music, of beautiful furniture and of a garden.....If she can do all this, she will be engaged in a life work that will demand every

ounce of her strength, every bit of her patience, every talent God has given her. the utmost sacrifice of her love. It will demand everything she has and more. And she will find that for which she was created. She will know that she is carrying out the plan of God. She will be a partner with the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe.' Talk about a remake from the old Proverbs 31 version ! Unisex : that's woman-power !

So, if you will accept your unique position as God's woman, then you will find love in marriage, honor among men and happiness and fulfillment in life.

The 'liberated' are building their own tower to heaven. God will yet confuse their lives as well as their tongues!

Copied.

My Home Congregation

Unto the Lord and His church, in every place I am under solemn obligation as a child of God and member of the body of Christ ; but to my "home" congregation I am under special obligation. As a member of the local home assembly, wherever I go I am affecting the total influence of that congregation. How may I help my home congregation and what should be my desire for the church from which I expect so much for my personal needs ? The Following suggestions are made to help us individually and the congregation collectively :

1. I want my home congregation to radiate a wholesome influence in the community. Therefore, I owe it the example of good life (Matt. 5 : 13-16). This automatically involves discipline that brings proper attitudes toward self, others and God (Titus 1 : 11,12).
2. I want the strangers who enter the doors of the meeting place to feel at home needed and greeted. I want them to feel that spiritual needs will be met and will return to be a part of the Lord's family. I must not stand back and stare, get in my own circle for visits, or wait for other members to greet them (Hebrews 13 : 2).
3. No congregation can make progress without faithful and efficient leaders. To the end that our leaders may

be strong and more efficient, I must give them my support. I must be willing to cooperate in every way (1 Timothy 3 : 13; Hebrews 13 : 17).

4. My home congregation has financial obligations. Whether I give or not, these obligations must be paid. If it is right for my home congregation to work for the Lord and pay its obligations each week, it is right for me to give each week. Though circumstances may force me to be absent at times, my contribution should find its way to the treasury.
5. The very existence of any congregation depends upon the attendance of members. I would not have my home congregation or the Lord's body suffer or perish because of my lack of interest in the opportunities to assemble (Hebrews 10 : 25).
6. I want my home congregation to grow for the Lord : therefore, I must take advantage of every opportunity to win souls to Christ (Proverbs 11 : 30).
7. I owe my home congregation the very love of my heart and dedication of my being so that it may be a monument of Christian influence to God's glory.

Selected.

Ingratitude; A Grievous And Ugly Fault

By Joe Goodspeed

Shakespeare was surely right in speaking of ingratitude as biting more sharply than a serpent's tooth.

Paul once warned of coming grievous times. He said, "Man shall be lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents," and then he went on to name some other hideous traits, such as, "unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up," and on and on he went in the passage. (II Timothy 3:1-5). He pictures some of the sorriest and most miserable personality traits known to man. Surely, any times that include those traits are grievous troubled times. Yet, along with those other qualities belonging to terrible times is that of being unthankful (verse 2). In God's eyes unthankfulness must be about as bad as you can get.

In Romans 1 you have a picture painted of the end to which humanity can go—an end that results even in God giving up on certain people. It is said three times in Romans 1, "God

YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE !

Radio Sri Lanka Broadcasts

ENGLISH—*The Voice of Truth*—Speaker : Reggie Gnanasundaram.

All correspondence should be sent to *The Voice of Truth*,
Post Box 3815, New Delhi 110049.

Sundays—10 : 15 to 10 : 30 P.M.

Tuesdays—9 : 30 to 9 : 45 A.M.

HINDI—*Gospel Truth*—Speaker : Sunny David.

All correspondence should be sent to *Satya-Susamachar*, Post
Box 3815, New Delhi 110049.

Tuesdays—9 : 00 to 9 : 15 P.M.

Thursdays—9 : 00 to 9 : 15 P.M.

Fridays—9 : 00 to 9 : 15 P.M.

Saturdays—9 : 45 to 10 : 00 P.M.

TELUGU—*The Voice of Truth*—Speaker : Joshua Gootam.

All correspondence should be sent to *The Voice of Truth*,
Post Box 80, Kakinada 533001.

Sundays—2 : 30 to 2:45 P.M.

Mondays—2 : 30 to 2 : 45 P.M.

Tuesdays—2 : 30 to 2 : 45 P.M.

Wednesdays—2 : 30 to 2 : 45 P.M.

TAMIL—*The Way of Truth*—Speaker : P. R. Swamy.

All correspondence should be sent to *The Way of Truth*,
Post Box 3301, Bangalore 560033.

Tuesdays—5 : 30 to 5 : 45 P.M.

Thursdays—6 : 45 to 7 : 00 P.M.

Fridays—6 : 45 to 7 : 00 P.M.

MALYALAM—*The Voice of Truth*—Speaker : John Chandy.

All Correspondence should be sent to *Church of Christ*,
Thevally, Quilon—9 Kerala.

Tuesdays—3 : 45 to 4 : 00 P.M.

Fridays— 3 : 45 to 4 : 00 P.M.

ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO LISTEN

Bible Correspondence Courses and Christian Literature
are available in these different languages from the addresses
listed.

gave them up..." (verses 24, 25 and 28). Paul there mentions such sins as idolatry, homosexuality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness and murder. Certainly not a very good crowd. And yet, along with those heinous characters we find these words: "Neither were they thankful." (verse 21).

Many years ago, an itinerant tinker in a rural area knocked on a door and asked if there were any pots and pans he could mend for a fee. The lady of the house found a few and paid him after he finished his work. Before leaving the traveler showed an uncommon interest in one of the lady's house plants, and seemed really to admire it. Thinking the flower would be an encouragement to the man, she gave it to him and even prepared a sandwich for him to take on the way. Later that evening, as she and her husband were driving their wagon down the road from their farm house, what should they see there beside the road but the flower she had lovingly nourished and cared for, then unselfishly given. It had been thrown to the ground, its roots exposed. The tinker had been interested only in the metal vase.

Let us hope the Lord does not look at us as those who are merely interested in the vase, the material rather than the life, the soul within.

*Some know no reason why they're born
Save only to consume the corn,
Consume the flesh, and eat the fish
And leave behind—an empty dish !*

Lord thou has given us so much. Wilt thou grant us one thing more—a grateful heart.

TO :

FROM :

The Bible Teacher

Post Box No. 3815
New Delhi-110049