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EMPTY PLACES

Radio Sermon by W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

How many of you use a glass coffee maker in your homes? Those who do have watched with interest the procedure by which this interesting invention accomplishes its purpose. The lower container, being filled with water, is placed over the flame. The upper container, with the coffee in it, is then placed above, with a tube extending downward, and made air tight to the one holding the water. As the water becomes heated, it is forced into the upper container. This creates a vacuum below, and as the unit cools the coffee rushes back into the place where it is to be served. If the lower unit were not empty this could not occur. There's a spiritual lesson to be learned by watching a glass coffee-maker operate.



One time Jesus said, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to himself seven other spirits more wicked: and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

I shall not bother to deal with just what is meant by such a parable, nor take the time to examine and cite the various expositions given with regard to it. My purpose is to notice a principle which, while secondary to the purpose of the Lord in giving the parable, is nevertheless, a basic and fundamental law of life. It is simply that no vacuum can exist in the heart of man. If we expel the evil influences from our lives, and then do not occupy our thoughts and attention with that which is constructive and good, other evils will rush in to take the place of those which were driven out and we may find ourselves worse off than before.

The only way by which you can eliminate the darkness from a room is by letting the light in. Darkness and light cannot exist together. Light being the more powerful will drive the darkness back. Regardless of how dark a room may be, if you turn on a light of any candle-power it will repel the darkness to the extent of its influence. During the recent great war countries suffering un-

der the blackout passed laws that men were not to light a match in the open. I little appreciated the reason for this until I was coming into St. Louis recently by plane. It was near midnight and I was amazed at how far away one could see a tiny finger-point of light from the air. Light drives darkness back from it.

On this same basis the light of God's Word when it is permitted to enter an honest heart drives back the darkness of ignorance and superstition. The two are the exact opposites and they cannot abide in the same place. One must give way to the other! God's light is greater than any force of evil. The Bible says, "The light is still shining in the darkness, for the darkness has never put it out" (John 1: 5). How foolish it is for people today to try and banish darkness of a spiritual nature except by letting the light shine! One only fools himself when he thinks that he can become wise and great by ignoring the truth of God. He mistakes fox-fire for real light, and the phosphorescent gleam of his own error for the Truth which only can make men free!

The way to keep down weeds in a field is to cultivate it and grow something worthwhile. It does no good just to go out and cut down the weeds if you stop there. They will grow right back again. Once when I was younger I got a job on a farm, and was assigned the very unwelcome task of cutting sprouts. I hacked and whacked, toiled and sweated, until eventually the whole field was clean and clear of all sassafras and other growth. A few years later I went back to that same county. In passing the field I noticed that it had grown up more thickly than ever. Where I had cut down one sprout, four and five had grown up to take its place. The field had been reclaimed by underbrush and unprofitable growth because it was placed to no good use.

The way to overcome bad tendencies in our lives is through cultivation of the good. Substitute a good or harmless habit for a vicious one and you are well on the way to overcoming the harmful action. Don't try leaving a vacuum in your life! The empty mind is the devil's workshop. Professor Angell once declared, "Give yourself surroundings which will offer the least possible temptation. Do not try merely to suppress the bad habits. If possible put something else which is good in the place of them. See that you are always occupied in some proper way

until you feel sure that the grip of the bad habit is loosed." That is sound advice!

Paul tells us how to conquer the problem of intoxicants. He says, "And be not filled with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5: 18). You can get too much of *spirits*, for there is excess in that connection; but you cannot get too much of the Spirit. There is no limit to it. You can be filled with it and not be harmed. Rather will you be helped. If, however, you are filled with spirits, you will be harmed and not be helped. But the point we should notice is that Paul tells us we must be filled with something! The way to get rid of that which is harmful is to be completely filled with that which is helpful.

Again we read, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." That is true! The lust of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit are opposite. You cannot do both at the same time. But if you merely try to stifle desire with sheer will power, and do nothing more, you create a vacuum, and just as surely as the coffee in a glass coffee-maker runs back in to fill up the lower container, so will your lusts ebb back, filling your heart! One can conquer anything if he will let Jesus be his guide, and his comforter!

A story is told of Henry Drummond and the way he used to break a friend of the drink habit. The friend's wife came to see Mr. Drummond and told him that she feared her husband was becoming a slave to drink. She besought him to do all that he could to rescue him before it was too late. The opportunity came to drive home a good lesson one day when Drummond and the friend were riding behind two spirited horses which the friend was driving. As they approached a steep hill, Drummond asked, "What would happen if these horses suddenly got out of your control and began to run down this hill?" The friend replied that they would surely be dashed to pieces and killed. "But," continued Mr. Drummond quietly, "suppose in such a case there sat one beside you who was able to save you from the impending disaster, by controlling the horses. What would you do?" The man was silent a moment and then said, "I would be a fool not to put the lines in his hands." Then Mr. Drummond showed how the man was upon the verge of disaster. Before him loomed the loss of friends and even of life. He pointed out that Christ sat beside him always, and all he needed to do was to put the lines in his hands. There's a good lesson in that story for all of us!

It isn't an easy matter to break our evil habits. The Bible tells us that it is a crucifixion of self. No death was more horrible than that upon the cross. Yet it is declared that "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Galatians 5: 24). But each day we walk with Christ the way grows easier. For it is a law of nature that the constant repetition of a practice makes each succeeding time demand less effort. If you bend a piece of cardboard, it is easier the second time than it was the first. Each time it becomes increasingly easier.

Not long ago I went with a young man to purchase a suit. He tried on one that he especially liked, but it did not hang just right. The salesman said, "When you wear

that suit a few times, it will set to the shape of your shoulders and the contour of your body." That was clever salesmanship but its truth is undeniable. The garments of righteousness may not feel as comfortable at first as they will when you have worn them awhile. In this case it is the reverse, for the contour of your life becomes molded to fit the garment. A lock works better after the key has been turned in it a few times. So the Christian finds his tasks easier after he has performed them frequently.

Banish your evil habits. But substitute something worthwhile for them. Drive hate out by permitting love to enter your heart! Drive the coldness out of life, by letting the sunshine of happiness enter the windows of the soul. God's way is best. Live it each day.

care of the godly. This is clearly indicated by the first verse of the Psalm. I believe that we have been unnecessarily influenced by this misapplication of Satan, and have generally applied this quotation to Christ only.

Besides the inspired writers of the Bible we often have short statements by inspired righteous men and women. Good examples of these are: Simeon (Luke 2: 25-35), and Anna (Luke 2: 36-38). The context plainly shows that they are inspired and that their words should be received with the same authority as those of the inspired writer.

Sometimes God inspires even wicked men to make great prophetic utterances. An example of this is the case of Balaam who wished to curse Israel for hire; but every attempt ended in pronouncing a blessing. For this story read Num. 23: 5-10, 16-24; 24: 1-24. Another example is the language of Calaphas, which he intended as a stinging rebuke to the Sanhedrin, for their inactivity in attempting to halt the popularity of Jesus, but was in reality a prophetic statement of Christ's death. This incident is recorded in John 11: 49-51. In cases like these of Balaam, Caiaphas, and other similar ones, we must watch carefully to distinguish where they cease making a personal utterance and where the prophetic statement begins. We probably would not have suspected that the Lord had a hand in this if the Holy Spirit had not led John to give the information in verses 51 and 52.

We sometimes have uninspired men giving judgment of their own, which though not inspired is excellent advice, and should be considered for its face value. Read carefully the language of Gamaliel in Acts 5: 34-39, as an example.

We also have uninspired men making historical statements, as in the case of the Jews of Rome whom Paul interviewed soon after reaching that city (Acts 28: 17-22). Their comment was, "For as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against" (Verse 22). Additional weight is given this, however, because of the words of Simeon (to which we have already referred), "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign that shall be spoken against (Luke 2: 34).

Next we wish to consider uninspired men interpreting the scriptures, as is true of the language of the man whom Jesus had healed of his blindness. "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth" (John 9: 31). This man was simply stating a truth based on his knowledge of the law of Moses. He was acquainted with the teaching of such passages as Psalm 66: 18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Also, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Prov. 28: 9). Two other passages that might be investigated on this point are Prov. 1: 28-30,

RULES FOR BIBLE INTERPRETATION

By L. C. ROBERTS

I presume the great majority of those who read this article are members of the body of Christ, hence believe in God and accept the Bible as His word. If

God has spoken to man in the Bible it has been with the evident purpose and design of being understood. That God would address his creatures in such a manner that the lessons could not be understood, or man's understanding be left to chance, is absurd. If we conclude



that the Bible is the pure and inspired word of the Living God, addressed to rational beings, we must conclude that it is to be interpreted logically and grammatically as other books and writings. Thus special rules which can be applied only by the most highly educated or those especially gifted are not needed.

The Holy Spirit must generally have employed words and expressions in their ordinary sense, according to the usage of the persons addressed. By nothing short of a miracle could His meanings otherwise have been conveyed. The Bible must be interpreted by the same general rules that would govern the study and investigation of other books of similar age.

There are six general rules that should always be kept in mind. Most of us know these rules; but that is not enough. They must be diligently applied. In this series of articles we will notice each of these rules and apply them to several passages of Scripture. These particular passages can often be understood only by the proper application of the rule in question.

Rule number one is: Who is speaking? While we believe that the Bible is the Word of God, or the words of the Holy Spirit, ("Holy men of God spake as they were

moved by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter 1: 21) we must realize and always keep in mind that the words of uninspired men, or even wicked men and the devil are also found in it.

God usually has used men, angels or, visions to reveal his will to man, but there are instances when direct contact seems to have been made. Adam and Eve "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day—" (Gen. 3: 8). "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend" (Exo. 33: 11). The ten commandments were spoken by God in a voice audible to all the people (Exo. 20). God's first public recognition of his son, at the time of Christ's baptism, was direct and in a voice heard by all (Matt. 3: 17). The voice of God was heard again at the time of Christ's transfiguration (Matt. 17: 5).

The words of Christ as directly spoken by him are easily discernible in the four gospel records, but sometimes the words of Christ are quoted, as in Acts 20: 35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." It is always well to distinguish between a direct statement and a quotation of some one.

In Job 1: 6-11 we find a dialogue between God and Satan. In such passages great care must be taken to be sure which is speaking in each statement. Again in Matt. 4: 1-11 is a lengthy conversation between Satan and Christ at the time of the temptation of Jesus. In verses 3 and 9 statements of Satan are recorded, but in verse 6 there is not only a statement by Satan but also a quotation by him from Psalms 91: 11-12. Notice the language in verse 6, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." We must be careful to distinguish between the direct statement and the quotation in this verse. However, the entire 91st Psalm refers to God's protection and providential

and Psa. 34: 15-18. One shade of meaning that Thayer gives to the Greek word from which we have "know" is, "—it is well known, acknowledged." What this man said was readily recognized by the Jews. They knew that he was referring to God's attitude toward his covenant people according to their acceptance of his law. We take this statement out of its setting and misapply it when we use it against one unimmersed, designating that person as a sinner and using this passage as proof text that God does not hear his prayers. This passage neither proves nor disproves that point. Rather should it be applied to Christians who are not living up to their profession. A quotation of similar teaching from an inspired man is 1 Peter 3: 12, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." He quotes from Psa. 34: 15-16.

We must be very careful to distinguish between the original speech and a quotation made by an inspired man. 1 Cor. 2: 9 is easily misapplied if this distinction is not kept in mind. It reads, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him." I have often heard this applied to heaven. And while all

this is no doubt true of heaven the passage has no reference to that. This is the language of Isaiah (64: 4), and he was referring to the great glory of the gospel age as contrast to anything then known to the Jews. Paul says plainly that, "It was written," and that, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit" (verse 10).

Often an inspired man's quotation becomes his comment. In Heb. 2: 12, the apostle quotes from Psa. 22: 22, which reads, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." But Paul in quoting says, "In the midst of the church will I SING praise unto thee." Paul's wording eliminates all but singing in the praise service of the church.

Sometimes even inspired men give their judgment. A case of this is found in I Cor. 7: 25-40, and Paul plainly states this in verses 25 and 40. The entire passage must be considered in light of this fact.

But the bulk of the Bible is the word of the Holy Spirit speaking directly through the inspired writers. "For it is not you that speak but the Holy Spirit." (Mk. 13: 11.) "But holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Other rules will be noticed in the next article.

(To be continued)

CHRISTIANS vs. EXTREMISTS

Another View of the Christmas Question

By STAFFORD ZERR

It is significant that the agitation against Christmas-observing Christians is unprovoked and has very few Holy Scripture quotations to support it. Instead, encyclopedia and other secular works are frequently quoted. The latest verbiage has one Bible quotation and it becomes a terrific boomerang. Luke 16: 15 is referred to thusly: "—for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

Christmas is highly esteemed among men; therefore, Christmas is abomination in the sight of God, is its argument. If this be correct reasoning and use of God's word, then you probably have a house full of abominations, perhaps a pair on your nose, making these words seem closer to your eyes. Indeed, if the mere fact that men highly esteem a thing makes it abominable, then nothing is left for Christians but the refuse and the off-scouring of the world. Read the preceding verse and all of the 15th and see the true application as the Savior, himself, made it.

Let us quote from the above-mentioned article: "—if God had wanted Christ's birth-

day honored by all these festivities, he would have specified the date." This is an unfair method in attempting to uphold an untenable position and gain a temporary advantage; unfair, because no one contends that God has commanded the observance. It is contended, however, that Christmas observance may be an individual matter, not official, not congregational, but purely personal. In support of this we have the entire 14th chapter of Romans on the subject of observance of days and the principles involved. According to the 5th verse, esteeming one day above another is an individual privilege if the individual "be fully persuaded in his own mind." This latter shows that Paul is not speaking of days or observances legislated upon by the Lord. Therefore, as long as we avoid excesses, abuses or any other conduct not becoming to Christians, our observance of a day may be private, public, civic, or religious. None in these categories is excluded by this or any other chapter in the Bible.

Now then, someone drags the Roman hering across our trail to confuse the issue, saying the Catholics started Christ-mass, and therefore we should have nothing to do with the "arch-enemy" of the Church. Stop and consider! Did the fleshly birth of Christ originate with the "Mother of Harlots" or the Holy Trinity? Who caused the evergreen

tree to grow, God or the Pope of Rome? Who said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," St. Anne or our Lord? If the mere fact that Rome figures in the early observance of Christmas makes the observance ungodly, then prepare to throw away your calendars and get new names for the months and days. Paul said idols are nothing, but you are keeping their memory alive each time you write the name of a month or a day, according to the so-called logic of extremism which can lead to hobbyism.

Wise men traveled some distance to celebrate Christ's birth. Are we not foolish today if we minimize the importance and the observance of one of the truly great events of history? Someone will say, "You can't be sure you are observing the day Jesus was born; no one is sure what day it was." We don't need to be. You commemorate Christ's death? Yes. Do you do it on the day He died?

The Scriptures, as always, contain the answer to the disturbance. "—let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." (Rom. 14: 5), and "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God—" (Rom. 14: 22). No one is going through the brotherhood pulling disciples off to one side, asserting that we must observe Christmas to please God. The agitation comes from the other side; from those who are not willing to have their belief on the subject to themselves, but sow discord among the brethren and become violators of Paul's solemn command, "Let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth" (Rom. 14: 3).

VIRTUE

By HAROLD SHASTEEN

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue" (2 Peter 1: 15). Thus, even though the doctrine of *faith only*, is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort, in the estimation of many, we must conclude from the above statement, as well as many others in the divine record, that it is not a Bible doctrine. The apostle Peter enumerates seven things that are necessary to our Christian well-being which must be in addition to faith. The first of these is virtue.

Strong gives as the meaning of this word virtue, "Manliness (valor) i. e., excellence." So a virtuous person would not be one of mediocre attainments, but one who has qualified because of his excellence and manly qualities. The apostle Paul admonished the brethren at Corinth to, "Watch ye; stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16: 13). One is not manly in the Bible sense, simply because he is a member of the male order, but he conducts himself as a man when he is strong enough to fight off and put to flight the evil desires that confront him. If you then, "add to your faith virtue," you will have added that to your life which causes you to rise above



those of the world about you, as a mountain towers above a mole hill.

No one can read the Bible in a thoughtful way without being impressed with the fact that it makes much of virtue and manhood and holds these up as things that should be sought after with diligence and perseverance. Many chapters and occasionally an entire book is devoted to telling us of the distinguished manhood of various ones. Abraham, Joseph, Caleb, Esther, Job, Ruth, David, Solomon and others are presented as those having virtuous, excellent and manly qualities, which we should strive to emulate.

Just previous to his earthly departure, King David charged Solomon his son, saying, "I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man" (1 Kings 2: 2). David himself had been a man of courage, character, vision, stamina and virtue and he wanted Solomon to rise to true and princely manhood. Solomon had the privilege to study and meditate on the beautiful life of his father, so we ought to take the great characters of the Bible and stand before them long enough to realize how great they are, then ask ourselves the question, *What was in them that ought to be in me?* And, especially should we spend some time every day considering the man who had in Himself the great and manly qualities of them all in a superlative degree, Jesus, the son of God. As we stand before this man we will soon see that there was

nothing unmanly about Him in any sense whatsoever. In His whole life He never spoke an unvirtuous word, thought an unvirtuous thought, or did an unvirtuous deed. Everything about Him was glorious, virtuous, manly and right. We ought all then, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of Him, be changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The crying need of the church is for those who have added to their faith virtue. We need *men* whose lives are so dedicated to God that they will be set for the defense of the gospel. In the words of Maltbie Babcock, I entreat you then, *be strong!*

Be strong!

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift; We have hard work to do, and loads to lift; Shun not the struggle—face it; 'tis God's gift.

Be strong!

Say not, "The days are evil. Who's to blame?"

And fold the hands and acquiesce—oh shame!

Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name.

Be strong!

It matters not how deep intrenched the wrong,

How hard the battle goes, the day how long; Faint not—fight on! Tomorrow comes the song.

and when they found not his body, they came saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not." It seemed that their hopes were all gone. Jesus then "expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." As they drew near the little town of Emmaus, Jesus would have gone further. But they said, "Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And he went in to tarry with them.

New songs, if they are scriptural, are not to be despised, for all songs were new at one time; but it seems to me that the old songs have already proved their worth and should not be forgotten. Read and consider the entire hymn, "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide"; then make that your prayer, Let us remember that Christ never *did* abide where he was not wanted; we must show that we not only need but desire his presence. Furthermore, we must live so that we may be fit companions of the Christ. Like Enoch, we must walk with God if He is to walk with us. (Gen. 5: 24.) Then we have the assurance that He will heed our plea: "When other helpers fail, and comforts flee, Help of the helpless, O abide with me."

"OBEY US"

By W. C. ROBERTS

In James 3: 3 we read this: "Behold, we put bits in the horses mouths, that they may obey us." The word "obey" here is from the Greek *pitheo* and means that some one should be obeyed, too. James uses the horse and bits to illustrate the necessity of some one being obeyed and shows that **FORCE** has to be used, often, to make the horse obey us. If the horse is hateful, contrary and balky the owner sometimes withdraws his fellowship from that horse by selling him and getting him out of the family. So in the family of the Lord, we sometimes have contrary, stubborn, balky members who will not work unless **EVERYTHING** is going according to **THEIR** orders, when everything is, of course, just lovely! There are some members of the family of the Lord who "kick over the traces," "fall over the tongue, kick and squeal" until we have to put the "bits in their mouths," so that we can try to control them. Then they often get the bits between their teeth so that they cannot be controlled by the elders. It is then 2 Thess. 3: 6 needs to be obeyed and the elders should see that it is obeyed, and get that "balky horse" out of the family.

You ask, "But what does the word 'obey' mean." Why, it means **OBEY**, of course. In our previous article we showed that this Greek word *pitheo* does mean "to listen to, obey, yield to, comply with," hence to "obey the ones who have the rule over you." It has been thought, by some, that "persuade" is

THE SONGS WE SING

By ROY HARRIS

On September 4, 1847, over a hundred years ago, Dr. Henry Francis Lyte had almost reached the end of his earthly pilgrimage. He was afflicted with tuberculosis. It is said that men who have reached the top of the hill are inclined to ponder the glory of what is to be. Their writings often endeavor to envision the future, and instill faith and confidence. At any rate, this was true of the hymn, *Abide with Me*.

It was his last song. He had been spending the winters in the milder climate of southern Europe, since his health would not endure the rigor of the climate at his home in Brixam, England. During the summer of 1847, he had lain extremely ill. On September 4, his final Sunday at home, he had attended worship services. The afternoon and evening hours were spent in his garden, and along familiar paths on the shore of the Torbay. As the sun was setting, the hymn began to take form. Later in the evening he showed the words to the members of his family. A few days later he started south-

ward, but on the way he contracted influenza and died November 20.

This hymn is a prayer within itself. The title is without doubt taken from the story in Luke 24: 13-36. This story has always been an impressive one to me. Picture a hill-country road, winding in and out among the trees. It is near the close of the first day of the week. Two men are walking along the road. From their discussion, and from the sadness of their countenances, it is easy to see they are troubled. Suddenly, a stranger appears and walks with them. He is Jesus, but they do not know Him. He asks them, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad!" One of them, whose name is Cleophas, asks Him if he is a stranger, and does not know the things that have come to pass in Jerusalem in recent days. He recites the story of Jesus and His work, and how that He died upon the cross. He mentions that Jesus was placed in the tomb, and how His disciples had hoped he would rise again. He concludes, "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel; and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;



the real meaning of the word, but not when we come to Heb. 13: 17. It means "persuade," "believe," etc., all right, but it also means to "OBEY those who have the rule over you, hence the *authority* of the rulers must be recognized.

"... But unto them that are contentious, and do not OBEY the truth, indignation and wrath" (Rom. 2: 8). The word "obey" is here also from that Greek word *pitho*. This shows that those who *refuse* to "obey" the TRUTH will have to suffer "indignation and wrath." This proves that some one has authority to teach God's word and enforce His laws upon the disobedient. It makes no difference whether it is the preacher or the elder preaching the TRUTH, said "truth" must be *obeyed* or the disobedient will have to suffer.

In Acts 5: 26 we have this: "... as many as OBEYED (*pitho*) him, were scattered and brought to naught." Here by a false teacher some are brought to naught. *Pitho* here simply means "as many as obeyed (believed) him" were brought to naught. They believed this false teacher. Keep the false teachers out. But who is going to do that? Can it be done by the soft method of just trying to *persuade* them? The Book says, "Close the mouths of the gainsayers."

In Gal. 3: 1 we read this: "... who hath bewitched you, that ye should not *obey* (*pitho*) the truth." Here, again, we have false teachers who kept them from obeying the truth. They BELIEVED the false teaching and, hence, weren't obeying the TRUTH. Who has been put in authority to watch over the flock of God and keep the false (wolves) teachers out? (See Acts 20: 28 and many other passages.) The elders have that authority, if you please. In Heb. 13: 17 we have this: "OBEY (*pitho*) them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves." The Greek word for "rule" is *hegeomo* and means, "to go before; to be a leader; to rule, command, to have authority over." It also means, "a prince, governor, viceroy; chief; leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel," so Thayer says on Page 276, if you wish the page. So the word "rule" in Heb. 13: 17 makes it pretty strong that the "overseers" have AUTHORITY. No dodging this, brethren.

Then the word "submit" in this same verse is from the Greek word *hupiko* and means, "to give way, yield; to yield to AUTHORITY and admonition, to submit" to said authority. This word *hupiko* is found nowhere else in the New Testament, which shows Paul used a strong term here showing we must SUBMIT to said authority which is given to the Elders. However, Elders are just as human as anyone else and often make their mistakes; so they, too, may be watched. But if they commit a sin, either moral or doctrinal, what are we to do about it? The Book tells us what to do, hence Paul said to Timothy, "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses" (1 Tim.

5: 19). Here we are told that the evangelist may handle such cases providing he has two or three witnesses. The evangelist has no right whatever to try to handle an elder unless he has at least two witnesses to prove the charge. The Book does not leave us in the dark on any of those questions.

A Saleswoman of Old

The Story of Lydia

By THELMA BUSSARD

This is an age when women seem to play important roles in business affairs. Many large companies have talented females in their employ who have risen to positions of prominence. Accordingly, with our modern associations, we may profitably consider a business woman of the New Testament times. We read about her briefly in chapter sixteen of Acts.

Lydia was probably a Greek woman converted to the Jewish religion. At least we know hers was a Greek name. Her original home was at Thyatira, a Macedonian colony hundreds of miles from Philippi. Now she was away from home as a saleslady, selling her purple dye. This dye was precious to the royalty and was used to dye a very famous cloth made by one of the guilds near her home town. There was a demand for the dye in the Roman colony of Philippi, where governors and other men of reputation among the Caesars daily passed in review. Thus we find Lydia and her helpers (household) in this far away city retailing their wares. There is no record of her being married even though mention is made of her household.

Lydia was a worshipper of God. Even in this strange city she sought a place of devotion. Since the Jews had no synagogue in Philippi, they resorted to the bank of the nearby river for a place of prayer and meditation. It is in this place and at such a time that the apostle meets this devout woman. Characteristic of Paul is the fact that he lost no opportunity to preach the gospel, and he opens up the way of life to the women.

Something else was opened the same day—the heart of Lydia. And what a heart she had as manifested by her attitude and work. She was interested in worship, friendly, kind, hospitable and thoughtful of the needs of others. She must have been highly regarded by her household, for after their baptism she invited and even constrained the travelling preachers to make her home their headquarters.

After the cruel scourging and imprisonment, Paul and Silas again entered this friendly home. Nor is that all, but after the preachers had gone on with the sacred message to other localities, the little band of disciples at Philippi remembered their needs, and sent to their assistance "once and again." The church at Philippi was the first of which we have a record being established on European soil by an apostle, and Lydia

has the distinction of being the first convert to Christianity made on that continent. Her life is an example to all of us of honesty, integrity, hospitality and Christian virtue.

I AM RESOLVED!

(Lk. 16: 4)

By Hershel Ottwell



With the beginning of the New Year, many will be making New Year Resolutions. The Word of God should be the basis of such resolutions. All of our resolutions should be to a closer walk with the Master.

I. All sinners should resolve to obey the gospel.

Some reasons:

- Your soul is at stake—(Rom. 8: 1, 13).
- Christ died for you—(Rom. 5: 6, 8).
- The judgement day awaits you—(Heb. 9: 27; Acts 17: 30, 31).
- The first thing that you should do is to resolve to seek the kingdom—(Matt. 6: 33).

II. All Christians should resolve to live godly in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. 3: 12).

Some things this includes:

- I—illumination (Heb. 10: 32; Matt. 5: 16; 1 Jno. 1: 7).
- R—eadiness (Matt. 24: 44; Tit. 3: 1; 1 Pet. 3: 15).
- E—stablishment (Heb. 13: 9; Rom. 1: 11; 2 Pet. 1: 12).
- S—ervitude (Mk. 10: 44; Rom. 6: 16, 17; 1 Pet. 2: 16).
- O—bedience (1 Pet. 1: 14; 2 Cor. 2: 9; Acts 5: 29, 32).
- L—earning (Rom. 15: 4; Matt. 11: 29; Phil. 4: 9).
- V—igilance (1 Pet. 5: 8; Matt. 25: 13; 1 Thess. 5: 6).
- E—ndurance (Matt. 10: 22; 1 Cor. 13: 7; 2 Tim. 2: 3).

MEXICO (MO.) MISSION WORK

Contributions from June 30 to Dec. 1, 1947:	
St. Louis (5344 Lillian)	\$ 25.00
Marvin Mayden (Wakenda, Mo.)	20.00
Anonymous	200.00
Mexico, Mo.	200.00
Anonymous	25.00
V. M. Foltz (Hale)—S. G. Bucher	
(New Florence)	30.00
	\$500.00

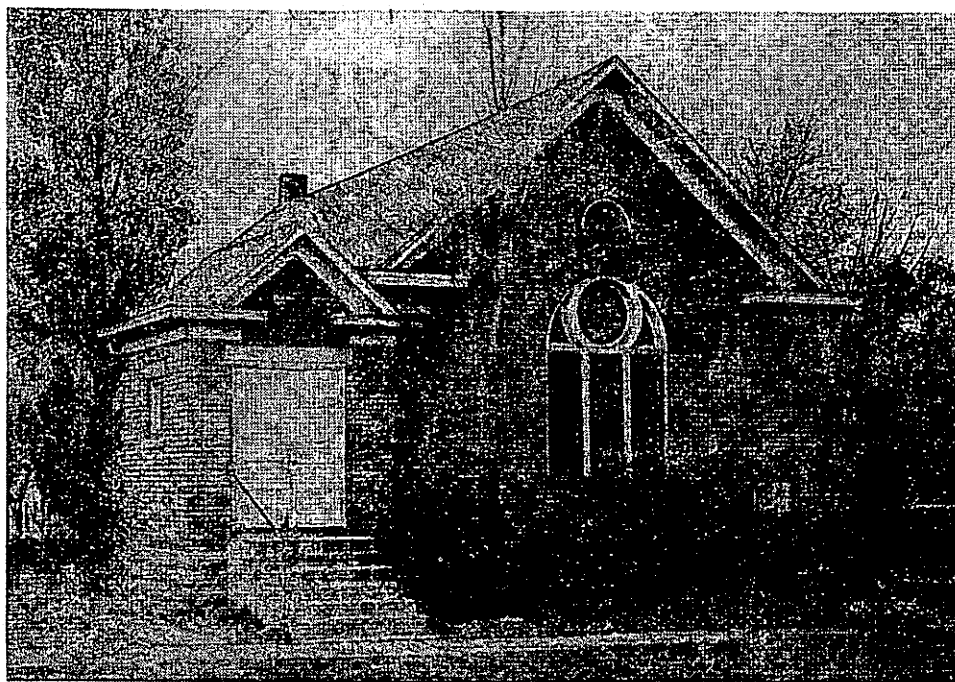
Expenses:

To Arthur Freeman for work	\$461.75
House rent—utilities	115.00
Car—travel expense	38.25
	\$615.00

Balance on hand, last report

Balance on hand now

(There is a deficit in the fund at present for 2½ months' support.



A REAL CHANCE FOR MISSION WORK

The little congregation of 11 members at Warrensburg, Missouri, have the opportunity of a lifetime. They have been meeting in an upstairs hall but now are attempting purchase of the above building from the Latter Day Saints. The beautiful structure is located at 214 North Market Street, a half block from the courthouse square. It has full basement equipped with men's and ladies' rest rooms. The building seats 131 and is furnished with opera seats which are included. There is a new gas furnace. The

total cost is \$5000. Brethren are arranging a \$2500 mortgage, and have raised \$1300 among themselves. They are asking you to help them with the remaining \$1200 which must be secured by March 1. Remember that Warrensburg is the home of the Missouri State Teachers' College. Many young people attend there. Let's give them a good place to worship. Send a liberal contribution at once to Anna L. Blum, Knob Noster, Missouri, and she will announce all contributions and amounts through this paper.

Evangelistic Oversight

The article on the above subject in October, was of special interest. I agree with most of the points suggested, but have some thoughts I want to present for consideration. I believe from the New Testament teaching that the evangelist in oversight is a temporary form of government to be used only until the permanent can be effected. A plurality of scripturally-qualified elders as executives, is the permanent form of government. These two system are so closely tied together that when one is in defect the other must be also. The two are either weak or strong together. At best, the present practice of evangelistic oversight is only a stop-gap arrangement as compared to that of apostolic times. Therefore, the permanent form of government must also be deficient.

Several causes have contributed to our present condition. The first, as far as the present Restoration is concerned, was a failure of the pioneer preachers to teach and put into practice the temporary system, though it is evident that many of them understood the teaching of the Scriptures on this point.

This brought about the appointment of many unqualified men to the eldership, who in turn, were unable to teach and qualify capable evangelists so they could and would put into force the temporary government of the church. This condition has grown until there are many congregations without any executive authority whatsoever. Some have an unqualified eldership, while others have fallen into the unscriptural practice of having "leaders" who assume the authority of elders.

These congregations get along for years, after a fashion, then find it necessary to call an evangelist to assist in correcting an internal disorder. That is all for which he is wanted, and it is not desired that he spend sufficient time to make permanent correction. This is often impossible because of their inability or unwillingness to support a long continued work.

There is not enough teaching on church government. Both evangelists and congregations are responsible for this. The evangelist either does not understand the scriptural teaching on this subject, or shirks his responsibility. Congregations often do not

want such teaching, but prefer "evangelistic" campaigns.

Another reason for the present situation is that many young evangelists refuse to assume the responsibility of oversight. This refusal may often be justifiable from the standpoint of their lack of experience, but oversight is definitely a part of the work of an evangelist. I must admit there is a vast difference in the task of oversight of a congregation newly gathered together, and one that has existed for years without the proper government. The latter is set in its ways and its problems are much more complicated. I remember hearing an elderly evangelist say, "It is much easier to lead a lamb than an old ram." This throws a heavier load on the few who will assist in this needed work.

Rather than see the cause suffer further, some evangelists have taken oversight at a distance that judgment did not recommend. However, distance is an accommodative term. Crete is an island of about one hundred and fifty miles in length. In all probability, there were churches over the entire island. With our present system of transportation and communication an evangelist could keep in as close touch with the condition and progress of a congregation in a distant state; and in case of need, could get from Missouri to California as quickly as Titus could have been secured from the opposite end of the island. Other obligations and responsibilities of the evangelists in this day hinder more than distance. However, I am not arguing in favor of any Missouri to California hookup. But I definitely insist that all evangelists should be encouraged to assume their share of this much needed work rather than give an excuse to find a loophole for further neglecting this phase of the "work of an evangelist."

L. C. Roberts.

SHAKE HANDS, FRED!

Bro. Fred Fenton, editor of *Radiant Truth*, closes a remarkably fine letter with these words, "I want you to know that I will battle with you in all that is right. I will make mistakes, and you feel free to tell me about them if they come to your attention. I will also be free and frank with you, but I pray that it may be always in the Christian spirit and that everything will be open and above board. We can't win any other way."

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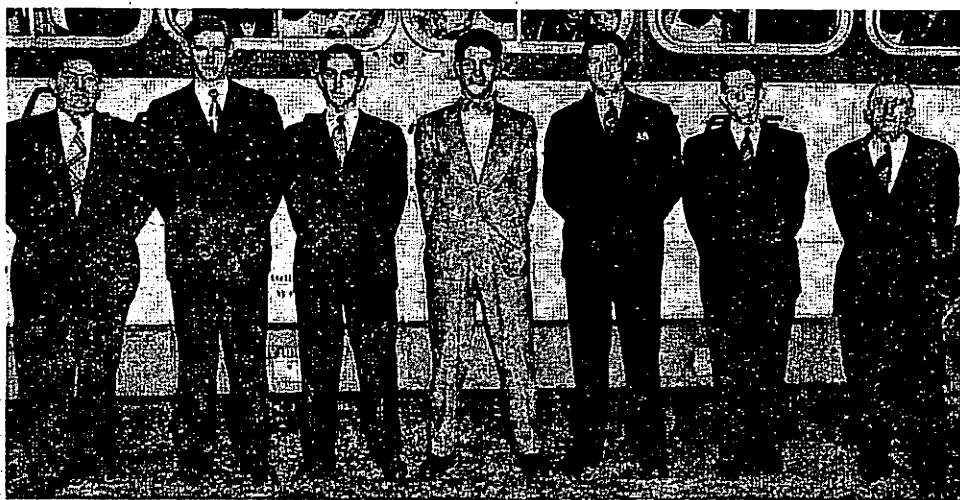
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Dedicated to the task of arousing churches in this state and elsewhere to a greater zeal in mission work, and assist in developing the talents of all to be used to the glory of God.

SONG LEADERS — FREDERICKTOWN ALL DAY MEETING



D. Thompson, R. Wofford, L. Burton, J. Ketcherside, St. Louis; L. Kelly, Flat River; L. Turner, Fredericktown; D. Green, Bonne Terre.
(Picture by United Studios, Flat River)

What did I tell you, folks? There's a new day dawning in religious journalism, and with such a spirit as outlined above, we'll go places and do things for God. Why not send Fred a donation to aid in sounding out the Word? Address him at 5727 West 63rd Terrace, Merriam, Kansas. And while you are at it be sure and subscribe for *News of Western States Churches*, that outstanding little paper edited by Ken Morgan. Mail your dollar to him at 5425 Shattuck Ave., Oakland 9, California.

"GOD SHALL JUDGE"

Be ye equally yoked together
As the oxen were of old;
"Be ye steadfast, and unmovable,
Nor engage in rioting bold";
"Be ye kind and e'er forgiving,"
Never sharing others' sin,
"Judge not that ye be not judged"
God will do that, at the end.

"If the salt have lost its savor"
Ye have need to be alarmed;
If your house has no foundation
Then repair, rebuild your form.
Do not hide beneath a bushel
For your sins will find you out;
God's to be the judge, remember—
You will have no choice or doubt!

"Be ye thankful" for the blessings
You receive from day to day;
Share your temporal things with others
Pray for such as go astray;
"Cast your bread upon the waters,
It will come to you again";
Brethren, let's not shirk our duty,
God shall judge us, at the end!

—De Ella E. Phelps.

SIMPLE WORD STUDIES

To learn correct speaking, one must constantly practice. There is no royal road to knowledge. Many readers are guilty of "lip-laziness." They do not open the mouth, or if so, they speak through tight, clamped lips. Flexibility of lower jaw muscles, and elasticity of lips is essential to proper diction and enunciation. Watch the endings of words, giving them full value. Here are some words for practice from Matthew. Repeat them aloud in front of the mirror. Do you give each syllable its full value? Are the endings sharp and clear? Pronounce each word six times daily for a week.

mourning	beholdest	clothe
weeping	knoweth	looketh
confessing	doctrine	mending
bringeth	exceeding	willing
becometh	causeth	concerning

JERSEYVILLE, ILL. (Dec. 14). — Eight special lessons on "Qualifications, Work and Responsibility of Elders" were followed by two weeks of analytical study of 1 Timothy, at this place. I was at Ottawa, Kansas, November 23, to December 7, principally for governmental work. Some Bible Study and preaching was done as time allowed at each place.—L. C. Roberts.

* * *

ANDERSON, IND. (Dec. 15)—When more Bible studies are conducted in homes of friends and neighbors we'll see many more souls added to the Lord. One brother and wife taught ten lessons from Acts in a home, and a man and wife obeyed the gospel; another brother and wife taught five lessons in a home and two more obeyed. We have four

Bible Studies going weekly and hope to start many more. Our goal for 1948 is more home studies—more souls saved for Christ.—Muri Howard.

* * *

The Mark Linn family (Martinsville, Ind.) want to read more of Bessie McClaffin's writings. . . . Walter Huse, elder at New Castle (Ind.) reports good all-day meeting, Dec. 14, and says Bill Hensley is a better preacher than ever. . . . Ivan Dennis, Mexico (Mo.) has mailed in a real list of subs this month. . . . Dick Kerr announces a new congregation in Chicago, meeting in north lobby of Odd Fellow Temple, 6318 S. Yale Ave. Remember that address. An average of 16 attend. Dick had 4 added during the month in that area. He taught a one week study at Bensenville, in the home of Major Egly, and conducted Sunday night services in the home of Leon Munger in Elmwood Park. En route home he visited churches at Peoria, Bloomington, Sullivan, Shelbyville and Yale (all in Illinois). Congratulations to the new Chicago church. . . . L. E. Ketcherside has about 18 members banded together in a new work at Pekin, Ill. . . . Jacob McCoy says that Peoria (Ill.) is looking for an evangelist to hold a meeting next year. . . . Robert Brumback closed a very successful two week Study at Kansas City (26th and Spruce) on December 12. . . . Melvin Burton immersed Jerry Tarbell, at 7121 Manchester Ave. (St. Louis) on December 21. . . . Roger Rinkenbaugh was appointed to the office of deacon at Kansas City (26th and Spruce) on December 16. . . . Sister Lillian Dix, Rockville (Mo.) reports the sad news of the death of Sister Elsie Atteberry, Dec. 17. Bro. Brumback conducted the funeral services. Our sincere sympathy to the bereaved. . . . Bro. George Shull, Mattoon (Ill.) says "I think your article 'I Believe in a Pastor System' about as near perfect as I ever read." Thanks a million, George. . . . Ray Hyatt, Kansas City, states "We surely enjoy keeping up on the news from over the brotherhood and especially reports from ones we are acquainted with." So do we, Ray! . . . Sorry

to learn that Sister (Mrs. Burt) Bratcher is hospitalized at Kansas City. . . . We just about have two more debates on the college issue lined up, one of them at a southern college. . . . Bob Duncan expects to answer the article of Bro. Stafford Zerr in the next issue. Then Stafford will have one more article which will close the Christmas issue. . . . If you believe this paper is worthy of your support why not send it to a friend for a year? Only one dollar! . . . The February issue will contain a story of the life of Hannah, written by Ragene Sims. . . . A great many of you have lapsed in your subscriptions. Send in your dollar as soon as you get your notice! . . . We pray that 1948 will be a year of peace and happiness to all of the faithful churches. It will be if we make it that!

THIS and THAT from HERE and THERE

NEWS FLASHES!

Raymond Weekly informs us that Robert Brumback is holding a meeting at Exeter (Calif.) during January. . . . Beloit (Kans.) is having a New Year's Eve service until midnight. . . . J. Ed Uland announces that the radio program is now on the air at Colby, Kansas. He recently held a meeting at Ottawa, and is now in La Junta (Colo.) for a Bible Study. . . . Ted Plank and Herbert Estep both report wonderful meeting by Bernell Weems at Salem (Mo.) and estimate that in all, more than 300 non-members heard the gospel, during the two weeks preceding December 7. There were no additions but interest and attendance were reported excellent. . . . Ira Patton was stricken with a severe heart attack while waiting on the Lord's Table at Bloomington (Ind.) the first Sunday in December. . . . J. Ed Uland spoke at Indiana Avenue Church (Bloomington) on Dec. 21, and at Middletown, Dec. 28. . . . We have a few copies of our radio sermon books "Proven Proverbs" at three for a dollar. Send for yours today. . . . Ralph Sweetin writes from Litchfield, Ill., that they enjoy the St. Louis radio broadcast each Sunday. . . . Clarence Cochran tells us that James Truitt was at Summersville (Mo.) on Dec. 7, for two fine lessons. . . . The editor will be in a meeting with the church at Compton (Calif.) from February 29 to March 21. California, here I come! . . . Thelma Bussard reports attendance of 147 at Nixa (Mo.) on December 7. Marvin Mayden says 160 attended at Carrollton (Mo.) on December 14. Good crowds! . . . Several of us enjoyed gracious hospitality at the home of Bro. Mayden during the duck hunting season. I spoke at Carrollton one night. . . . We also acknowledge with thanks the glorious fellowship in the homes of Ova and Marion Surber, Dudley Sallee, and Dewayne Springer, December 13, 14, when I spoke at Eureka Church, near Meadville. . . . Art Freeman and family are in California for several months. . . . Deacons at Manchester Avenue (St. Louis) announce the largest prospective Bible study class in the history of the winter Bible study with more than 50 from out of the city enrolled. . . . Harold Shasteen just closed a Bible study at Bloomington (Ill.) and will return for another next year. Interest was excellent. . . . Two were added at Hartford (Ill.) Dec. 14. . . . Three were added at Lillian Avenue (St. Louis) on Dec. 7. . . . Ragene Sims, Odon (Ind.) writes her appreciation of the article by Bernell Weems dealing with Christmas. So does W. G. Roberts, Hammond (Ill.). . . . Flora McCleery, Esbon (Kans.) says, "I was glad to see 'Christians vs. Christmas' and thought your article on the pastor system



B. V. HIGGINBOTHAM

The congregation at Anderson, Indiana, announces that Borden Higginbotham is planning to enter the field for full-time gospel labors. Borden was born at Evening Shade, Arkansas, August 16, 1910, and was baptized into Christ at Sikeston, Mo., August, 1925. He married Mary Lee Samuell on January 10, 1931, and they are the parents of two children, Jerry Lee, age 12, and Linda Sue, age 7. Borden has been employed with the Delco-Remy Corporation for the past 17 years. We are happy over the announcement that this faithful brother will devote full time to the labors of the Master, and pray for his success in the gospel field.

one of the best I've seen." . . . Mrs. J. E. Tippen, Reedley (Cal.) informs us they plan to start their church building soon. . . . Lester and Opal Lewis thank all who made it possible to have a church in Fredericktown, Mo. . . . Hester and Erma Davis inform us the church at Anderson (Ind.) is getting busier all the time having Bible study with those out of Christ. . . . Virgil Atwell sends thanks for the Warrensburg appeal we make in this issue. We're pleased to be able to help. . . . Joe Kerr, Harthill, Lanarkshire, Scotland, was happy with the article "What? No Pulpit?" and mentions with joy their mutual improvement class at Bathgate, conducted every Saturday. . . . H. Kemp, Hindley Green, Lancashire, England sends thanks for the tracts which we mailed to him and which he distributed to the teen-agers in the Sunday Bible classes. . . . A letter from our aged and faithful

Brother D. N. McDonald, Spokane (Wash.) says his health has improved somewhat. We're thankful to learn that fact. . . . Arnold Hintz, elder at Spokane, says, "I want to offer my hearty approval of your recent articles, as follows: 'Three-Tongued Men,' 'Evangelistic Oversight,' 'Committees or Congregations,' and 'I Believe in a Pastor System.'" He adds, "I wish that every member of Christ's Church could get the spirit of the article 'Three-Tongued Men' and put it into effect." . . . C. H. Uland tells of a recent contribution from Indiana Avenue, Bloomington (Ind.) toward the new church building in Indianapolis. Good! It is a worthy project. Have you given to it yet? . . . Harry and Gaenel Powell send a picture of John Dean and Sueanne, the two little children they adopted. They're sweet babies, God bless them. We'll run Sueanne's picture next time. John D. has already appeared. . . . Everett J. Allen says to tell you the church in Denver (Colo.) is at the corner of Colfax and Jay Streets. He sends a plan of their building, and those brethren are working. Congratulations! . . . Sister E. J. Hasbrouck mentions that Bro. Riggins has the oversight of the little church at National City (Cal.) and we mention that he is a good one. Lloyd has done a noble work on the coast. . . . Anna Schlieper of Pearl (Ill.) sends a gift subscription for a young brother. She is an aged sister whom I love in the Lord, for she helped lead my dear mother to Jesus. . . . Lois Kyker, Anderson (Ind.) is sending tracts and books to brethren across the ocean. She considers Bernell Weems's article wonderful and says Bessie McClaffin's article is VERY GOOD! . . . Berdell McCann of Hartford (Ill.) says the same thing. A lot of folk want more of Bessie's pen. The editor is one of them. . . . Fred Fenton is teaching a development class at 5907 Kenwood, Kansas City (Mo.) every Friday night! Good work! . . . We can supply you with a new Cruden's Complete Concordance for \$3. Send for yours and get its help in studying the Word of the Lord. . . . Brethren disbanded the committee I wrote about in my article in November, and have the work on a purely scriptural basis. We extend our commendation. Folks, we're on the way back to Jerusalem! Let's go all the way back. . . . Winford Lee was at Martinsville (Ind.) Dec. 31, and will be at Bloomfield, Jan. 4, then starts for two weeks at Bicknell, Jan. 5. He recently concluded a development work at Clarinda (Iowa), his home.

ST. JOSEPH, MO. (Dec. 1)—We have just concluded a two-week meeting with Bro. William Hensley. Basket dinner and all day meeting held on Nov. 30. One was immersed into Christ.—J. E. Goforth.