

Devoted to Evangelism, Missions, and Bible Doctrines.

The Baptist Examiner

The Paper With a National Circulation

"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel."

"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20)

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"Is There Literal Fire In Hell?"—The Subject Of A New Tract By Dickerson

One major evil of our day is the light regard in which the Word of God is held. The prohibitions concerning women speaking in mixed public assemblies are disregarded by the majority of those who claim to be Christians. The fact that Jesus founded a local Church is sneered at by many, many people. The worth and meaning of the ordinances seem to be known by an ever decreasing number. Many Baptists who still practice what is commonly known as "close communion" seem to be ashamed of it. Few take seriously the Bible requirements as to how a Christian should live. One cause of this laxity is the common practice of designating definite passages of the Scriptures as "figurative language." Some who seem to desire to take a stand against error appear to have fear the error "might be proven true." Gradually, faith in the Bible as an inspired Book, is being undermined. Recently, in one of our Baptist papers appeared an article by a prominent Baptist pastor, in which he states his belief that hell contains no literal fire. He states, "the description of hell as a place of literal fire is a figure of speech." Again, "To be sure, I raise no question against hell being a place. What I am saying is that the state of being that makes hell is all about us, even in this life." Of the terms "darkness," "prison," "lake of fire," he states that their variety requires that they be held as figures. He believes the language used to describe Heaven also is figurative.

In the interest of that which, to me, appears to be Truth, I wish to notice some of the reasons he gives for believing as he states. First, he

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Hypocrites

A hypocrite is an actor—"one who is playing a part." Jesus waged war against those who put tradition on the same plane, often above the Word of God. No matter how sincere they have been in believing that the traditions of the elders "were commanded by God," those who obey were mere formalists—just actors. Infant baptism, confirmation, adoration of saints, sprinkling for baptism, the mass, prayers for the dead are not "the commandments of God."

Tracey says: "These Pharisees were not conscious hypocrites—they thought they were what they tried to appear to be, devoted servants of God." Are you a hypocrite? Careless worship, being baptized, or partaking of communion before you are saved, giving alms and offering prayers, or singing hymns to be "seen of men" are hypocritical deeds.

WEDDINGS FOR SEPTEMBER

1. Glenn Miller, clerk, 21, and Juanita Woolum, 21, Jackson County, Ohio.
2. Hassib Beebe Bassitt, merchant, 21, and Reba Jane Hollandswarth, 18, St. Albans, West Virginia.
3. Thomas Ball, shipping clerk, 24, and Ethel Lamb, 21, Cleveland, Ohio.
4. ——— and ——— of Huntington, West Virginia.
5. James Stone, sailor, 21, and Esta Barnett, 21, Reed, West Virginia.
6. Charles Bechtle, hardware merchant, 25, and Ruth Ward, 22, Spencer, West Virginia.
7. ——— and ——— of Ironton, Ohio.
8. Lonnie Malone, operator, 23, and Georgia Thacker, 19, Coalgrove, Ohio.
9. William John Lockney, clerk, 23, and Grace Louise Hoal, 21, Parkersburg, West Virginia.
10. Howard Frazier, laborer, 22, and Wilma Pitts, 21, Firebrick, West Virginia.
11. Louis Peres, restaurant owner, 34, and Mary Russ, 26, Charleston, West Virginia.
12. Paul Payne, wood worker, 21, and Marie Collingsworth, 18, Wheelersburg, Ohio.
13. Oliver Wendell Myers, steel worker, 27, and Jennie Mae Dilts, 21, of Peru, Indiana.
14. Jerry Curtis Stallard, accountant, 24, and Hazel Virginia Gilbert, 21, Charleston, West Virginia.
15. Wendell Snodgrass, cook, 23, and Mabel Moore, 21, Columbus, Ohio.
16. Harold E. Dille, laborer, 28, and Louise Jeffers, 21, Chesapeake, Ohio.
17. Charles McQuillin, laborer, 22, and Goldie Adams, 21, Ashland, Ohio.
18. Gordon Foster, clerk, 21, and Eileen Hall, 19, Ironton, Ohio.
19. ——— and ——— of Clendenin, West Virginia.
20. Ronald Drayer, farmer, 22, and Muriel Porter, 21, Marietta, Ohio.
21. Wayne W. Schafer, mail clerk, 27, and Anna Maxine Beel, 22, Millersburg, Ohio.
22. Sterling Hughes Satterfield, gas worker, 21, and Julia Carolle Starr, 22, South Charleston, West Virginia.
23. Ben Brown, farmer, 21, and Jessie Faught, 21, Jackson, Ohio.
24. Thomas Mancari, service station attendant, 21, and Dora Carler, 22, Springton, West Virginia.
25. Chase A. Ballard, salesman, 32, and Lula Claypool, 21, Logan, West Virginia.
26. Rex Leander Repass, Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Co., 24, and Genevieve Verdella Melton, 22, Charleston, West Virginia.
27. Albert J. Drab, attendant, 25, and Florence Buchko, 21, Cleveland, Ohio.
28. Robert H. Moan, cook, 22, and Eileen Gibson, 21, Peru, Indiana.
29. Henry L. Pateet, salesman, 22, and Hilda Lee Dunfee, 21, Huntington, West Virginia.
30. Leo F. Burchfield, glass worker, 25, and Catherine M. Lynch, 23, Columbus, Ohio.

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The First Baptist Pulpit

"IS FOOTWASHING A CHURCH ORDINANCE?"

"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

He rusheth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part of me.

Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

Jesus saith unto him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all.

For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."—John 13:3-15.

In answer to the question as to whether or not foot washing is a church ordinance, human opinion is very much divided. All of our Hardshell,

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The Purpose Of Christ's Coming, The Theme Of A Second Article By Eastep

In our last article we discussed the FACT OF CHRIST'S RETURN, but in this one we shall discuss briefly the PURPOSE OF HIS RETURN.

Most students of prophecy are familiar with the difference between what is commonly known as the Rapture and the Revelation. The Rapture has to do with the time when Christ comes "for" His people; the Revelation is the time when He comes "with" His people to reign upon the earth. We shall, therefore, deal with these two phases of the same event in the order mentioned.

I. The Purpose of Christ's Coming at the Rapture.

1. He comes to raise the bodies of His saints. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." (I Thess. 4:16.) "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." (Revelation 20:6.)

2. He comes to change the bodies of the living. "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. . . this mortal (those living when Christ comes) must put on immortality." (I Cor. 15:51-53.)

3. He comes to bring both the living and the dead (but raised and made alive at His coming) Christians to His judgment seat to be judged. "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every

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God's Highest Ideal

A flood-tide is a rising tide. It flows in and fills up and spreads out. Wherever it goes, it cleanses and fertilizes and beautifies.

God's highest ideal for men is frequently expressed under the figure of a river running at flood-tide. Ezekiel's vision of the future capital of Israel gives prominence to a wonderful river gradually reaching flood-tide and exerting untold influence.

When Jesus would give a picture of a Christian man up to His ideal, He exclaims, "Out of his belly, shall flow rivers of living water." John's explanation years after was that He was speaking of the Holy Spirit's presence in the human life. Jesus' ideal would put our lives at the flood-tide. No ebb-tide there—no rise and fall; but a constant flowing in and filling up and flooding out.

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JOHN R. GILPIN..... Editor

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THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S COMING

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man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." (I Cor. 3:12-15.) "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (II Cor. 5:10.) "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." (Rom. 14:10.) The above mentioned passages of Scripture make it plain that all (Christians) will be judged for their WORKS which were performed while they lived in this present body.

The Christians will also be rewarded. "Then shall every man (every Christian will have at least one small thing to commend) have praise of God." (I Cor. 4:5.) "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his WORK shall be." (Rev. 22:12.) The last words of Paul were, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown (reward) . . . which the Lord shall give me at that day: and unto them also that love his appearing." (II Tim. 4:8.)

The judgment seat of Christ should never be confused with the Great White Throne Judgment mentioned in Revelation 20:11-15. The place, purpose and time are different. There is a thousand years between the two judgments. See Revelation 20:5.

The fact of the judgment seat of Christ should sober the child of God. Whereas it is a time of reward, it is also a time of serious and thorough searching of life and work. To say the least, it will not be a dress parade.

II. The Purpose of Christ's Coming At the Revelation.

1. He comes to deal with the ungodly. "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 14:15.) This verse makes it very plain just what the wicked will face at the coming of Christ. And this passage is only one of dozens of passages speaking of the same thing. Space allotted us forbids mentioning others.

2. He comes to bring peace to the world. "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many

WEDDINGS FOR SEPTEMBER

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31. Louis H. Gates, steel worker, 23, and Mary Louise Batton, 21, Montgomery, West Virginia.

32. Herbert McCormick, laborer, 21, and Margaret Ridge, 21, Jackson, Ohio.

33. William Dellinger, plumber, 23, and Nell Fulkiner, 23, Charleston, West Virginia.

34. Norman Brogan, machinist, 21, and Marie Harless, 21, Dunbar, West Virginia.

35. Norman McComas, banker, 27, and Nina Hankins, 21, Ironton, Ohio.

36. Charles Evans Jenkins, steel worker, 23, and Virginia Kincaid, 21, South Charleston, West Virginia.

37. Richard McClung, steel worker, 25, and Faye Flenner, 21, Montgomery, West Virginia.

38. Kenneth Akers, stocker, 26, and Arizona Kitchen, 21, Huntington, West Virginia.

39. William R. Maner, engineer, 38, and Jessie Belle Reid, 34, Mt. Hope, West Virginia.

40. Walter Massey, laborer, 21, and Augusta Bell, 21, South Charleston, West Virginia.

41. Frantz Callison, truck driver, 26, and Louise Gardner, 22, East Bank, West Virginia.

42. Jack Kinder, 21, and Josephine Pullen, 16, St. Albans, West Virginia.

43. Billie Bratton, miner, 22, and Christian Hairston, 21, Highcoal, West Virginia.

44. William Stump, laborer, 24, and Delcie Flowers, 21, Leatherwood, West Virginia.

45. Richard Rice, Jr., book binder, 21, and Betty Bryant, 18, Akron, Ohio.

46. Charles William Brockmeyer, salesman, 25, and Virginia Mae Harris, 21, Huntington, West Virginia.

47. Henry Bells, railroader, 49, and Easter Garton, 40, South Charleston, West Virginia.

48. Milliard Smith, operator, 25, and Phyllis Greenlee, 23, Leon, West Virginia.

people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isa. 2:4.) "And I will break the bow and the sword, and the battle out of the earth." (Hosea 2:18.) You will note the time this takes place. See the beginning of the verse—"in that day" (the day of the Lord).

Even the animal world will experience a reign of peace when Christ returns. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:6-9.)

Peace in this dispensation of grace is a false hope. "Even unto the end shall be war." (Daniel 9:26 R. V.) Let us not be deceived by looking for peace until the Prince of Peace comes.

3. He comes as King of Kings to rule and put down all who oppose. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and

IS THERE LITERAL FIRE IN HELL? SUBJECT OF NEW TRACT BY DICKERSON

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says no commentary he has examined teaches a literal hell fire. It is supposition on my part, yet I venture to think that not all of his views of Scripture are substantiated by all the commentaries he has examined. One is not necessarily incorrect in holding an opinion with which some commentators disagree. The commentators sometimes disagree among themselves.

His second point is, "The variety of terms describing hell are against a literal fire." He mentions three; fire, darkness, and prison. If the reference he gave (Luke 12:58, 59) refers to hell, of which I find no proof, certainly we should not expect the wicked voluntarily to stay in a place of torment. How this term conflicts with those of fire and darkness I confess I am unable to understand. Mainly, it seems he cannot believe in literal fire in hell because it is said that darkness also is there. Are these terms irreconcilable? The brother appears to think so. Yet, I feel certain he believes literal the language of many passages that appear to be contradicted by others. Take the matter of salvation by grace. Being a Baptist, I am sure he believes this teaching which means so much to us. Nevertheless, he must believe it in the face of a seeming contradiction. Paul says in Ephesians 2:8, 9 that we are saved by grace without works, but James in his second chapter, verse 20, says faith without works is dead. Romans 8: 37-39 is held by us as teaching the eternal security of every believer in Christ. Yet this view is held in

True, and in righteousness doth he judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath in his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Revelation 19:11-16.) This passage plainly tells us Who is to be the earth's ruler. No speculation is necessary in the face of such plain language.

There is much encouragement in the fact that while Christ reigns upon the earth we shall reign with Him. See Rev. 5:10; I Cor. 6:2.

Let it be further noted that He will reign until all enemies have been put under His blessed feet. (I Cor. 15:25-28.)

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does His successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

"From north to south the princes meet
To pay their homage at His feet;
While western empires own their Lord,
And savage tribes attend His word.

"To Him shall endless prayer be made,
And endless praises crown His head;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
With every morning sacrifice.

"People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song,
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their earthly blessings on His name."

spite of the seeming possibility of apostasy as found in Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:26-29. John 5:28, 29 apparently teaches that all the dead shall be raised in the same hour, and Revelation 20:4, 5 seem to teach with the same degree of finality that there is one thousand years between the first and second resurrections. Again I John 1:8 says, "if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." And in the ninth verse of the third chapter, the same writer states, whosoever is born of God cannot sin. If our brother dealt with these passages as with the terms "fire" and darkness," he would reject as being literal all of them—for, do they not seemingly contradict each other? And should he believe in both the Sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man—but this is sufficient. We feel sure that he is not at the point where he simply cannot believe a passage is literal which is seemingly contradicted by another. One is tempted to ask which passage dealing with the subject of hell, he does consider as literal language.

Further, he says that if one will turn to Luke 16:19-31 and read the story of the rich man in hell, he will find the gist of his sufferings to have been memory and conscience. A reading of this passage convinces me the man's primary and greatest concern was of intense heat, even flame of fire, and the thirst that naturally would obtain under such a condition. Concern for his brothers comes in after he is assured he cannot obtain water. One wonders why our brother so asserts. According to him there is a good bit of figurative language in this passage. How does he know where the figurative stops, and the literal begins? The rich man said he was tormented in flame, and fervently desired water. He says he was in a place of torment, and asked to have his brothers yet living to be warned not to come there. Our brother denies that the man was in either literal fire or a place of torment. (If I understand him he believes hell is only a place where the lost are kept. He says the state of being which makes hell is all about us). He here uses as a witness a man whose word he already has called in question. He reaches between two passages he calls "figures of speech" and selects one spoken by the man, in the course of the same conversation, and says, "This is literal." What could not one claim to prove by such a method? Our brother says the gist of this man's sufferings was memory and conscience. Now what have we? The man's mental anxiety was not based upon fact, our brother himself being witness—if his views are correct. The man thought, and said, he was in flame. He desired to prevent his brothers coming to a place of torment. Our brother says the man was neither in literal fire, nor a place which produces torment. If this be true, the man was exercised mentally over conditions that did not exist. How then, from this passage, can our brother justify his belief that there is mental anguish on the part of those who are in hell? If this man were not in such conditions as he stated, his brothers were in no danger of such. His mental concern therefore was that of a disordered brain, and we may well suppose he soon became totally insane and thus passed alto-

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"IS FOOT WASHING A CHURCH ORDINANCE?"

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United, and Enterprise Baptist friends observe it as an ordinance. Even some Missionary Baptists practice it as an ordinance. In contrast, the majority of Christians think of foot washing not as an ordinance, but as an example teaching humility. In fact, the great majority of Christians look on it as such.

From time to time, we hear from many of those who listen to this program who ask if we observe it as a church ordinance. Others, knowing that we do not observe it, ask why it is that we fail to do so.

Early in my ministry, I adopted the following words of the apostle Peter as the criterion of my ministry: "And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." (I Peter 3:15.) This verse declares that we should be ready always to explain to others what we believe and why we believe it. In the light of this verse, I thus bring to you this message.

I

First of all, I believe not only in foot washing, but in feet washing. I not only believe in it, but I practice it. I don't do it just once a quarter, nor when we observe the Lord's Supper; but day by day as a means of physical sanitation and personal hygiene.

Then also, I believe in it as to whatever Jesus may have meant by it in the Scripture which we have just read. As we shall study this Scripture, I think we can determine His meaning, and whatever that meaning may be, then I believe in it.

I hasten to state in the very beginning of this message, that foot washing is not a church ordinance. This is apparent from several standpoints.

First of all, nothing is said concerning foot washing as a church ordinance in any of the church epistles. There are ample instructions relative to the ordinance of baptism and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, but there is not a word about foot washing as a church ordinance. If it were to be practiced as an ordinance within the church, then surely in some of those church epistles, Paul doubtlessly would have mentioned it. The silence of the Scriptures in this respect is proof—positive—that it wasn't to be considered as a church ordinance.

In the second place, washing of feet is not a church ordinance in view of the fact that wherever the washing of feet is mentioned in the New Testament, it is always an example of lowly service. However, that is not true when practiced as a church ordinance today. If you will attend one of these modern services where foot washing is observed, then two things usually will be apparent: First, only one foot is washed, and then it is easily to be seen that that foot has been washed beforehand, ere coming to the house of God. In this respect, it is a mere ceremony. Why for one to wash his feet scrupulously clean and to put on clean hosiery before going to church for the ordinance, makes its observance a travesty.

There are only two occasions that I have ever heard of wherein a real service was rendered relative to the washing of feet in a modern church service. In the first of these, the man washed one foot at home, but when he came to the service in the church building, he forgot which foot it was that he had washed, and took the shoe off the wrong foot. In

that case, a real service was rendered—and one which was badly needed. In the other instance, after that an elderly lady had washed her feet preparatory to attending one of these foot washing services, her grandson dropped some lamp black down inside her hose which she put on, without knowing what he had done. Again a genuine service was rendered in her behalf, much to her apparent mortification.

Yet withal, when people wash their feet beforehand, and especially since they usually wash only one foot in these churches where foot washing is observed as an ordinance, then there is no service rendered—it becomes merely a form and an empty ceremony.

In the third place, the washing of feet is not a church ordinance since it is not mentioned in connection with any of the ordinances. The first three gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke, record the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, but do not mention foot washing. In contrast, John mentions foot washing but does not mention the Lord's Supper. Evidently then, foot washing was not intended as an ordinance since it stands as a separate incident entirely apart from both the ordinance of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

In the fourth place, it is not to be considered as a church ordinance since I Timothy 5:10 shows that it was not practiced as a church ordinance. Let me read you this Scripture: "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work." This Scripture gives the qualifications, that a widow might be placed on the charity roll of the church. Now if foot washing were a church ordinance, it would be needless to specify it as a qualification of support from the church. Furthermore, if it were meant as an ordinance, it is difficult to conceive why the other ordinances are not mentioned. This merely shows that it is not a church ordinance, but only an act of humble service.

In the fifth place, the washing of feet is not a church ordinance in view of the fact that it was never observed until 1700 years after Christ's death. You never read in the New Testament where that any church was ever rebuked by the disciples for not observing it, nor do you read where they were ever commended for observing it. It would seem logical that if it were enjoined by the Lord, surely some church would have practiced it during the first 1700 years following the crucifixion of Christ. However, in view of the fact that it was never heard of and never observed for 1700 years, we are led to believe that it is not a church ordinance.

In the sixth place, foot washing is not to be considered a church ordinance in view of the history of foot washing. It was merely an act of hospitality which preceded an ordinary meal. In Palestine the people wore sandals and no hose. Furthermore they wore robes which came usually just below the knees. Therefore, they did not have the protection of shoes, hose, and pants' legs in order to keep their feet and the lower part of their legs clean. Palestine is furthermore a sandy country. You can imagine how that one

walking any distance at all without hose, wearing sandals, and with the flesh bare at least half-way to the knee—you can imagine that by the time one might make any journey at all, that his feet were badly soiled. Furthermore, they did not sit at tables as we do today, but rather upon cushions. Naturally with soiled feet, those cushions would be ruined, and therefore it became very needful that their feet be washed immediately upon entering the home. On coming to a door where the individual was to be a guest, the host would meet him, or have a servant to do so with a towel and basin of water, and loosing and removing the sandals would wash and wipe the feet. It was done much as we take the wraps of our guests today. Since customs have changed and we do not wear sandals and we dress differently, then the washing of the disciples' feet does not have the meaning today it had in those days.

In this connection, may we notice that Jesus did not institute anything new. They had washed each others feet for hundreds of years prior to the coming of Jesus. Listen to these Scriptures: "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree." (Gen. 18:4.)

"And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways." (Gen. 19:2.)

"And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him." (Gen. 24:32.)

"And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet." (Gen. 43:24.)

"So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses: and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink." (Judges 19:21.)

"And she arose, and bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." (I Sam. 25:41.)

"And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head." (Luke 7:38-44.)

"There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound

of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair." (John 12:2, 3).

Hence, from these Scriptures you will notice that Jesus was not instituting anything new, rather, He was merely practicing that which had been observed from the days of Abraham.

If I were to come to your home today for a meal, in all probability if I were to drive any distance, out of courtesy, you would doubtlessly ask me if I wished to wash my hands before eating. You would not think of asking if I wanted to wash my feet, for there would not be any necessity of this in view of the way in which we dress today. Yet there would be a necessity and a reason for the washing of my hands, and accordingly, it would be only the part of courtesy for you to ask my desires in this matter. In the same way in the days of Jesus it was purely a matter of courtesy that one's feet be washed before that one should partake of an ordinary meal.

In the seventh place, foot washing is not to be considered as a church ordinance for it destroys the very thing that it is supposed to teach. Most any of those who practice foot washing will say that its spiritual significance is that of showing one's humility. They will say "When we wash one another's feet, we show our humility." That brings to mind a pertinent story. A man came to his pastor and said, "Pastor, I believe you are a good man. You preach some excellent sermons, but it seems to me that you are lacking in humility." The pastor said, "Perhaps I am lacking in humility. In fact, I often feel that I am, I suppose that you are a very humble man?" And to this the man replied, "I sure am, and I take pains to show it too." Now which of these two—the pastor or his critic,—had the spirit of humility? The pastor acknowledged his lack of humility, and the other boasted about it and sought a display.

Will you get the moral of this little story! Whenever supposed humility is vainly displayed in itself, it becomes a specie of pride. I say then instead of the example of foot washing teaching us the lesson of humility, in reality it produces an aggravated condition of pride.

II

What then is the meaning of foot washing to us today? Or does it have any meaning at all? That it has a spiritual meaning is easily ascertained by noting the words of Jesus. "If I then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." (Jn. 13:14, 15). Jesus said that He washed their feet for an example. As we have already seen, He did not mean this was an example as to the literal washing of feet as a church ordinance; instead, He meant that it should be an example as to their conduct toward one another spiritually.

Every saved person is saved for time and eternity. Yet, as he journeys through this world, he becomes defiled with the things of this world, and it is necessary that his life be cleansed, and the only way we can be cleansed is through the Word of God. Listen: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it

(Continued on Page Four)

"IS FOOT WASHING A CHURCH ORDINANCE?"*(Continued from Page Three)*

with the washing of water by the word." (Eph. 5:25, 26.) Just as one washes away the defilement on the feet, so each of the redeemed needs to wash in the Word of God after he has been saved, and thus cleanse away the defilement of the world.

A young woman comes into our church building for the services today. Most immodest is her dress; high cut at the bottom and low cut at the top. It has a peek-a-boo front and decolette back. Her hands are weighted down with rings. Her hair is not only bobbed, but wind-blown, frizzled, and marcelled. She enjoys the things of the world; dances, cards, and movies are a part of her nature. In short, she is just a modern girl. She has come to the service only because she has been invited; and to show her appreciation for the invitation, she decided she will attempt to endure it once.

In the course of the sermon, the Word of God is carried on the wings of the Holy Spirit to her heart. The gospel is to her, truly God's dynamite. She is convicted, and in due course of time, is saved. I tell her to make the Bible her standard for life, and request of her that she follow its teachings implicitly. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). Next Sunday she comes forward and asks for believer's baptism. I ask her why that she desires to be immersed. Like a flash, she turns to the Bible that I have given her, which I requested of her to make her standard for life, and reads, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." (Rom. 6:4). Then she reads the Scripture wherein Jesus set the example of baptism. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized went up straightway of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:13-17). She says, "Pastor, I want to be buried in baptism just like my Saviour was." What's happened during this first week of her conversion? Simply this, she has been taking a bath in the Word of God.

I notice as she makes her offering to the Lord Sunday after Sunday, and she cites as her reason for doing so: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouses that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Mal. 3:8-10). Oh, how badly do the anti-missionary crowd and

the penny-givers need a bath just here!

A few weeks later I notice that her bobbed hair disappears, and her dress becomes much more modest. I say to her, "You look so old-timey any more; you look like you were born thirty years too late. What's become of that pretty hair and those fancy dresses?" She replies, "Pastor, didn't you tell me the Bible was to be my standard for life? Well, I could not follow it and dress as I have been." Then she reads, "Doth not nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering." (1 Cor. 11:14, 15). "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." (1 Tim. 2:9, 10). I notice that her diamond ring, the sign of her engagement is soon removed, and I ask her the reason when I see her coming to church alone. She explains that her betrothed was a man of the world, unsaved, unredeemed, and unregenerated. And since the Scripture said, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," (2 Cor. 6:14), she had to follow what the Book said, for it was her adopted standard for life.

I notice that her name no longer appears in the society stew as a partaker of all kinds of worldliness. The cards, dances, and movies which used to intrigue her, have now lost their charm. She has a new affection. Her heart is set on the Lord Jesus Christ. I notice that she never misses the services of the church. I ask her why it is that she has given up the world, and why that she never misses any services in God's house. To all this she replies, "Pastor, you gave me a Bible and told me to make it the standard of my life; it tells me how I ought to live before the world. 'Abstain from all appearance of evil.' (1 Thess. 5:22). 'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' (1 Cor. 10:31). It tells me that I ought to go to church. 'Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.' (Heb. 10:25). Therefore, I cannot do otherwise as long as I follow the Bible as my standard." Everybody asks, "What's the matter with her, what has caused the change?" The answer is simply this—she has just been taking a bath in God Almighty's bath tub,—the Word of God.

However, there are many who have fallen into some particular sin or vice who are not interested in their lives being reclaimed. In this instance, we are to seek the restoration of the fallen brother. We are to seek to wash his dirty feet. Listen: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (Gal. 6:1).

How sadly the erring one is neglected. It is so much easier to talk about the fallen brother than to wash his feet. It is so much easier to criticize his dirty feet than to wash them. How few of us are qualified to even attempt the task, for Paul says, "Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one." How few go at it in the specified manner as Paul

IS THERE LITERAL FIRE IN HELL? SUBJECT OF NEW TRACT BY DICKERSON*(Continued from Page Two)*

gether out of suffering, according to the brother's view.

If the language concerning the fire and the nature of the place be figurative, the count is two to one that the language indicating mental anxiety is likewise figurative. For the Baptist pastor to base his conception of the conditions of hell on the statement of a man who bounds that statement by others which he (the pastor) discredits; and to use as evidence this statement which was prompted by that which he thinks is illusion, is *very* peculiar. If one is thus able to prove there is no literal fire in hell, one could more easily prove there is no mental suffering either, and thus that there is no hell of condition. Small cause for wonder the dear brother endeavors to strengthen his position by alleging the language used to describe Heaven also is figurative.

If the words of Luke 16:19-31 constitute a parable, the Savior departed from his usual custom of making clear the main point in each parable. Surely the main point is this: the manner in which conditions are reversed between this life and the other side, both for the unsaved rich and saved poor. And if the words with which our Lord describes those conditions are figurative, we do not know what is on the other side. And we have the same right to doubt Lazarus being in a place of comfort as to doubt the rich man being in literal fire.

But this is no parable. The Lord Jesus said there was a man named Lazarus who experienced these things. He lived for a time as a beggar; he died and was carried by the angels to a place of comfort; he was seen there of a man at whose gate he formerly lay and begged for the crumbs which fell from his table; and was (through Abraham) sought by that same rich man to bring water to cool his tongue, saying he was tormented in flame. Abraham, who was sufficiently near to observe, indicated by his reply to the rich man that he understood the man's words to be accurate. In

declared, "in the spirit of meekness."

Cleansing at any time is an unpleasant dirty task, and to spiritually wash the feet of one who has fallen and to restore one to a position of fellowship with God, is surely far from pleasant. No holier-than-thou-spirit will do. Surely in order for us to wash another's feet and thus restore a fallen brother, you must patiently endure his ignorance, errors and weaknesses. You must endeavor to remove whatever defiles his mind and conscience, and above all else, pray for that erring fallen one.

This then is the meaning of foot washing. It is not a church ordinance as we have noted from several angles. Instead, in the Bible it was a simple act of hospitality which preceded an ordinary meal, which due to the change of customs is no longer needed today. However, today it does have a spiritual meaning for us. Each of the redeemed should seek daily to be cleansed. Then after that one has cleansed himself, he ought to take the Word of God and wash the dirty feet of others, and thus patiently endeavor to remove all that has defiled the one who has sinned, and restore him to a position of fellowship with God.

effect he said, "Son, conditions are now reversed. In other times you had good things, and Lazarus had evil things, but now he is comforted while you suffer. I cannot send Lazarus to you with water because no one from here can come to you." In other times the rich man fared sumptuously, while Lazarus suffered from sores and hunger. The emphasis here is upon things, *external* conditions.

Again, the brother makes the statement "the state of being that makes hell is all about us, even in this life." In other words, if I understand him, he does not believe there is any punishment endured by those in hell, which is produced by the place itself. That God takes no active part in punishing men. I understand differently. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah are cases in point. Moreover, I am positive *Jonah* would not agree with that definition of hell. It appears to me God threatens men with hell as though it itself adds to the suffering of those who go there. Notice the closing words of Mark, chapter nine. Matthew 25:41. Psalm 9:17. Revelation 21:8. This last passage speaks of some classes of sinners having their part in the "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." This is more than an advanced stage of the conditions as they are found in the lives of the wicked in this life. Going to hell is much more than simply missing Heaven. The brother mentions the fact that many suicides are trying to get away from the hell they have created for themselves in this life. Sure. But they are doing so because they think conditions will be better on the other side. If they knew they were to be in literal fire the moment they died they would not take their own lives. This talk of "figurative language" is indirectly responsible for many self-murders.

One night I saw a great quantity of oil burning. Huge billows of smoke with only an occasional flash of flame showing through them. That scene could not be accurately described without mention of both fire and darkness. The degrees of punishment in hell could well account for Jesus saying of some that they were cast into darkness, and of others into fire. A fire which produces smoke, makes for darkness. Hell fire is such. Rev. 14:11. I intend this. No great flight of the imagination is required to believe fire and darkness *could* well be used in describing the same general place. I see nothing in the passages forbidding a literal interpretation. It is singular that the brother rejects as literal the language used to describe hell, because of the variety of the terms employed, and rejects the language descriptive of Heaven, not because of any seeming contradictions, but because he thinks it is not sufficiently splendid. Too bad some folk couldn't have helped write the Bible. (?) I accept the language describing each as literal. A God who could speak into existence a universe could call into existence a hell containing both fire and darkness. One could wish the brother would come back to accepting as literal the teaching on this subject. There would be more preaching with power if men were conscious that lost men face an eternal literal fire in hell, as the Word of God teaches.

(Editor's Note: This material is being reproduced in Portuguese and will soon be scattered over Brazil.)