

MISSION MESSENGER

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PARSIMONIOUS PRETENDERS

By W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

Recently I preached to an audience made up of robbers! I was strangely unafraid in such company. Most of them were well-dressed. A number of them came to the meeting in new cars. They were friendly and companionable, and chatted amiably before the time for the service to begin. The place was not the state prison, nor was there any air of the penitentiary about the location. All of the attendants sang cheerily



and the hymns were given with a right good grace. The place was one of our faithful(?) churches, and all of those present were members on the occasion. Those who were at the meeting would not think of taking another's purse, and if they found it lying in the road they would restore it. They picked no one's pockets but their own, and then only for smaller change. They are honest with each other, and everyone of them would have shared with another if he appeared in need before them. These were only robbers of God!

"Will a man rob God?" The first time that question was asked, it was directed toward God's chosen people. And the answer was given by the spokesman of the Lord. It was in the affirmative! "Yet ye have robbed me." But will God's people rob him today? Let us see!

Ask that brother who a few years ago was making \$25 per week and gave the Lord a dollar of it. Now he is making \$60 per week and he is still giving the Lord a dollar every week! He may spend more than that for cigarettes, he spends half of it for a daily paper including the Sunday edition with all of the comic sections. Smoking, laughing, letting the world go to hell before his eyes, drawing \$3120 per year and giving God \$52 of it—ask him if a man will rob God!

Ask that brother who waits on the Lord's table, who exhorts the church to be faithful, and who piously entreats all to remember the great sacrifice of Jesus. He makes more than \$100 per week, and when the time comes to "give as prospered" he wads and crumples up a dollar bill and drops it in the collection basket. Paul was placed in "stocks and bonds" but this modern brother is in-

terested in a different kind of the same. Yet he is a prisoner as surely as Paul, but a prisoner to his own covetousness. Will a man rob God?

Ask that young lady who has a job as secretary downtown, and who has to reserve time for the beauty parlor so she cannot come to the midweek meeting. She spends a dollar for a ticket to the show and that much more for a midnight snack with her friends. Daintily she searches through her cluttered purse, filled with compact, lipstick, chewing gum, and a hundred other items. Under the stub for last week's \$35 check she finds the quarter she was looking for, and absent-mindedly drops it in through force of habit, her heart and mind a mile away. Will a woman rob God?

To his ancient people Jehovah said, "Ye

are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Shall we also be cursed because we rob him as whole congregations? Will we go, pharisaically, hypocritically, stealing from God, robbing heaven of its dues, and come up before the great Judge with the rust of wealth to eat like fire our bodies and souls? How much do you love God? How much do you value the church? What price do you attach to fellowship, mercy and divine love? If the world were to accept your estimate of the value of the church, how many of them would ever be brought into it?

America is a nation of idolaters. Even the church is filled with greedy, mercenary, money-loving, wealth-hoarding members whose hearts are bled when the call comes for aid and assistance. George Washington was "first in war, first in peace," but it is his photograph on the dollar bill that is "first in the hearts of his countrymen." Will a man rob God?

SCRIPTURAL OVERSIGHT

By L. C. ROBERTS

What is God's plan of church government as it pertains to new congregations which have no qualified material for an eldership?



Did the congregations in apostolic days have gifted evangelists to oversee them, and if so unto whom were these evangelists responsible—to the apostles, or to a local congregation elsewhere? These are queries we commonly hear. They are matters of current interest to the church. Let us search

the scriptures and be governed by God's revelation upon these things.

Practically everyone agrees that the eldership is the highest executive office in the church. Some few contend that elders and evangelists ceased to exist with the passing of spiritual gifts, and with the three others mentioned in Ephesians 4:11, where the expression "pastors" refers to elders. That these five classes were composed of spiritually gifted men is plain from the context, but since the elder and evangelist are the only ones for whom qualifications are stated, these two must have remained after the spiritual gifts terminated; after the accom-

plishment of Ephesians 4:12, 13 and 1 Corinthians 13:8-12.

The Lord's perfect plan is a qualified eldership (plural in number) over every congregation (Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23). These were to have authority over ALL the flock. To learn something of the work and responsibility of elders read Acts 20:28-32; Hebrews 13:7, 17; and 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13. Bible students of every faith agree that there must be some executive authority (an office with power to execute or enforce the law) in every organization. It is requisite in schools, colleges, lodges, cities, nations—and in the church. In the permanent form of government with a scriptural eldership this is accomplished. But elders cannot be ordained until men are qualified. (See 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.) Some have reasoned that these many qualifications belong to the group of "board of elders." This is foolish. It might be necessary to have nearly as many elders as there are qualifications. Since "husband of one wife" and "children in subjection" constitute two qualifications, such absurd reasoning would mean that if one elder was married, and another had his children under subjection, the rest could be bachelors, and men with unruly children or none at all.

If elders possessing these many qualifica-

tions constitutes the Lord's plan in the old and fully grown group of disciples, can we conclude that he has no plan for the weak, uninformed, struggling group of beginners to have any authoritative government? I think the reason discipline has not been practiced and the churches kept clean in so many places is because no one is in authority and each does that "which is right in his own eyes." Some may be there who understand the teaching of the Word, but with each having an equal amount of authority with all others, the wicked and indifferent outweigh the voice of the righteous. If there is a church that is kept clean, other churches receive with open arms the disfellowshipped and grant unto them the right of communion and every other privilege of the church. I cannot conceive of the fornicator from Corinth being received at Cenchrea (about five miles east). The result of that disciplinary action (2 Cor. 5: 7) is not always effective because of this general condition.

We do not have many scriptures on the temporary form of government, but Titus 1: 5 was addressed to an evangelist. We do not know if he had a spiritual gift. Timothy had at least one gift, but did not have all of them as did the apostles, for he was told to study, so was not inspired as were they. Paul instructs Titus to do two things: (1) "Set in order the things that are wanting," (2) "Ordain elders in every city." He had been appointed to do both of these, which require separate and distinct action. The first would require teaching and training of the members (2 Tim. 2: 2) so that material could be found for the eldership. But until he could complete the second part of the command, who was to take final action against such members as referred to in 1 Corinthians 5: 11?

The evangelist already had authority to "reprove and rebuke" (2 Tim. 4: 2; Titus 2: 15). Certainly a condition such as at Corinth would make the church "out of order" and to put it in order would require whatever corrective measures were essential to bring repentance, or a purging of the guilty as commanded in 1 Corinthians 5: 13 and 2 Thessalonians 3: 6. I believe that Hebrews 13: 7, 17 and 1 Thessalonians 5: 12, 13 refers to the evangelist who has banded a small group together as well as the elders. Certainly the Lord did not leave the new church without government as we so often see it today. The modern situation probably arose from the emphasis given to the first principles of the gospel in the early restoration period, when hundreds were baptized and left without a shepherd, or men were placed in the eldership who were untaught and not qualified.

Referring to appointment of elders as "setting the church in order" is unscriptural language. "Setting in order" comes first and should be done before new men are placed in the eldership. An inexperienced group of elders over a church that is out of order

would be whipped before they start. A new group of disciples may be easily led; but one that has long been without governmental restraint is another matter.

Probably every church had spiritually gifted men to lead them at first. It is likely that most elders (James 5: 14, 16) and most evangelists (2 Tim. 1: 6) had one or more gifts. There were nine gifts in all (1 Cor. 12: 7-11) and it appears the Corinthians had all of them (1 Cor. 7: 7). Other churches are also mentioned as having them (Rom. 1: 11; 12: 6). These gifted men were necessary until the New Testament was completed. But it was not written in one day, but was near three quarters of a century in being compiled. Paul laid down his pen about A. D. 66 or 68 after writing Hebrews and 2 Timothy. John the Revelator completed the book about A. D. 96 and died soon after. Only the apostles could impart these spiritual gifts, and as they died there would be fewer gifts bestowed, since there would be fewer apostles to go among the churches.

The death of the recipients of the gifts would lower the number of the gifts, but the need of gifts would also be lessened as more copies of the various New Testament

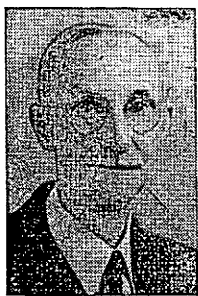
books were made and distributed where needed. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John would take the place of tongues and signs (1 Cor. 14: 22) the twenty-one letters would take the place of the gift of prophecy (1 Cor. 14: 3-4). So as the giving of the gifts was gradual, I would say their passing was also gradual. Spiritual gifts ceased when the last man died upon whom any apostle had laid hands. As the gifted elders and evangelists died those without gifts took their places, with the more nearly completed New Testament to assist and direct them. Hence, the transition from the spiritually gifted to the New Testament government was not abrupt in either its temporary or permanent forms.

Certainly the evangelist is answerable to authority. God's plan has put every Christian under some authority. The elder may be tried by the evangelist when properly accused (1 Tim. 5: 19-22). The evangelist is a part of some flock and under the authority of the eldership (Acts 20: 28). The church member or evangelist who runs about over the brotherhood without being a member of some local church is disobedient to the principles of government as set forth in the New Testament.

SAVED IN CHILD-BEARING

By W. G. ROBERTS

Several years ago I was called upon to deliver the funeral discourse for a mother who had never accepted Christ, and whose



son, a Christian, was much worried. A lady came to me and asked if I might say something to comfort him, and quoted 1 Timothy 2: 15, asking if that did not mean the deceased would be saved, since she had three children. The verse she referred to is understood but by few persons, it seems. It reads, "Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety." I suggest that you read the preceding two verses also.

The word "in" is from Greek *dia* and has many definitions, such as "through, an allusion to, reminding you of, by reason of, because of," etc. In this case it means "through childbearing." The word "saved" in this verse is from the Greek *sozo*, and means, "to save, to keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger."

In "Life and Epistles of Saint Paul" (page 814) occurs this rendering: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. Adam was not deceived; but the woman was deceived, and became a transgressor. But women will be saved by the bearing of children; if they

continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-restraint." Then this comment is inserted: "The Greek here cannot mean *in* (dia) childbearing. The apostle's meaning is that women are to be kept in the path of safety, not by taking upon themselves the office of man, but by the performance of the peculiar functions which God has assigned to their sex."

Macknight has translated the passage thus: "However she shall be saved through childbearing, if they live in faith and love and holiness, with sobriety." Then he comments: "The word 'saved' in this verse refers to the woman in the foregoing verse, who is certainly Eve. But the apostle did not mean to say that she alone was to be saved through childbearing; but that all her posterity, whether male or female, are to be saved by the child-bearing of a woman, as is evident from his adding: If they live in faith and love and holiness, with sobriety. For safety in child-bearing doth not depend upon that condition at all, since many pious women die in child-bearing, while others of a contrary character are preserved. The salvation of the human race through child-bearing was intimated in the sentence passed upon the serpent (Gen. 3: 15), 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head.' Accordingly, the Savior being conceived in the womb of his mother by the power of the Holy Ghost, he is truly the seed of woman who was to bruise the head of the serpent."

And a woman by bringing him forth, hath been the occasion of our salvation."

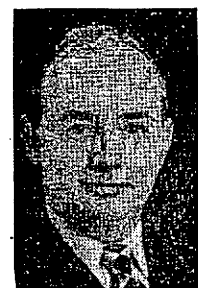
Dia ("in") meaning "through, reminding you of," etc., shows that child-bearing is a reminder, that is a reminder of man's fall in Eden. It is *through* child-birth we are reminded of Eve's transgression, and Paul says women shall be saved from that transgression by the bearing of children, *if* they

continue in faith, love and holiness, with self-restraint. Christ is the one, born of a woman, who brought this redemption to all of us. This conveys my idea of what this verse is intended to teach, and I commend it to all of my readers for their earnest consideration and as an incentive to further investigation. May God grant us wisdom through study is my prayer.

"MURDERERS IN THE CHURCH!"

By ELLIS CRUM, JR.

Have you ever visited a congregation where there were murderers assembled together with the saints? Have you ever known a murderer to take a public part in the worship? I have, quite frequently! I do not mean there are congregations that fellowship those who have actually been guilty of taking someone's life. Let's hope that the discipline situation has not become that bad!



John tells us, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." (1 John 3: 14, 15). I am sure that you have met brethren who seem to hate one another. This is a terrible thing.

Sometimes brethren hate another brother because he has more talent or ability than they. In reality they should rejoice that he has the ability and is willing to use

his talent to the glorification of God. Often brethren become jealous of others because they seem to prosper more, have more friends, or greater influence. This is not a "godly jealousy"!

If we have some reason to be offended at our brother, God's Word tells us what we should do, in Matthew, 18th chapter. First of all we should go to our brother, and to him alone, and talk the matter over—perhaps we can gain our brother. If this fails, we are to take one or two witnesses with us and go again and talk to our brother who has offended us. If this second effort is fruitless, we should take the matter unto the church. If he refuses to make his wrongs right, the church is forced to withdraw fellowship from this erring disciple.

Even if our brother is withdrawn from, we still should not hate him. We must hate the act or sin, but not the sinner. The Lord hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, and the doctrine of Balaam, but He didn't hate the individuals. In the words of the poet, "we should love the sinner all the while we loathe the sin." By this the world will know we are his disciples.

treat such people and matters. So much stress was put on cleanliness in the law of Moses, that the "elders" in Israel drew a line upon eating with persons who had not first washed their hands. The Lord ignoring their extreme discipline, gave them to understand it is not what enters into the man that defiles him, but the things which come out of him (Mark 8: 15). The law was very strict against any affinity with the Gentiles, because they were sinners. When ten tribes were led away by Jereboam into spiritual wickedness, the Lord forbade his faithful to eat or drink with them, or help them in any way to further their cause (1 Kings 13 and 1 Chron. 19: 1, 2). Because of this, the elders of Israel in their zeal to exclude all sinners placed *Hebrew* publicans (tax-gatherers) in the same class with those plainly disfellowshipped by the law of the Lord, and when the Savior was received into the house of Zacchaeus, the publican, they all murmured, saying, that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. But, by the Lord ignoring their "extreme discipline" salvation came to that house.

There are those in the church who are to be commended for their relentless fight against all sin in the church, but who, on the other hand, are condemned by the Lord, I fear, on the same principle which condemned the elders in fleshly Israel. For in their zeal for purity, they go so far beyond the place where they are sure that the Lord draws the line of fellowship, it becomes necessary for them to get together and decide just what they will, or will not make a test of fellowship. When these leaders make their decision, any preacher or congregation not submitting to their judgment, is immediately considered unfaithful, and thrust out of the Kingdom, and their religion is so completely built around discipline there is practically no time nor thought left for the constructive activity which the Lord demands of us as surely as he demands that we maintain purity (See 2 Peter 3: 18 and a Timothy 2: 2). As a result, many years of time are allowed to pass without any elders being appointed or developed, and no preachers are developed to be sent out equipped with knowledge and ability to carry the gospel to regions beyond. Yet these who thus neglect these demands of the Lord consider themselves the "super-faithful" (Matt. 23: 23, 24).

I believe in purity and discipline in the church, far more than is practiced in many places; but temperance in all things, and moderation, are fundamental principles of the gospel which we dare not ignore. Let us be scripturally consistent.

"A CLEAN CHURCH" is the title of the 165 page book on church government and discipline, which has occasioned so much interest. Read it for yourself. Send your order with \$1.50 to this office today. Your book will be sent at once.

THE TRADITION OF THE ELDERS

By A. C. WARREN

"But he answered and said unto them, why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" (Matthew 15: 3).

Observation manifests that through the ages those who have attempted to serve God have been prone to become so indifferent and careless in religious matters that they have advocated or tolerated innovations, worldliness and general wickedness; or else, in their zeal for purity have become so extreme in discipline and fellowship (or disfellowship) that they have gone far beyond the place where they are sure the Lord authorizes or sanctions their acts in these matters. Both classes have invariably stressed one or more points of God's demands to the utter exclusion of other things just as important. Our Savior designates such as "Ye blind guides, which strain out a gnat and swallow a camel" (Matt. 23: 4). While practicing these extremes our trust is in tradition.

I still believe the gravest danger lies in our being loose, indifferent or careless. Yet zeal gone to seed, and not according to knowledge cannot save us (Rom. 10: 1, 2). Experience has taught that this also works havoc in the church, and it is with this side of the question I shall deal herein.

"And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11: 12). The marginal reading is: "Or is gotten by force and they that thrust men." On the part of the over-zealous there is a tendency to take the kingdom by force, build a wall around it, and thrust out everyone who will not submit to the most extreme demand, even one which must depend upon human judgment, as to the right or wrong of the matter.

During his personal ministry upon earth Jesus gave us an example of how we should

Views of the News . . . By ROBERT T. HARTMANN

The Widow's \$10,000

Here is a story of an Oklahoma City woman—a 51-year-old widow—whose doctors have told her she has only a year to live.



After providing for her family she has \$10,000 left over, and she asks the public for advice on how best to spend the sum in 12 months. "Every idea seems silly or useless," she says. "I want a plan. I want a purpose. It's the most peculiar sort of feeling."

I suppose it does feel peculiar to suddenly

discover that most of the things you have spent your life doing, or hoping to do, are in reality silly and useless. Most of us never get that feeling, though, because we never stop to think about it. But if you knew for certain that you had only 365 days left—what would you do differently?

The brutal truth about death—and death will come just as surely to everyone who reads these words as it will to the worried widow—is that without Christ a human life can have neither plan nor purpose. For there can be only One Plan and Purpose in the universe, if there is any at all—and science truly so called unites with revelation to prove that there is. It is obvious that any individual plan or purpose that runs counter to this Master Plan is both useless and silly, and can end only in destruction.

If, on the other hand, the individual's plan and purpose is in harmony with God's plan and purpose, the death of this physical body will be no more than an incident in it. The gravestone will be but a milestone on the journey.

How then can we know God's eternal plan and purpose? "*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son,*" is what Hebrews 1: 1, 2 informs us. And the rest of the Bible tells us all we need to know about the unfolding of God's plan and purpose from the creation of the world to the perfection of a New Covenant by which all men can, if they will, be reconciled to God through the sacrifice of his beloved Son.

But, some will say, the Bible contains many things hard to be understood, and its commandments require of weak human beings a perfection and selflessness that no man, save Christ alone, has ever been able to attain. And this objection is valid. Truly, none of us can ever bring his life into perfect submission to the Divine Will. Are we then hopelessly lost?

No! The just are saved by faith—faith in Christ Jesus. When faithful disciples have done all they know to do, when they have done the very best they can, and still come short of the goal, then God's Plan takes over. Christ's goodness is sufficient to cover their frailty. They will be accepted, not because they deserve to be, but because they are Christ's. If Jesus, who has known our temptations and suffered more than we all in the flesh, if he recognizes us, it will be enough.

This is what the lady in Oklahoma needs to know. Not what to do with her \$10,000—there are many good uses to which she could put it—but what to do with her soul. And she is not the only one who needs to know!

"*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation.*"

already too many denominations in this confused world of ours.

The Church of Christ is unique in that it has no other creed than the Bible, the inspired Word of God! You are not required to study some humanly concocted catechism, subscribe to a man-made book of doctrines and covenants, endorse some pet theory as a key to the Scriptures, swallow some book of discipline, or pledge allegiance to a Book of Concord written by man! It is our firm contention that God's Word is a perfect law of liberty, written by the dictation of the Holy Spirit for our guidance. We believe that it contains all God wants us to have with reference to what is requisite to convert the sinners and sanctify the saints, and we do not believe that any uninspired interpreters of the inspired record are needed to formulate, invent and collect together their own mental meanderings as a basis of belief. If you become a member of the Church of Christ you are not asked to believe to secure fellowship, anything that God has not provided.

The Church of Christ has no earthly headquarters. The citizenship of its members is in heaven. True, each person is a member of a local congregation, and subject to the discipline of that congregation, but there are no popes, prelates, priests or cardinals over the church as a whole. Each congregation is separate in its functions and is not subject to the dictation or direction of some earthly functionary. "There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." No synods, conferences or national committees make laws for the government of the church. No elected delegates journey to far off places to draw up legislative action for the supervision of your moral and spiritual liberty. Jesus is our supreme head, and the only one we recognize; there is no earthly head of the One Body in Saint Louis; Washington, D. C.; London, England; or Indianapolis, Indiana.

The name which we wear is divinely given and authorized by the Spirit of God. In the apostolic times the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch, and those who are still disciples are still called that and nothing else. The church of the New Testament is not divided into various segments, factions, cliques, clans and clergy-dominated

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

By W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

We're quite frequently asked what difference exists between the Church of Christ and other religious bodies. A great many folk when they become religiously inclined seek to compare various organizations, to determine by such a method, with which one they desire affiliation. I cannot help but suggest that this is the wrong method to employ. If one wishes to be well-pleasing unto God, he should compare all of the religious bodies with the Word of God, and become a member of that one which represents the teaching of the Bible. Selecting a

church because of its popularity may leave you bitterly disappointed in the final day of accounts.

We are not averse to telling you some of the points in which we differ with others in their religious practices. We feel that there would be no occasion for the existence of the church of Christ if it had no distinctive reason for being on earth. If it were just another sectarian body, had no special mission to perform, and no real objective to gain, we could well abandon it any time in an attempt to promote union, for there are

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Dedicated to the task of arousing churches in this state and elsewhere to a greater zeal in mission work, and assist in developing the talents of all to be used to the glory of God.

groups. It is true, very true, and I say it sadly, that there are those who profess to be Christians and who have created that kind of condition, but they just think they are children of God. God does not recognize them, and we should not, until they repent of their divisive heresies!

No other name than that of Christian can be found within the scope of New Testament revelation as a distinctive name for God's people as individuals. In a collective group, we wear the title, "Church of Christ." The reason for that is obvious to everyone who knows that Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build *my* church." It can never be misunderstood by those who are familiar with the fact that "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

The Church of Christ is the only religious body on earth which actually believes in and practices the "priesthood of all believers." There is no distinction between clergy and laity in the church of the New Testament. The Bible teaches that every Christian is a member of God's clergy, a word which means "lot" or "inheritance." The term laity is from a word meaning "the people" and is intended to distinguish between them and a privileged class. But there are no privileged classes in the church of Christ. Some so-called churches of Christ announce on their billboards and on the air, the name of the minister of the church, but that kind of a thing is as foreign to the New Testament as the wearing of clerical robes and collars in which to preach to the people. It came from Rome and is only preserved as a result of the ignorance of those who ought to know better.

No one has any more right to call upon God than any other faithful Christian. Every man has an equal right to announce Jesus Christ to his fellowmen. However, men can never be satisfied with the simplicity of the gospel. They must improve upon God's plan, and help Him out with his arrangements. This requires catering to the lust for power, pre-eminence and prestige that wells up within the heart of those who would make the church and religion a stepping-stone for political ambition. I received through the mail recently a bulletin from a college in Los Angeles, California. It was started to develop Christians, according to its founder George Pepperdine. Apparently George thought that in California it took more than the church to make Christians, so he would turn them out like Henry Ford, on a production line basis, streamlined and chrome-plated!

In any event, the head of the Department of Religion was shown placing a Master's gown and cap on one of the young preachers who had finished the prescribed course! He had won a "Master's degree in religion," and was entitled now to take over a church as a master! I thought as I saw the picture of the words of Jesus, "Call no man on earth

Master, for ye have but one Master." It looks like we're going to have a heap of them from now on if we continue with itching ears! Imagine anyone calling himself a Master of religion! The Old Book I read, and still place my confidence in, declares "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall!"

Churches of Christ remaining faithful to the Lord have no reverends, no doctors of divinity, no doctors of religion—but just plain, simple, old-fashioned, every day Christians! The fact that one man has a little more wealth than another makes him no better in God's sight; the fact that one has a superior education is no indication of a masterful command of the Truth of Heaven! There is no special clergy in the church of Christ, and I suggest to some of you who are selling your birthright for a mess of pottage that it would be well for you to awaken before it is too late. In the November (1947) issue of *The Bible Banner*, Foy E. Wallace says of a religious college at Henderson, Tennessee, where it was my privilege to debate Dr. Grover C. Brewer, "What effect will it have on the church in

the next decade for a couple of hundred young preachers a year to be taught this link-up between the churches and the colleges? It shows that the schools have the power to sweep the church into digression on any point at which they themselves digress and choose to push." Well, they won't sweep us into digression, because we don't have them, and do not intend to have them!

Churches of Christ are scriptural in worship and work. Their praise service to God is unaccompanied singing of the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, as set forth in the Book. They have no carnivals, Bingo parties, plays, dramatizations, cantatas, or minstrel shows to raise money. In every particular they strive to follow the pattern set forth in the New Testament. With God's word as their only guide, Jesus Christ as their only king, your soul as their only interest, and heaven as their only hope, they seek to press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God as it is in Christ Jesus. Would you be satisfied with such a program? Then, investigate our plea today!

SONGS WE SING

By ROY HARRIS

Wonderful Words of Life

A few years ago, I heard an aged lecturer who had heard the singing of Philip P. Bliss, say: "He was the sweetest of all gospel singers."



P. P. Bliss was born and had his boyhood home in Rome, Pennsylvania. He lived from 1838 to 1876. Sometime in this period, he wrote the words and music for *Wonderful Words of Life*. He was killed, at the age of 38, in a railroad accident near Ash-tabula, Ohio.

In his comparatively brief life, Phillip P. Bliss wrote many simple but impressive gospel songs. It is said that he was passionately fond of music: "He loved music like a bird." His parents were very poor, and he had a struggle obtaining a musical education. As a child, he once wandered, uninvited, into a rich lady's home because of the singing he heard within. She rather heartlessly ordered him out, but she could not quench the love of singing in his soul. He is said to have had a beautiful deep singing voice. Ideas for songs often came to him from any impressive event or story, he happened to hear.

On his monument at Rome, Pennsylvania, is inscribed "P. P. Bliss, author of 'Hold the Fort.'" In 1870, Mr. Bliss heard of an incident of the Civil War. General Sherman

signalled a message to the soldiers defending the garrison at Allatoona Pass, Georgia, "Hold the fort, I am coming.—W. T. Sherman." From this message Mr. Bliss evolved the vigorous song, "*Hold the Fort, For I am Coming*." It probably is the song by which his merits as a composer could best be judged; but I believe that among our brethren today, *Wonderful Words of Life* is better known.

Both melody and harmony of *Wonderful Words of Life* are extremely simple, though not without beauty. The words are based upon the language of our Savior: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (John 6: 63). The words of other men, philosophers, teachers, and statesmen, have gained the attention of men. Some have gripped the imagination and stirred the soul. The chief difference between their words and those of Jesus is that Jesus' words "are spirit, and they are life."

"Sing them over again to me," might well be our request from now until the end of our lives; for the more they are repeated, the more fully we will see their beauty. Let us tell to others that "Christ the blessed one gives to all" (Rom. 1: 16.) "Jesus, only Savior, sanctify forever" (see John 17: 17). They are "beautiful words" and "wonderful words." Why? Simply because they are "wonderful words of life."

Why not share this paper with a friend when you have read it?

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE — A Forum

"The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." Is this statement found in 1 Corinthians 7:39 a commandment or a statement of judgment upon the part of the apostle Paul? To what extent are we subject to the regulation today? To determine the interpretations of current teachers in the church, we asked six of our preaching brethren to state their convictions upon this matter. We present herewith their replies.

J. A. FREED, Topeka, Kansas

In my opinion the restriction found in 1 Corinthians 7:39 is not a command to be made a test of fellowship in the church today, but an instruction given to widows to keep under the stress of conditions then. (See verse 26 of the chapter.) There seems to have been a distressed condition surrounding the church at Corinth as the reason for considerable of the teaching in this chapter and the 39th verse is included in it.

If this is taken as a command and enforced only on widows it would be class distinction and respect of persons. This the Lord does not endorse. If this is enforced on all alike—virgins, widowers and unmarried men—it would make us guilty of the sin of presumption, against which we are warned (Psalms 19:13; 2 Peter 2:10). I believe that the principle of restriction taught in this verse should be taught in the church today.

C. R. TURNER, Sullivan, Illinois

There has been a lot of discussion regarding widows remarrying "out of the church." Some have thought that 1 Corinthians 7:39 is not binding today, and that Paul was merely giving advice. At the time he wrote this epistle, there was a condition existing which caused Paul to think it best not to marry (verse 26). The Lord had given no instructions regarding this, so Paul gave his judgment (verse 25). This was not for all time to come (See 1 Tim. 5:14). However, the verse under consideration is NOT Paul's advice. He is here stating a fact that "the wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." "Only in the Lord" is a restriction bound upon a widow. If that expression is Paul's judgment, then so is the other clause, "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth" the judgment of the apostle. What proves too much, proves nothing.

"After my judgment" in verse 40, has no reference to her "marrying only in the Lord" but to the effect that she will be happier if she remains single. I certainly believe that

the widow who ignores verse 39 and marries out of the church, violates a plain command and commits a grievous sin. Also, marrying in the Lord does not mean to marry a backslider or one who has been immersed and then united with some unscriptural body. There should be more teaching upon this subject in the churches.

FRED W. FENTON, Merriam, Kansas

Paul expresses his judgment beginning with verse 25 of this chapter. However, his knowledge of divine things, his quotations from divine law and his devotion to the Lord elevate his judgment above mere opinion. Moreover, he concludes with the statement, "and I think also that I have the Spirit of God" (verse 40).

We have no right to place any man's judgment upon an equal plane with divine commands, not even the judgment of the apostle Paul. This fact is recognized by Paul when he distinguishes between his own judgment and that which the Lord commanded. We have good reason, however, to evaluate the judgment of Paul above that of our own, and then to add to such an appraisal of the judgment of this apostle, the importance of his statement, "and I think that I have the Spirit of God."

We should take the judgment of Paul at face value, and we should not reduce our appraisal of his judgment connected with his statement that he thought he had the Spirit of God, by approving marriages that violate his advice. This is not to say that we are authorized to make such a marriage a test of fellowship, for this would put the judgment of the apostle on an equal plane with divine commands. But we can disapprove any marriage that disregards his advice and holds no fear for the fact that he may have written by "the Spirit of God." Any other attitude will result in underestimating the value of what Paul has written, and no true Christian will wish to become involved in that which is regarded by the faithful as doubtful and dangerous. This attitude by the people of the Lord should save many from serious mistakes which may lead to sorrow and disgrace in many cases.

E. M. ZERR, New Castle, Indiana

I believe this to have the force of an inspired apostolic command. The opposite view is generally based on the words "permission" (verse 6), and "judgment" (verse 25). That only shows that Paul was not originally commanded to give the instructions but was permitted to do so according to his judgment. If a father should permit his older son to give a command to a younger brother to do a certain thing, that would be the same as a direct command from the father to the younger son. The proviso

in verse 26 affected only the advisability of marrying at all in the "present distress," and Paul made his own exception in verse 9. That would have nothing to do with the right or wrong of marrying out of the Lord.

W. C. ROBERTS, Hammond, Illinois

In my opinion 1 Corinthians 7:39 applies to us with the force of a command and should be obeyed as other commands. I'm aware of the fact that verse 40 says, "... I think also that I have the Spirit of God." Some there are who claim the word "think" implies a doubt. But this word is from the Greek *dokeo* and is sometimes rendered by the word "think"; however, MacKnight translates it in this instance, "I am certain that I have the mind of God." I think he is right in this translation, for in the following passages we find the same Greek word. "Then pleased (*dokeo*) it the apostles" (Acts 15:22). "It seemed (*dokeo*) good unto the Holy Spirit" (Acts 15:28). "It pleased (*dokeo*) Silas to abide there." "I verily thought (*dokeo*) with myself" (Acts 26:9). "For I think (*dokeo*) that God hath set some" (1 Cor. 4:9). "How much sorer punishment suppose (*dokeo*) ye" Heb. 10:29). All these show that the word from which we have "think" does not and cannot express doubt in the mind of the apostle or the Holy Spirit.

Who can say that Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:40 meant that he was not certain he had the mind of God, or that he doubted if God would endorse what he said in the previous verse? Paul certainly meant, "I am certain that I have the mind of the Spirit." All will admit that I have the safe side of the question. Who will say that those passages I have cited imply doubt? To do so would be to call in question that Paul was pleased in Acts 15:22, that a thing seemed good to the Holy Spirit, or that Silas was not sure whether to abide where he was pleased to stay. The safe side of this question is to do just what Paul said, and that is to marry "only in the Lord." God at least permitted Paul to give that advice to widows, and I believe it is a command.

KENNETH MORGAN, Klamath Falls, Ore.

Considering the statement "But if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." whether this is a command, a part of the discipline of Christians, or an expression of Paul's good judgment, spoken, as he says, "for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction."

A careful reading of 1 Corinthians 7 will show any reasonable person, I am confident, that the only subject on which Paul gave his judgment (see verses 6, 7 and 25) was: in "this present distress" it is better for a man to remain unmarried, if his powers of will

(and the will of his betrothed) made it possible for him to do so. Paul says he is giving his judgment, and that this is not binding upon any, lest they take on too great a task in trying to control the basic impulses of their natures. He says, "It is better that a man remain unmarried; but if need requires, let him be married; and if he marries, no wrong is done; for this advice is given only to protect you from the exigencies of life under the present severe circumstances besetting Christians."

To those who are married or who will be married he gives the Lord's commandment, the regulator of Christian marriage. It is unfair to the user and contrary to the usage of language, to say that Paul's statement in verse 39 is only his judgment; but you will notice that he makes a distinction himself in verse 40, as he falls back to the subject upon which he gave his judgment: "she is happier to remain unmarried, by my judgment." And even in his judgment, he says, "I think also that I have the Spirit of God."

Undoubtedly, when he says that a widow is free to marry "whom she will, only in the Lord" it is the command of the Lord. It is accepted generally, and is the obvious conclusion, that "only in the Lord" means that a widowed Christian (man or woman), though free to marry, should marry a fellow-Christian, and such widowed ones are forbidden to do otherwise.

Since the beginning, the Lord has forbidden intermarriage between his people and the aliens among whom they might dwell.

(a) This is indicated in Genesis 6: 1, 2, respecting the sons of Seth. Where it is said "They took them wives of all which they chose" we understand that the "sons of God" chose to disobey God and follow their own pleasures. These "sons of God" were evidently descendants of Seth who had begun to call upon the name of the Lord (Gen. 4: 26). Apparently they were marrying with the descendants of Cain.

(b) Abraham and his descendants would not take wives of the Canaanites, but sent their sons back to Mesopotamia, to their own people.

(c) The Israelites had the tradition brought down from Abraham, strengthened by a precept in the Law (their covenant with God) given them through Moses. They were often exhorted and warned against any intermarriage with the peoples among whom they dwelt. The dangers that beset them through these intermarriages is illustrated convincingly in Nehemiah 13: 23, 24—"In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, of Moab: and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people."

(d) But the nature of the Kingdom of Christ, the people called by the Lord out of every people, makes it impossible that this regulation be given as in the cases above—for those who became Christians were often

mature adults already married, whose mates remained unbelievers. To these it was commanded that they remain married, making the best of the situation. Apparently, the younger people are not placed under the strict regulation, lest they be tested beyond strength against their natural urges. But when one has long been subjected to the discipline of the faith, they must marry in the Lord. When a person has been a Christian, truly a Christian, his tastes and habits would be compatible only with those of another Christian. Happiness and companionship, true union and continued attendance upon the Lord without distraction, these would not be possible when marrying out of the faith.

Thus the Lord has commanded—the widow is at liberty to marry whom she will; *only in the Lord.*

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

In 1 Corinthians 7: 15 is a statement to the effect that "a brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases" in which an unbelieving companion deserts a believer, and that through no fault at all of the latter. Does this mean that the brother or sister is free to marry again "in such cases"? We have asked six brethren that question and their answers will appear in our next issue. The brethren whose opinions have been requested are J. Henry Mabery, Borden Higginbotham, Hershel Ottwell, J. Ed Uland and Ellis Crum, Jr. Meanwhile, we give below some of the comments and ideas relative to the previous issue and the forum question it introduced.

Romans 7: 2 tells us "the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." Here is one case where the marriage partner is definitely loosed and free to remarry. Paul speaking this by permission in 1 Corinthians 7: 39 gives his judgment or observation on the subject of remarriage. Here he suggests that a widow remain single, or if she does remarry, she should marry a Christian. Experience has proven this advice is sound for both widows and widowers. . . . In order to have "Christian marriage" there must be a mutual relationship between a brother and sister in Christ. It is possible to live a good Christian life and be married to an unbeliever, or to remain unmarried. However, it is an impossibility to have a Christian marriage, or a completely Christian home, with those who have reached the age of accountability out of Christ.—*Ellis Crum, Jr., Bridgeport, Connecticut.*

For another question of importance or interest in the "Marriage Forum" see the article "A Question to Elders" on page 8 of this issue. Be sure that your subscription is renewed so you'll not miss it.

Scriptural Bishops

By F. WILFORD LANDES

Let us consider "not a novice" as a qualification of the elders. It is a simple term, which literally means, "not a new convert."



Paul reasons that a new convert is apt to be uplifted in pride by the conferring upon him of this position of authority, and thereby fall into the same condemnation into which the devil fell through pride. In business and every other field of endeavor, it has happened when newly hired men seeming to

have ability, are promoted rapidly they tend to become arrogant and proud. "Pride goeth before destruction" says Solomon.

We may ask, "How shall we determine when a man ceases to be a novice?" It is impossible to set a definite time, but it is evident that the person must be thoroughly tested and proven, and whatever time is required for such testing is the amount required to determine that one is no longer a novice. Time tests as nothing else can. "Let him first be proved" was the injunction concerning deacons. Surely it would also apply to this sacred office with its important responsibilities.

AN ELDER SPEAKS

I think your book "A Clean Church" is like buried treasure which has just been uncovered. We can now read the Bible with these thoughts in mind, and cannot help but grasp the great lessons in the Holy Writ. Before this we would read over them without seeing their depth, as one walks over a buried treasure without appreciating it, until someone shows him a map which locates it. I want to thank you for putting these great lessons in book form that all might have access to them.—*Charles M. Fleener.*

LABOR DAY MEETING

The great event which is always welcomed is the all-day meeting of the congregations in the vicinity of Hammond, Illinois, held each year on Labor Day, which falls this year on September 5. The Hammond church begins a meeting with Richard Kerr on August 21, and will conclude with the gathering of the faithful on Labor Day. Short talks by visiting brethren, rousing songs of Zion, good fellowship and a glorious time about a table spread with physical comforts—all of these serve to attract brethren from several states. It is planned as a special feature this year that Bro. Albert Winstanley, of Great Britain will be present for an address. Brethren are urged to plan now to be present for this great meeting.

PRIDE AND DESTRUCTION

By W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

One of the apparent fruits of the modern Bible college is *pride*. This word which is never used in a favorable sense in God's revelation, and which has no place in the commendatory terms of the Christian vocabulary, represents one of the most potent weapons in the arsenal of Satan for overthrowing the people of God. It toppled the mighty king of Babylon from his regal seat, smote Herod with obnoxious worms, and led the church into a "mystery of iniquity" which resulted in an apostate prince "sitting in the temple of God and showing himself that he is God." Surely anything which engenders such a spirit in our midst is dangerous as "a wolf in sheep's clothing."

Evidence clearly indicates that most, if not all, of the modern Bible colleges were established so that the church of our Lord might keep pace with the sectarian bodies about us. If their inception was not born in such a spirit of rivalry their existence is soon justified on this basis, and men with means are pumped dry to keep "our" schools at an endowment level with denominational plants. Like the gruesome and deadly international armament race, there can be no end to such a diabolical contest except the eventual overthrow and destruction of all who participate.

Vanity and haughtiness are the natural results of the atmosphere surrounding the establishment of these institutions. They are created to honor men who have been blessed with an excessive accumulation of this world's goods, and dedicated to the purpose of perpetuating their names while those of humbler circumstances are forgotten. They gender a competitive spirit which seeks to excel the materialistic accomplishments of other religious bodies. That which is divine cannot unite with that which is earthly in concept and produce a pure offspring. When God's chosen church goes in unto the Egyptian handmaiden of human institutionalism, the outcome will be a product of worldliness. This is true throughout the world.

In England exists Overdale College. On October 18, 1946 C. K. Green published an appeal for a new building. In justification thereof he asserted, "We thought it might be a fitting expression of our gratitude to God for the end of the war which has given us all another chance to make Christianity into a real world force. Further, the college had been in existence for twenty-five years, during the whole of which time William Robinson has been principal. We wanted to celebrate that outstanding record of service."

We may seem unduly critical, and even censorious, but we humbly submit that nowhere in God's revelation do we find a single intimation that Christians are to invest thousands of dollars in a college building as "an expression of gratitude unto God."

As for milking the church of its shekels to celebrate the service of one of its members—this is sheer effrontery! Perhaps the underlying motive for the building was best stated by Principal Robinson himself, on the same date: "Let us have a building that is worthy of our name, *one that you as a member will be proud of* . . . where our national witness can be well made, and one to which many of the best men in our American churches will be attracted."

Now for America! In April 1936, J. N. Armstrong, president, writing on "The True Merits of Harding College" mentions a visit by an inspection committee from the University of Arkansas. He says, "With *pride* we pointed out the quality of our buildings and of our equipment. . . . Every Christian in Arkansas may justly be *proud* of Harding College and her strength."

Having quoted from these moulders of thought in their human institutions, let me now quote from God who holds the destiny of the world in his hand. "Every one that is

LIFE'S PIECES

God's thoughts are above human knowledge

He moves in mysterious ways

To work out eternity's purpose

Through time's short procession of days.

While some lives seem favored by fortune

Still others misfortune increases,

Yet with every life plan that is broken

God knows what to do with the pieces.

Fond hopes often bloom but to wither,

Ambition may glow and soon fade,

Joy frequently turns into sorrow

And life makes us doubtful, afraid.

Then a rainbow appears on the storm cloud

And our doubting immediately ceases

When we know that though life may break us

God knows what to do with the pieces.

God can make the four walls of a sick room

Hold sunshine along with the pain,

And the spirit within broken bodies

Inspire us again and again.

Nature compensates for her shortcomings,

Making up for her lacks and decreases,

God can take a life that is shattered,

And make heaven inhabit the pieces.

It takes faith, vision and will power

To determine the cast of a soul,

In spite of convictions and courage

One sometimes comes short of the goal.

But no matter how many our failures

Our faith in the future increases,

When we let God take over our troubles.

For He knows what to do with the pieces.

(This poem was sent in by Mrs. Vern Cox, unto whom it was dedicated by the author, Mrs. James Cox).

proud in heart is an abomination unto God" (Prov. 16: 5). In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud" (2 Timothy 3: 1, 2). "God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4: 6). "When pride cometh, then cometh shame" (Prov. 11: 2).

Let us not forget that those who sow the seed of pride and arrogance, are doomed to reap a harvest of discouragement and destruction. Let us be abundantly satisfied with the church as God gave it, rejoicing in it rather than in the works of men's hands!

THREE DAY MEETING

Brother William Hensley announces full speed ahead for the great gathering at Speedway City Church, at Indianapolis, Indiana on July 2, 3, 4. Speakers are being scheduled and the program is fast being whipped into shape. Among the interesting features will be addresses by Bro. Albert Winstanley, who comes from England on June 20. This brother has been laboring with churches in the Slamannan District in Scotland for the past several years, but is taking six months from his work abroad to tour the churches in the United States. The three day meeting will be his first opportunity to contact a great many of the brethren, and all are urged to make plans to be present for this occasion when so many of the faithful will join hearts and voices in praise to our Heavenly Father. Get ready to go to Indianapolis on July 2, 3, 4. Let's all go!

MEETING ON MAY 15

The church at Webster Groves, Missouri issues a cordial invitation to all who can attend to be present at their all-day meeting on May 15. Three major addresses will be given at the morning service starting at 10 o'clock, and the afternoon session beginning at 2:30 will feature speakers and song leaders from numerous places. Basket dinner will be served at 1 o'clock, to enable others in the city to be present for the meal. Brethren everywhere are given a sincere invitation to come and spend the day in worship and fellowship.

A QUESTION TO ELDERS

"A man who is not a member of the church divorces his wife on the ground of incompatibility. Later he becomes engaged to a sister in the church, who deserts the church and marries him. At the end of a year she calls you and asks what she must do to be reinstated in the fellowship of the congregation of which you are one of the elders. What would you tell her?" This is a question we have mailed to six elders in five states. Their answer will be made a part of the forum now going on. Watch for the replies to this question in subsequent issues. By the way, what would you answer?

What Does That Mean? . . . by E. M. ZERR

Isaiah 55: 11

It is always pleasant to see evidences of optimism in the servants of the Lord, yet it is not good to put such a feeling on a false basis. The above passage has been abused many times by reporters of evangelistic work. A very usual form of report is as follows: "I held a two-week meeting at such a place with no visible results. However, we know it will finally bring converts because the prophet stated positively that

God's word would not return unto him void, but would accomplish that for which it was sent." Like many other instances, this optimistic conclusion assumes something the text does not state. It is true the Word is guaranteed to accomplish that for which it was sent, but this passage does not profess to state what that purpose was. All that it affirms is that it will accomplish what it was expected to do, but we will have to consult some other passage to learn what that purpose was.

For this information we may consider 2 Cor. 2: 15, 16. Paul says the preachers of the Gospel were a sweet savor (sweet fragrance) for Christ in them that are saved as well as in them who are not saved. Therefore, when a man faithfully preaches the word of the Gospel to the world, he has done his duty and will be blessed of the Lord whether anyone is saved by it or not. (See 1 Cor. 3: 14, 15.) On the same principle, when the truth of Heaven is offered to a man it will do one or the other of two things. It will save that man if he obeys it, or it will condemn him if he does not obey it. In either case it will not be a failure but will accomplish that for which it was sent into the world. Does this conclusion take from the worker for the Lord his feeling of optimism? It need not do so, but rather it should strengthen it. He may have that very satisfied feeling in every instance even without waiting for the "visible results." He has the combined assurances of the prophet and the apostle that he has done his duty in sending out the heavenly message on a successful mission.

(The editor suggests that you preserve these scriptural explanations).

certain stage of mental experience to activate our thinking powers. Certain circumstances must also exist to call forth decision or judgment. An object must exist in relation to ourselves, there must be a difficulty between it and ourselves, and the mental effort required to solve that difficulty constitutes the act of reasoning or thinking.

In Romans 12: 21 we read: "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good." Evil must be overcome or else we are lost. The act of overcoming must be first in the form of a mental decision. For every act there must be first a thought. It is the germinating seed and the action produces either the sweet perfume of peace or the pain of suffering as a result of our decision. If you possess an active conscience and you decide to do good, the enduring fragrance of love will fill your soul, but if you decide to do evil, there will be the gnawing pain from which there is no escape by day or by night. Do not allow evil to vanquish you, but triumph over it, and that by the only way prescribed—by doing good!

Reverend Is His Name

By ADA STORY

"Holy and reverend is his name." As Brother E. M. Zerr states in a recent article, many people think the word "reverend" occurs but once in the Bible, and so it does in the English King James Version. But the Hebrew word (Yare) which is so translated occurs often, and with varied meanings. As applied to God, it seems to me that it implies that in his judgment and authority he is to be feared above all. The disobedient can expect a terrible and dreadful outpouring of his anger. Though he will be just, he will be severe in punishment of sinners, as he has forewarned. Those who have accepted Christ must abide by his commands. As we would not want to think that in the last day he would change his reward to the faithful, we should not think that at such time he will reverse his threat to the wicked. He is to be feared, exalted and revered for keeping his covenant promises without fail.

Many in this world call themselves "reverend" and permit others to do so. Who among us is worthy of being feared, exalted or revered as God Almighty? Jesus said that those who exalt themselves shall be abased. No writer ever tells us to exalt ourselves or permit others to do it. We are continually ordered to humble ourselves, so God may exalt us. Paul, Peter and James teach humility. Did any of these attempt to put themselves upon equality with the Master? If the title "Reverend" is applicable to religious teachers, would not the inspired men have indicated so? Would they not have adopted it? Instead, they inform us that no one is to be thought of above that which is written. Even the angel speaking to John (Rev. 19: 10) refused to be exalted and worshipped, but designated himself a

YOUR THOUGHTS AND YOU

By W. G. ROBERTS

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23: 7). Now read in connection with this Matthew 15: 17-20, then recall "Love thinketh no evil" (1 Cor. 13), and then read Matthew 5: 27, 28. The thought in the heart is the thing that counts, and John says that he who hateth his brother is a murderer. The very thought of murder, the initial conception of lying, is the beginning of sin. If we must give account for our thoughts, we had better begin to guard them carefully.

It has been said that we cannot keep from thinking wrong things. That depends upon what you call *thought*. Suggestions are offered to our minds over which we have no control, it is true. If a man sticks a bottle of whiskey under my nose and asks me to drink with him, I am not responsible for that so long as I refuse the suggestion. But if I take a drink, I indicate a decision of my own to do wrong. Then I am responsible. I cannot keep the birds from flying over my head but I can keep them from building nests in my hair. Satan suggested to Eve that she eat the forbidden fruit. She was not respon-

sible for his suggestion. But she pondered over it until she decided to heed his bidding. The suggestion was transmuted into thought, and that into action. Thus, she sinned! It was not her fault the devil made the suggestion to her, but it was her fault that she decided in his favor. A thought is one thing; a suggestion is another.

When Satan suggests to you that you should be hateful and cross with your brethren, and that you should lie to justify yourself in your rebellion, and write wicked things about others, you cannot help that. But if you go on to do it, then you are responsible before God.

Thought is the arranging in the mind of things in classes and quantities, according to their likeness or unlikeness. We must solve our problems and the things which involve us by this means. It isn't very easy sometimes, but we must follow this process. We are constantly called upon to judge between this act or that; to decide whether we will do this thing or the other, and that is thinking! It is true that we must reach a

fellowservant with John? Will mortal man claim a power denied by the angels?

Certainly these modern teachers are to be "feared" but not in the sense that we fear God. With the position of exaltation they assume and accept, they draw away disciples after them into plans foreign to that of God. They speak of congregations as their ecclesiastical units or parishes. They are exalted

as though they had special powers bestowed of God, above that given to other men. They are esteemed by those whom they designate the "laity" and who are under them. But in God's sight we are all the same. All who have been washed in the blood of Jesus are made kings and priests. Let us neither be guilty of calling another "Reverend" or of accepting that title for ourselves.

LOVE THE BROTHERHOOD

By W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

The spiritual health and moral welfare of the church are in direct ratio and proportion to the practical and observable demonstration in our lives of the divine injunction to "love one another." The religious world rests in abject disgrace because of the schisms which characterize it. We can expect such rifts in sectarianism which is merely the outgrowth of human creeds and finite arrangements. The bond which holds the diverse elements together is flimsy and soluble since it entails but a mutual trust in a vain philosophy.

But to see the believers in Christ who profess to "speak where the Bible speaks, and remain silent where it is silent," arrayed in warring camps, murdering character by slander, hating and being hated, is almost incredible. Public proclaimers of the love of God who should be standing as a unit against the encroachments of evil, bite and devour one another. Talents which ought to be used in overthrowing the wicked one are directed to the sinful task of caricaturing and ridiculing those who have been born again, and are more righteous than the "apostles of defamation" who denounce them. Think of the reams of paper which might have carried the glorious good news of the Savior's reign to other nations and tongues, being consumed to spread doubt and dismay, heartache and sorrow, scandal and reproach in the church of the living God.

It is enough to make angels weep and strong men bow themselves to envision the jealousy even between congregations, the insane rivalry which causes a continuous trampling underfoot of the sacred plea to "speak not evil one of another." "Whence come wars and fightings among us? Come they not hence even of the lusts that war in your members?" Is it not true that we are damned and doomed to frustration and eventual destruction if we continue to divide and strive over men? "Ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men?" What are the factors which have caused this rape of the restoration, producing a maze and mess of hopelessly entangled factions slicing and slashing at each other in maddened frenzy while the devil delights and hell takes a holiday?

The prime cause is the arrogant ambition

of men to rule over and control their fellow-men. Humility is crucified and submission trodden into the mire. Political chicanery producing base propaganda which assigns false motives where good was intended and colors deeds of mercy with the black tint of suspicion until they appear unChristian—this seems to be the staff upon which many depend for prominence. The world totters upon the brink of despair by reason of the assumptions of carnal rulers. Shall the church continue to pursue the same course and produce tyranny over thought, and subjugate truth to whim of the spiritual despot? The meek and lowly One said, "Ye have but one master, and all ye are brethren." Why cannot we be satisfied to be just brethren? Why must we seek to be masters of the destiny of others?

Without realization, we have drifted into a condition where we preach unity and practice division. The least difference in concept of a scriptural interpretation has been the excuse for the rending of the Body. Over night men who have fought for Christ have turned to fight each other, families are alienated, and those who should glory in the company of all their brethren shun some of them with a coldness which blights Christianity like a killing frost turns the beautiful blossoms into black and withered uselessness. Even though we cannot see alike upon those points not essential to our salvation, must we be enemies? Must we despise, deride and persecute those who differ from us? Must we seek to drive the knife of character assassination into already bleeding hearts and spill the gore of those who do not see things as we do? Have we been sent to destroy men's souls or to save them?

Out of a chastened heart which has known its Gethsemane, I admit that having been reared in the vitiating influence of animosity toward those who denounce us, I have often succumbed to the subtle whisper of Satan to hate the sinner as well as the sin. Such a course is wrong—terribly wrong! Charity cannot rejoice in iniquity and those who are glad to hear of another's error to confirm a despicable suspicion, live in the miasma of the swamps of lust, and have not yet breathed the pure and fragrant atmosphere upon the mountain peaks of God's love.

I refuse to hate those who would persecute

me or malign my motives. Instead, I love them! I have learned the secret of a heart filled with glorious liberty from bondage, and I shall not again be entangled in the yoke of servitude from which the indwelling Spirit of God has made me free. A few days ago a brother brought me a document teeming with intolerance and unfair aggression upon my name and character. It was written by one who gives evidence that he would thank God if my hand became paralyzed that it might never write, or if my tongue was silenced that it might never speak again. Once it would have disturbed my waking thoughts, and banished sleep from my eyes during a fitful night. But I took it into my room and spread it upon the bed. I knelt in front of it. The Father who sees in secret was given charge of the letter and of my life. I prayed with tear-dimmed eyes for the writer, pleaded for his soul, petitioned God that somehow he might learn that I held no personal hate or rancor toward him. I arose with an inner sense of calm, a knowledge of the peace that passeth understanding.

I'll travel countless miles to face anyone who differs with me if we can meet in peace as friends. I'll meet those who are my enemies by their choice, if there be one or a thousand. I'll do it because our Lord said, "Blessed are the peace-makers." I am not afraid of what men may do to me as I do His will. Nor will I ask any clique or group if I may go. I believe that all the divisions in this discordant brotherhood can be settled by honest men with God's Word on the table between them as the arbiter! Yes, I believe that! Praise be to God!

Men have fallen out with me because I have not turned this paper into an antagonistic journal, attacking men instead of their errors. I cannot assail those whom I love—and I love my enemies! I hate sin, hate it with every moral fiber of my being. I hate it when I commit it, the same as when others do it! But I cannot and I will not use my energies and facilities to batter another breach into Zion's walls. I want to plant flowers where none grew before, and I want to pluck up the thorns and thistles created by my mistakes in the past. If others choose to fashion of them a crown of tearing briars and press them down upon my heart, I shall suffer gladly, the while I still pray for them.

We can lecture about love, censure the church for not possessing it, and find fault with each other for lacking this greatest of the enduring virtues, and still our hearts will be as cold as ever, and truth will be trampled in the streets. *To promote love in others we must first show that we love them.* This is God's way. He first loved us and then taught us to love Him. To fill this whole brotherhood with love overflowing and abounding, exhilarating and soul-thrilling, all that is required is for every disciple to begin now earnestly and seriously to show

his love, mercy and compassion for others. Let each esteem other better than himself. Let love be without dissimulation.

Pray for each other! Weep o'er the erring one; plead for the fallen. Endure insult without returning it. When reviled, revile not again! Father above, teach us how to love so that we shall cling to each other in the indissoluble bond of grace until schisms shall be no more. Let us learn how to heal the breaches and to aid truth to triumph! O, dear God, show us how to love the brotherhood; to protect it, cherish it, care for it, and if need be, die for it. May we learn to agree on all that is essential, and when we disagree about that which is not, may we do it in love, in charity and in the hope of a better world where one grand symphony of love shall produce a grand unity of eternal bliss. "Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged, because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee" (Isa. 60: 5). Dear Lord, hasten that day!

BOOKS YOU NEED

Bible Commentary, by E. M. Zerr, Volumes 1 and 2. Containing explanations of every verse in the Bible from Genesis through Job. \$4 per volume.

Johnson's Peoples' New Testament With Notes. Two large volumes. The best there is on the New Testament. \$3 for each volume; \$6 for the set.

Story of the Bible, by Charles Foster. Written for all ages. The greatest story in words you can grasp. The large book for only \$2.25 now.

First Steps for Little Feet is the book for the little folk. Only \$1.25 per copy.

Looseleaf Bible. Leather bound. Pages for your notes where you want them. This famous Bible for teachers, preachers and students at \$15.

Congregations needing Bibles for use in the classroom are requested to ask us for particulars and prices. Are you ashamed of the copy of God's Truth that you place in the hands of visitors? You do not need to be. Let us order you Bible Dictionaries, Concordances, and other books that will aid. Write and ask us!

AN EDITOR SPEAKS

J. L. Hines wrote in the *Gospel Broadcast* as follows: "A CLEAN CHURCH is a book of 165 pages written by Carl Ketcherside. There is no other book like it. The discipline of church members is very ably discussed. It is clear, sound and drives to the point. Carl does not swing either to the left or right. It is free of hobbies. This book should be in the home of every Christian." J. D. Phillips reprinted the foregoing review in *The Truth* with his own endorsement affixed. You can now obtain a copy of this book which is everywhere acclaimed, for only \$1.50 by sending to this office.

THANKS FROM C. J. BEIDEL

Our brother C. J. Beidel of Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, who is now on the road to recovery after a serious attack of illness asks us to express to all who sent him letters and cards during his sickness, his sincere thanks and hearty appreciation for your interest and prayers.

CHEER FOR THE BLIND

In almost every community there is someone who cannot see the light of day. It is difficult to imagine how lonely the hours must become to those who are sightless. To help bring the gospel of love to these and other shut-ins, the young people of the Manchester and Southwest churches, Saint Louis, have transcribed a 16 minute program of songs, scriptural reading, prayer and a short talk by W. Carl Ketcherside. Any brother who will secure a record player can take this little service of love to warm the heart of anyone who is confined to a home. There is no charge and the records will be mailed upon request addressed to Raymond Wofford, 1230 Oakley Place, Saint Louis, Missouri. If you know of someone who is blind or otherwise shut-in, will you not help us brighten his day?

TO AID THE HOSPITALIZED

The young people of the Saint Louis churches have lovingly, and prayerfully prepared a booklet which will be mailed to anyone who is sick or hospitalized, anywhere in the world. It is a unique collection of bits of cheer contributed by members and then carefully edited in this mimeograph booklet. If you know of anyone in the hospital, or anyone who is discouraged through sickness, a simple request for this booklet will start it on its way, accompanied by a letter of hope and faith. Be sure and send the correct name and address of the one to receive it, and mail your request for it to Mae Klein, 1269 Delaware, Saint Louis, Missouri.

HARRIS REPORTS

Our fellow-servant in the Cause, Roy Harris, is now laboring at Bolivar, Pennsylvania. Our prayers are offered for his success in the Lord's Cause at that place. Roy reports 1 immersion and 2 acknowledgments of neglect at Agra, Kansas; 1 immersion and 1 acknowledgment at Phillipsburg, during his work with them. He preached one Lord's Day in Red Cloud, Nebraska; 2 nights each at Beloit and Green Mound, Kansas. He is also scheduled to conduct a Vacation Bible Study at Bloomfield, Indiana this summer.

FROM HARTFORD (ILL.) ELDERS

A faction created by Fred Doman, aided and abetted by Harold L. Ottwell, has been started, and is now meeting on Marguerite

Street, in Wood River, Illinois. Brother Doman was disfellowshipped by us, after every scriptural expedient had been exhausted. Charges against him were for rebellion, falsely accusing the eldership, and sowing discord among brethren. Bro. Harold Ottwell thereupon took a group away in sympathy. We call upon the churches to respect this scriptural discipline of the church and stand ready to prove it has been administered according to the Word of God—*Walter Fields, Ora Wheeler, C. Otto Schlieper, Berdell McCann*, Elders.

LILLIAN AVENUE STUDIES

Under supervision of the elders, a new series of 12 lessons adapted to any meeting of the assembly of saints has been worked out. These are especially designed to encourage home study and public recitation of every member of the body. Each lesson consists of 30 questions on a special topic, with additional thought questions appended. A mimeographed copy is handed each person on Thursday night, and they are to have the answers ready one week from that time. The leader then calls upon the class for response, giving as many as possible an opportunity to participate. The average attendance has been over 100 per session, and the church is growing in knowledge. Any congregation may secure a copy of the whole series of 12 lessons without obligation by addressing a request to Elders, Church of Christ, 5344 Lillian Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

OUR NEXT ISSUE

The June edition of *MISSION MESSENGER* will revert to eight pages unless receipts in the meantime justify another 12 page issue. We can promise you that the next edition will be filled with powerful and thought-provoking material.

THE BIBLE COMMENTARY

To our new readers especially we commend "Bible Commentary" by E. M. Zerr. Two volumes have been completed covering Old Testament books from Genesis through Job. The cost is \$4 per volume and they are worth it. Send your order at once to this office, and your books will be mailed immediately.

SAINT LOUIS STUDY

Advance notice is hereby given that the annual Bible Study in Saint Louis will begin this year on November 7 and continue until December 16. The investigation of the sacred text will include studies of the epistles of Paul in analytical form. No cost will accrue to the students, except for room and board while in the city.

Share your paper with another when you have read it.

THIS and THAT from HERE and THERE

J. M. Lamb tells of a good meeting with James Truitt at Mount View, near Iberia, Missouri which started April 17. . . . The church at Martinsville (Ind.) wishes to commend C. R. Turner to the brotherhood for his classes in church government. They suggest that other places arrange for this excellent series of discussions. . . . Glenn Ellis is doing a great job teaching the Revelation letter at midweek services at Independence (Mo.) . . . Brethren who plan to attend the three day meeting at Shippensburg, Pennsylvania on May 28-30, should write at once to E. L. Albright, 21 East Orange Street, or to C. J. Beidel, 36 Cumberland Avenue, and let them know of your plans for attendance. Go if you can, and write if you plan to go. . . . Glenn Ellis spoke at Springfield (Mo.) on April 3. . . . William Hensley began at Granite City (Ill.) April 17. . . . Rose Woolman and Illa Mae Brown both report interesting services at Farmington (N. Mex.). . . . Russell Tate informs us that the church at Centerville (Mo.) is now holding midweek meetings. . . . Glenn W. Slater, Cowgill (Mo.) says the MISSION MESSENGER just doesn't come often enough to suit him. . . . John Fleener, Decatur (Ill.) sent in 14 subscriptions at one click as result of a public announcement about the paper. Thanks, John! . . . Lois Kyker, Anderson (Ind.) is mailing 6 copies of "A Clean Church" to brethren overseas. . . . E. M. Zerr spoke and taught at Pomona, Compton, West Riverside, Reedley and Exeter, California on his Pacific coast trip. The church at Riverside dismissed one of its regular services to enable members to attend a session of the Bible Study conducted by Bro. Zerr. . . . Wilford Landes immersed one in the meeting at Warrensburg (Mo.). . . . C. R. Turner was in a meeting at Wakenda (Mo.) starting April 3. . . . Borden Higginbotham starts at Independence (Mo.) on June 5. . . . J. Ed Uland closed two weeks of work at Vincennes (Ind.) on April 3, conducted a forum at Kansas City (5906 Kenwood) on April 4, began at Concordia (Kansas) on April 5. He is now in a meeting at Las Animas, Colorado, if plans have worked out. . . . B. O. Negley, Hepburn (Iowa) reports Winford Lee as being there on April 17, and says, "Always enjoy the MISSION MESSENGER. Without it we would not know of the work in the brotherhood." . . . Bob Marshall, Oakland (Calif.) wants to work with some of our preaching brethren for experience in the gospel field this summer. He is a good song director. Will congregations who need someone to assist in that fashion during a summer meeting, notify us at once. We'll send the information on to Bob. . . . C. R. Turner reports 3 added when he spoke at Sullivan

(Ill.) March 27. They were immersed in the baptistery at Hammond, the following Wednesday night, when our brother addressed the church at that place also. . . . Fred Killebrew spoke 3 times at Canalou on April 2, 3 and Jim Mabrey was with the church there on April 10. Owen Taul informs us that Borden Higginbotham will be with the Canalou church for two weeks starting the last of July. . . . The church at Antioch (near Bethany, Missouri) asks all of you to remember the date of August 14, when they will have their annual all-day meeting. W. Carl Ketcherside will be the speaker. . . . Stop in La Junta on your western vacation! That's the invitation from this Colorado city where a Vacation Bible Study and a New Testament Reading will be held June 12-25. Bro. J. Uland will have charge of the study. . . . Dick Kerr reports excellent attendance at Brookport (Ill.) where he spoke on April 3. He immersed one during his meeting at Salem (Mo.). . . . Bernell Weems visited Glendale (Ariz.), Riverside, Compton, and Bakersfield (Calif.) en route to Oakland where he is conducting development classes and two series of gospel meetings. . . . Alton Brewer and Ellis Crum, Jr., were at Shippensburg (Penn.) April 3. . . . Mary C. Journey reports 2 added at Nevada (Mo.) on April 3. She says local talent is doing a splendid job in mutual ministry. . . . Gilbert O. Nations, Silver Spring (Maryland) writes, "Your leading article on One-Man Sectarian Ministry merits high commendation. The views you there express have grown on my mind from my youth." . . . W. Horrocks, Windsor, Ontario (Canada) writes, "Read the April issue with interest. The reason why it was so interesting to me is that I have taught those same things down through the years of my stewardship." . . . We sincerely apologize to all those who wrote for extra copies of the last issue. The demand far exceeded the supply and we were unable to begin to fill the requests. We are very sorry to disappoint you. . . . We are having extra copies of this issue printed. We'll try and send one to all of the folk you wanted to receive the other. . . . Harold Shasteen was well received at Fredericktown (Mo.) on April 10, when he gave two excellent talks. . . . Bob Duncan was with the brethren at Evansville (Ind.) on April 17. H. R. Miller of Bloomington is assisting there once per month. . . . Those of you expecting to attend the summer Bible Study at La Junta (Colo.) June 12-25, should write to Norman Carlock, 523 Lewis Ave., for your reservations. J. Ed Uland will conduct the study. . . . Virgil Stevens, Webster Groves (Mo.) reports a fine talk by Wayne Peden, of Globe, Arizona on April 10. . . . Clyde S. King, re-

ports a membership of 35 at Phillipsburg (Kans.) where one was immersed and one restored during the meeting by Roy Harris, which closed April 10. Ellis Crum, Jr., will assist in a meeting there the last part of July. . . . Robert Sankey tells us that Lloyd Riggins will conduct a Vacation Bible Study at Compton (Calif.) starting June 17. . . . You're invited to attend an anniversary meeting of the church at Warrensburg (Mo.) on June 5. Don't forget the date! . . . Clyde King sends in 15 subscriptions at once from Kansas! Thanks a million, Clyde. . . . Jess Ruth tells of a good visit with Bernell Weems at Compton (Calif.). . . . James Truitt reports that he has worked with the church at Excelsior Springs (Mo.) during the past month. . . . If your friends need this paper why not ask them to subscribe? . . . If you know of anyone who is sick, or hospitalized, please send the correct name and address at once to Mae Klein, 1269 Delaware, St. Louis, Missouri. . . . C. R. Turner recently completed a five night Bible Study in "Church Government" with the faithful at Brookfield, Missouri. . . . Robert Brumback, upon completion of his work at Topeka (Kans.) began with the church at Ottawa. . . . Seamon Beck spoke at Centerville (Mo.) on April 24. . . . Good audiences attended the series of meetings just closed by William Hensley at Granite City (Ill.). . . . L. C. Roberts assisted the church at Nixa (Mo.) in special work. . . . Hershel Ottwell started a class in personal work training at Hartford (Ill.). . . . W. Carl Ketcherside will speak at Ellington (Mo.) on May 7, 8. . . . Betty Waggoner and Kenneth Kohr were married in St. Louis, April 24. . . . Robert Morrow reports continued progress on the meeting house at Klamath Falls (Ore.). . . . Raymond Weekly reports good Bible Study with E. M. Zerr at Exeter, Calif., which closed April 24. . . . The carelessness of subscribers who forget to send their changes of address costs us money. Please tell us when you are moving, so we can make the adjustment! . . . Guy O'Neill, Ozark (Mo.) expresses his appreciation for the forums in the paper. . . . Fred Wulfkühle, Stull (Kans.) tells us the church there is doing fine. . . . Cleona Harvey reports good interest at Speedway City, Indianapolis (Ind.). . . . Leonard Bilyeu, of Lillian Avenue (St. Louis) is conducting a Tuesday evening study in his home. . . . Don't forget the all-day meeting at Bonné Terre (Mo.) on June 12. . . . Send in subscriptions for your friends. Let them have the benefit of the paper also.

The subscription price of MISSION MESSENGER is \$1 per year. That's a lot of good reading for that amount.