

Self-righteousness is as hard to cure as cancer.

THE CHURCHES OF GOD

ARTHUR W. PINK

"For ye brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews" (1 Thess. 2:14).

The ignorance which prevails in Christendom today concerning the truth about the Churches of God is deeper and more general than error on any other Scriptural subject. Many who are quite sound evangelically and are well taught on what we call the great fundamentals of the faith, are most unsound ecclesiastically. Mark the fearful confusion that abounds respecting the term itself. There are few words in the English language with a greater variety of meanings than "church." The man in the street understands by "church" the building in which people congregate for public worship. Those who know better, apply the term to the members in the spiritual fellowship who meet in that building. Others use it in a denominational way and speak of "the Methodist Church" or "the Presbyterian Church." Again, it is employed nationally of the state-religious institution as "the Church of England" or "the Church of Scotland." With Papists the word

eternally lost. Many of the Lord's own people seem to be strangely indifferent concerning God's mind on this important subject. One from whose teachings of the church we differ widely has well said, "Sad it is to hear men devoted in the Gospel, clear exponents of the Word of God, telling us that they do not trouble themselves about church doctrine; that salvation is the all important theme; and the establishing of Christians in the fundamentals all that is necessary. We see men giving chapter and verse for every statement, and dwelling upon the infallible authority of the Word of God, quietly closing their eyes to its teachings upon the church, probably connected with that for which they can give no Scriptural authority, and apparently contented to bring others into the same relationship."



ARTHUR W. PINK

"church" is practically synonymous with "salvation," for they are taught that all outside the pale of "Holy Mother Church" are

WHAT CONSTITUTES a New Testament church? That multitudes of professing Christians treat this question as one of trifling importance is plain. Their actions show (Continued on page 3, column 1)

ARE ALL BAPTIST "BRIDERS" SECTARIAN?

LARRY J. KILLION
Tacoma, Wash.

If you have ever met a Baptist Brider, your first impression of him was probably that he was a cantankerous old crank who was not worthy of a home in Heaven, let alone a special place up there. Of course, the latter part of your conclusion was absolutely true. For



LARRY J. KILLION

there is not a man under Heaven who is worthy of the saving grace of God. But in spite of this, God has seen fit according to the good pleasure of His will to reveal the Redeemer to some and to grant unto them the knowledge of salvation. It is the view of Baptist

Briders that in like manner, God has by elective grace also revealed to some of the redeemed the glorious truth of the Lord's Church and scriptural baptism. Because of their rejection of the widely accepted but erroneous view of the universal church, these brethren are often misquoted and misunderstood.

What is a Baptist Brider? It would be good to clarify this term before we go any farther, for there seems to be more than one opinion about these folk. First of all, let it be established that Baptist Briders do not believe that only Baptists are saved. They claim to be Bible-believers and the Bible is clear that there are many in Heaven who were never members of a Baptist church. Some examples of this are: the thief on the cross (Luke 23), O. T. saints like Abraham (Luke 16), angels (Isa. 6), and some of those round about the throne (Rev. 4).

Neither do Baptist Briders believe that all Baptists are in the Bride. There are many who go by the name Baptist today who are not in the bride. In fact there are even some Baptists mentioned in the N.T. who will not be in the Bride. A couple of examples of this (Continued on Page 6, Column 1)

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REAL TRAGEDY OF DEATH PENALTY

By G. RUSSELL EVANS
Norfolk, Virginia

The moralizers and ecclesiastocrats will have a busy schedule now that the death penalty is reinstated. Their maudlin pleas for convicted murderers are exceeded only by their unctuous exhibitions outside the prison walls. However, the real tragedy of the death penalty is not the execution of the murderer; nor the brutal bludgeoning of his victim; nor even the grief and disgrace of the families involved. The real heartbreak is the death of moral values and principles in a large segment of our society—death in the souls of the emotional-wrought, weeping, and bleeding heart sympathizers who refuse to honor and implement God's moral law.

Opponents of capital punishment use specious arguments at best; and those biblically inclined select their Scriptures with great care—or not at all! They say, about the death penalty: (1) It deters no one from crime. (2) It demeans human dignity. (3) You might execute the wrong person. (4) Even Jesus repudiated executions.

Non-deterrence turns out to be the principal argument for both the legalistic and church-connected abolitionist. This is shaky ground. Two things are certain; John Spenselink and Gary Mark Gilmore are forever deterred. They will kill no one else!

Proving deterrence is like proving a negative; it can't be done 100%. Proving nondeterrence is equally inconclusive. Nevertheless, both sides can make a reasoned judgment based on common sense and a preponderance of evidence.

For example, homicides in the U.S. jumped from 10,920 in 1966 (when the death penalty was in effect) to a dramatic 20,510 in 1975 (when it was banned). There was also a dramatic change in public support for capital punishment during this period: 42% in 1966 upped to 65% approval in 1975. (Frank G. Carrington's "Neither Cruel Nor Unusual"). A 1979 Gallup poll shows 74% approval. People are afraid, and morally outraged at those who murder the innocent. They demand protection and revenge.

The abolitionists skip this kind of "evidence" and apparently offer no specifics to support their position. Certainly they'd never mention the 1971 Los Angeles Police study which found a deterrence ratio of five to one in crimes of violence because of the threat of the death penalty. Nor would they mention the fourteen specific instances, cited by justice Marshall McComb of the California Court, in which lives were actually saved because a would-be killer, by his own admission, was deterred by the threat of the death penalty from murdering innocent victims. (People v. Love, 56 Cal. 2nd 720 (1961), J. McComb dissenting).

There is a great deal more "evidence" to support deterrence. The most charitable question to ask abolitionists, then, is: "If we can't 'prove' that capital punishment deters, whose side should we err on—the innocent victims' or the convicted murderers'?"

The argument about demeaning human dignity is more of an obsessive suffusion of self-righteousness. It also jibes with the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche: "There is a point in human society when it becomes so pathologically soft and tender that it sides even with those who would harm it, criminals, and does this seriously and (Continued on page 5, column 2)

Dan Parks Takes Stand In Cruz Bay

Dear Friends:

Greetings in the saving name of Jesus Christ, my "Hiding Place: He shall preserve me from trouble; He shall compass me about with songs of deliverance" (Psalm 32:7).

I am an Independent Baptist. Regarding the word "independent," it is my conviction that New Testament churches should be "not subordinate or subject to nor dependent for support upon any government, person, or thing" (FUNK & WAGNALLS DICTIONARY). It is my conviction that Independent Baptist distinctives include:

1. Independence from within the (Continued on p. 5, Col. 1)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Milburn Cockrell

"TEMPERATE IN ALL THINGS"

(Preached on the Independent Baptist Hour August 5, 1979)

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible" (1 Cor. 9: 24-25).

In my text the Apostle Paul is making an allusion to the Isthian games celebrated in the vicinity of Corinth. The Corinthians had often attended these and watched the foot race. The apostle compares the Christian racer to the Grecian foot racer. In the case of

both temperance was a vital factor. Both were responsible to exercise self-control in all things.

Generally, if a man announces he is going to preach on temperance people assume he is about to give a discourse against the excessive use of alcohol. It is true that the Christian grace of temperance prohibits alcohol abuse, but temperance involves a great deal more than this. The words "is temperate" used by Paul in the text denotes abstinence from all that would excite, stimulate and ultimately enfeeble. It means

to pursue a course of entire temperate living.

Note carefully the words "is temperate IN ALL THINGS." Temperance not only relates to abstinence from unlawful indulgence, but also abstinence from many lawful things which may weaken our Christian testimony. The apostle said: "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend" (1 Cor. 8:13). Temperance is not confined to any one thing, but to every (Continued on page 2, column 1)

yet we must acquire the habit and become accustomed to speak in prayer on all occasions, without direct preparation for the occasion. This gift may be acquired by premeditation and practice. We should learn to pray extempore, some occasions admit it; as,

In secret or closet prayer. Persons of good natural faculties and readiness of expression are capable of it, and there are sudden calls of providence that require to be promptly met.

Young Christians and particularly preachers, until well trained, should arrange their thoughts, and have a plan in their minds each time before they pray in public.

It may be proper here to add a few words on the position of the body in prayer. Kneeling is a scriptural and very appropriate posture, especially in family worship, and in social prayer-meetings, but it is not indispensable, nor the only scriptural form. See II Chronicles 10:5, 13; Luke 18: 11, 13; Mark 11:25, where standing is the posture. Prostration of the whole body in seasons of great distress and humiliation is proper.

Bowing before the Lord in worship is a scriptural posture. See Genesis 14:26-27; Exodus 9:31; 12: 27; Nehemiah 8:6; Exodus 34:8. These instances are quite sufficient to all who require a scriptural example for posture of the body in prayer. Bowing the head in a reverent manner and resting on the pew before us, is a suitable and convenient posture in all our church-houses that are provided with pews or slips, too narrow for kneeling. Some awkward preachers make an unpleasant exhibition of themselves by attempting to kneel in a pulpit or "stand" where the space is narrow. Every person who leads in prayer should be prepared, without embarrassment, to take the posture that to him is most convenient, or to which the congregation is the most accustomed. By a careful examination of the quotations to which we have referred him, the judicious reader will perceive there is no fixed posture enjoined in the Scriptures. This is one of the non-essentials in religious worship.

The voice in prayer ought to be modulated so as to produce solemnity and edification in the worship of God. It should be solemn, slow, distinct in utterance and just loud enough to be heard by all in the house. Some persons mumble over sentences or phrases in an unintelligible manner. Others speak so low as not to be heard except by those near them. Again, not a few (Continued on page 6, column 3)

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Temperate In All . . .

(Continued from page one)
kind of indulgence that tends to render the body weak and cause the Christian testimony to wane.

TEMPERANCE BETTER UNDERSTOOD

"Temperance" in the Bible signifies self-government over the appetite and passions of our nature. It is a moderation of our desires, pursuits and aversions. It is the equilibrium of the mind, the equal balance of the temper, and the regulator of the heart. Temperance as a virtue must dwell in the heart (Dan. 1:8). It consists in a rigid subjection of every inward feeling and power to the rule of right reason. It means to be master of one's self. It means one's passions must be his subjects obeying his will.

The field of temperance is exceedingly broad, and it takes in the whole realm of Christian living. Temperance is an essential element of good Christian character. It is the application of reason to all daily acts of life. It is the highest and best form of life one can attain to on earth. The temperate Christian by abstaining from the excess of most things will be surprised how many things he can still enjoy.

Temperance is not an optional grace for a Christian; it is a thing commanded of God. The text said: "And EVERY MAN that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." In Titus 2:2 it is written: "That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate . . ." In listing the seven important Christian graces to be added to our faith, Peter said: "And to knowledge temperance . . ." (II Pet. 1:5). What is required of a minister should be regarded by all Christians: "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, TEMPERATE" (Tit. 1:7-8).

Temperance is a subject worthy of man's pursuit. True religion is designed to deliver us from the dominion of fleshly lusts and to purify our character (Tit. 2:13; I Pet. 4:1-5). The person who abounds in this grace makes himself useful and honorable. He fits

himself for discharging his duties in a manner worthy of the Saviour he professes to know. Temperance stamps the character with loveliness and purity. It is a virtue with out pride and envy, the best guardian of youth and supporter of old age; It is the physician of the soul as well as the body—the universal medicine of life. It is the boundary line over which we cannot step without violating the rules of discretion, blotching our character, disfiguring our moral features, and sustaining great physical loss.

THE SIN OF INTEMPERANCE

Temperance is necessary to prevent extremes either of excess or deficiency. Excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures, in carnal gratifications, in eating and drinking, is not only injurious to our physical and moral nature, but it is prohibited by God. Proverbs 23:20 commands: "Be not among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh." Christians would do well to regard the Saviour's caution to His disciples in Luke 21:34: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life . . ." To be a real Christian requires that we govern our passions. There can be no advancements in the path of holiness without temperance.

The streams of intemperance are legion. The allurements that lead downward are equally numerous in our modern world. There is not a power of the mind, affection of the heart, nor a desire of the body that may not be disposed to some form of intemperance which may injure our physical and spiritual well being. All forms of intemperance are evil and destroy some functions of the mind or body. Intemperance is a disease which spreads in harmony through the whole of man's being.

Good health can only be acquired and maintained by temperance. Bodily pains and aches tell of intemperance in some areas of life. Pain means penalty, and penalty means that its sufferer should reform. Intemperance is the curse of modern society. It has filled our hospitals with patients, crowded the offices of medical doctors, and dug many an untimely grave. Most of the diseases that afflict the body grow out of man's inability to control his appetite and passions.

Intemperance means excess. A thing is good as long as it is necessary. All beyond necessity is sinful. Money is good; more than is necessary may cause us to be pierced through "with many sorrows" (I Tim. 6:10). Food is good; too much destroys us. Light is good; too much will blind us. Water is good; too much will drown us. Heat is good; too much will burn us. Any excess of a good thing constitutes intemperance and is to be avoided.

THE TEMPERANCE OF THE TONGUE

In many things and in various ways men may be intemperate. A temperate person controls his tongue. The government of the tongue is essential to all self-control. James 3:2 declares: "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able to bridle the whole body." An unbridled tongue is the proof of an unbridled spirit.

It is said that Peter the Great, Czar of Russia, once spoke harshly and struck his gardener, who, being a man of great sensibility, took to his bed and died in a few days. Peter hearing of this, exclaimed, "Alas! I have civilized my subjects, I have conquered nations; but I have not been able to conquer myself."

It is our responsibility to keep our tongues in check. In Psalm 34:13 it is written: "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." He who can conquer his tongue is greater than all world conquerors. A wise man must sometimes bite his tongue until it bleeds. We all do battle with our tongues. There is none among us who does not at times speak indiscreetly, foolishly, or immodestly. We read where Moses "spake unadvisedly with his lips" (Ps. 106:33). Because of this he was not privileged to lead the children of Israel into the promised land. How often have our lips caused the Lord to turn from blessing us?

Some have no control over their temper. When they come into collision with something they do not approve, they explode in a flame of passion. Trivial occurrences, slight provocations, a little opposition, or small doctrinal disagreements throw them into a fit of irritation which unbridles their tongue. This unbridled tongue "defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (Jas. 3:6). This cesspool of iniquity proceeds from an uncontrolled emotion and an unchecked tongue. It is a scar on the character and indicates the existence of an ill-regulated heart! Unless the tongue is kept in check it is apt to go aside from sober to ridiculous conversation. From it may come exaggerated statements, jesting at sacred things, foolish expressions, and idle words. A proper government of the tongue checks such inconsiderate remarks and promotes "sound speech that cannot be condemned" (Tit. 2:8).

TEMPERANCE IN DRESS

While the Scripture furnishes us with no detail rule of the precise form of clothing we are to wear, it does enjoin "modest apparel" (I Tim. 2:9). Our apparel should be

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such as becomes a godly person. It must be modest in the sense of being opposed to immodest. Our clothing should become us and be appropriate to us. Our outward appearance in clothing ought to sufficiently cover the body, for clothing was enjoined by God to hide the body and to prevent unlawful lusts.

A lady once asked John Newton what was the best rule for female dress and behavior. "Madam," said he, "so dress and so conduct yourself that persons who have been in your company shall not recollect what you had on." There is much truth in his words.

We must not dress in needless finery. We must not sacrifice necessary food to appear fine and affluent. We should never rob the Lord of His tithes and offerings to buy beautiful clothes. Good stewardship is a must for a Christian. We cannot ignore those destitute of the common necessities of life nor the call of Christian missions. These things should make a heavier demand upon Christian liberality than any costly raiment.

Nonconformity to the world must be observed in the wearing of apparel. The Divine injunction reads: "Be not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). The word rendered

"conformed" properly means to put on the form, fashion, or appearance of another. It certainly does include such things as dress. The world is not to lead the church in the styles of clothing, but the church is to be an example to the world. The Bible should be the mirror at which the Christian dresses. Being temperate in all things means dress as becomes a true Christian.

TEMPERANCE IN DESIRE

Temperance demands that we control our appetite at the table. "When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat" (Prov. 23:1-3). We are to make provision for the needs of our body by proper eating habits. But we must not make "provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14). God gave us our body to feed, not to feast; to be our servant, not the master, of our spirit.

A man can commit suicide with a fork at the table as well as with a pistol to the head. Paul wrote to the Philippians about some "whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly" (Phil. 3:19). Excessive eating makes the body sick: "Hast thou found honey? Eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it" (Prov. 25:16). A man at today's prices may literally eat himself into poverty: "For a drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty" (Prov. 23:21). Daniel in obedience to God refused to engage in riotous eating: "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank . . ." (Dan. 1:8). The Israelites (Deut. 29:6) and John the Baptist did likewise (Matt. 11:18; Luke 1:15; 7:33).

A true Christian will control his diet. A believer's power of endurance is sorely tried at the eating table. Any food which harms the body is off limits to a Christian. All drink and drugs harmful to the body are forbidden. Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and we must not defile it. Most Christians hang their religion on a nail while they eat. This ought not to be. Intemperance in eating is not a laughing matter. We must not make a joke of it, for it is a part of being temperate in all things.

TEMPERANCE OF THE MIND

A man's mind cannot remain dormant. It is constantly being exercised either in lawful or unlawful desires and imaginations. Objects, opportunities, and actions furnish ample material for thought and observation. When our thoughts move in a forbidden direction, they must be arrested, controlled and brought into subjection. The imaginations of our minds often exceed the bounds of decency, unless they are disciplined and kept in subordination. Peter made reference to a temperate mind when he wrote: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober . . ." (I Pet. 1:13).

In regeneration the mind is renewed (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23). A carnally-minded man becomes a spiritually-minded man in regeneration (Rom. 8:1-9). A renewed person has a "sound mind" (II Tim. 1:7), and he serves the Lord with

all of his mind (Matt. 22:27). There can be no peace of mind and conscience unless the Christian minds heavenly things. Isaiah 26:3 says: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." By keeping a pure mind the believer distinguishes himself from "men of corrupt minds" (I Tim. 6:5).

ITS DESIRABILITY

You cannot abuse God's physical laws and expect to escape punishment. God is not to be mocked by puny man even in the physical realm. An excess committed today may not bring the penalty until tomorrow. But the law of nature requires a definite penalty to follow all excess. The punishment is mild at first, but afterwards it becomes more severe. When nature's voice goes unheeded the final penalty is physical death. An admonitory sign board should be hung upon our walls at home which says: "No excess."

There is no more strong and noble virtue among men than the ability to resist strong impulses, to subdue powerful passion, and to silence the voice of wrong desires. The nation which has the best government progresses the most and enjoys more of God's blessings. Even so, the Christian who governs best himself honors God and receives God's best. No man is free who has not command of himself. He who is governed by his appetite and passion is enslaved to a dirty tyrant.

The man who masters his passions is stronger than Samson. We should measure the strength of a man by the power of the feelings he subdues, not by the power of those that subdue him. Have you ever seen a man receive a terrible tongue lashing and then reply calmly? Have you ever witnessed a man in deep anguish stand as if he were carved out of solid rock mastering himself? What about a man bearing a hopeless daily trial and remaining silent? That is strength! There is a man who is spiritually strong. There is a man who is temperate in all things.

A truly temperate person will subordinate his appetite to the superiority of reason, restrain his temper, bridle his tongue, check extravagance, control the desires, and moderate the imaginations. This virtue of temperance must be cultivated and exhibited by all who profess the name of Christ. It must be cultivated by self-denial, by abhorrence of evil, by cherishing exalted thoughts of Christ, by faithful imitation of His example, by constant exercise of prayer, and by living under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Christ demands our all, and He will accept nothing less. There must be no reservation, nothing kept back which Christ desires. All our hopes, desires, and affections must be centered on Christ. Moral virtues must be visible in our character. There must not be merely a skeleton of religion. Temperance in all things is the badge of true discipleship, the universal attire of the soldiers of the cross.

CONCLUSION

We are all intemperate to some degree. But we are duty bound to strive to improve and cultivate temperance. Each day every Christian should strive to be temperate in all things. Let us keep our eyes upon Christ Who never violated the rule of temperance. May we give heed to Paul's words to the Philippians: "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:5).

Some persons may say, "I have such a problem with self-control. I am the helpless slave of my own passions. What must I do?"

Temperance is not a product of the old nature but of the new nature. Galatians 5:23 lists temperance as the fruit of the Spirit. The unsaved person does not have the Holy Spirit to produce temperance in his life. This leaves him to be a slave of intemperance. In regeneration the Holy Spirit comes to influence a person to be moderate in all indulgences, to teach him to restrain his passions, to govern himself, to control his evil propensities, and to subdue all inordinate affection. Only by the help of the Holy Spirit given in regeneration can you ever expect to be temperate in all things.

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Churches Of God

(Continued from Page One)

They take little or no trouble to find out. Some are content to remain outside of any earthly church. Others join some church out of sentimental considerations, because their parents or partner in marriage belonged to it. Others join a church from lower motives still, such as business or political considerations. But this ought not to be. If the reader is an Anglican, he should be so, because he is fully persuaded that his is the most Scriptural church. If he is a Presbyterian, he should be so, from conviction that his "church" is most in accord with God's Word. So, if he is a Baptist or Methodist, etc.

There are so many others who have little hope of arriving at a satisfactory answer to the question, What constitutes a New Testament church? The fearful confession which now obtains in Christendom, the numerous sects and denominations differing so widely both as to doctrine and church-order and government, has discouraged them. They have not the time to carefully examine the rival claims of the various denominations. Most Christians are busy people who have to work for a living, and hence they do not have the leisure necessary to properly investigate the Scriptural merits of the different ecclesiastical systems. Consequently, they dismiss the matter from their minds as being one too difficult and complex for them to hope of arriving at a satisfactory and conclusive solution. But this ought not to be. Instead of these differences of opinion disheartening us, they should stimulate to greater exertion for arriving at the mind of God. We are told to "buy the truth," which implies that effort and personal sacrifice are required. We are bidden to "prove ALL things."

Now, it should be obvious to all that there must be a more excellent way than examining the creeds and articles of faith of all the denominations. The only wise and satisfactory method of discovering the divine answer to our question, What constitutes a New Testament church? is turn to the New Testament itself and carefully study its teachings about the "church." Not some godly man's views; not accepting the creed of the church to which my parents belonged; but "proving all things" for myself! God's people have no right to organize a church on different lines from those which governed the churches in New Testament times. An institution whose teachings or government are CONTRARY to the New Testament is certainly NOT a New Testament "church."

Now if God has deemed it of sufficient importance to place on record upon the pages of Inspiration what a New Testament church is, then surely it should be of sufficient importance for every redeemed man or woman to study that record, and not only so but to BOW to its authority and con-

form their conduct thereto. We shall thus appeal to the New Testament only and seek God's answer to our question.

I. A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH IS A LOCAL BODY OF BELIEVERS. Much confusion has been caused by the employment of adjectives which are not to be met within the New Testament. Were you to ask some Christians, To what church do you belong? they would answer, The great INVISIBLE church of Christ — a church which is as intangible as it is invisible. How many recite the so-called Apostle's Creed, "I believe in the holy CATHOLIC Church," which most certainly was NOT an article in the APOSTLES' "creed." Others speak of "the Church MILITANT," and "the Church TRIUMPHANT," but neither are these terms found in Scripture, and to employ them is only to create difficulty and confusion. The moment we cease to "hold fast the FORM of sound words" (II Tim. 1:13) and employ Unscriptural terms, we only begot ourselves and others. We cannot improve upon the language of Holy Writ. There is no need to invent extra terms; to do so is to cast reflection on the vocabulary of the Holy Spirit. When people talk of "the UNIVERSAL Church of Christ" they employ another unscriptural and antiscritptural expression. What they really mean is "the Family of God." This latter appellation includes the whole company of God's elect; but "Church" does not.

Now the kind of church which is emphasized in the New Testament is neither invisible nor universal; but instead, visible and local. The Greek word for "church" is "ecclesia," then those who know anything of that language are agreed that the word signifies "An Assembly." Now an "assembly" is a company of people who ACTUALLY ASSEMBLE. If they NEVER "assemble," then it is a misuse of language to call them "an assembly." Therefore, as all of God's people NEVER HAVE YET assembled together, there is today no "universal Church" or "assembly." THAT "Church" is yet future; as yet it has no concrete corporate existence.

In proof of what has been said above, let us examine those passages where the term was used by our Lord Himself during the days of His flesh. Only twice in the four Gospels do we find Christ speaking of the "church." The first is in Matthew 16:18 where He said unto Peter, "Upon this Rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." WHAT KIND of a "church" was the Saviour here referring to? The vast majority of Christians have understood it as, the great invisible, mystical, and universal Church, which comprises ALL His redeemed. But they are certainly wrong. Had this been His meaning He had necessarily said, "Upon this Rock I AM BUILDING My church." Instead, He used the future tense, "I WILL BUILD,"



The Baptist Examiner

BIBLE STUDY LESSON

By WILLARD PYLE

Pastor — First Baptist Church of Naples Park, Florida

For September 2, 1979

Amos 1:1-5.

Intro.: The manifestation and methods of God's righteous execution of judgment on the nation of Israel and surrounding nations. A worthwhile lesson to all people everywhere. Similar to Christ's reply in Luke 13:1-5.

VERSE 1

"The words of Amos." Here we have the spokesman raised up to give forth a public declaration of the coming judgment. God separated him unto this task (Acts 9:15; 13:2).

"Who was among the herdmen of Tekoa." He like David was quietly going about his daily task when the mantle of God fell on him. God had in His providence again provided a man to stand in the gap. This in itself is an amazing study. Consider Joseph, Moses, Joshua, John the Baptist, etc. He was of the southern kingdom of Judah, but called upon to prophesy in the northern kingdom.

"Which he saw concerning Israel." He was divinely endowed

which shows clearly that at the time He spoke, His "church" had no existence, save in the purpose of God. The "church" to which Christ referred in Matthew 16:18 could NOT be a UNIVERSAL one, that is, a church which included ALL the saints of God, for the tense of the verb used by Him on this occasion manifestly EXCLUDED the Old Testament saints! Thus, the FIRST time that the word "church" occurs in the New Testament it has no reference to a general or universal one. Further, our Lord could not be referring to the Church IN GLORY for IT will be in no danger of "the gates of hell"! His declaration that, "the gates of hell shall not PREVAIL against it," makes it clear beyond all doubt that Christ was referring to His church upon earth, and thus, to a visible and local church.

The only other record we have of our Lord speaking about the "church" while He was on earth, is found in Matthew 18:17, "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Now the ONLY kind of a "church" to which a brother could relate his "fault" is a visible and local one. So obvious is this, there is no need to further enlarge upon it.

In the final book of the New Testament we find our Saviour again using this term. First in Revelation 1:11 He says to John, "What thou seest write in a book and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia." Here again it is plain that the Lord was speaking of LOCAL churches. Following this, we find the word "church" is upon His lips nineteen times in the Revelation, and in EVERY passage the reference was to LOCAL churches. Seven times over He says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," NOT "what the Spirit saith unto THE CHURCH" — which is what WOULD have been said had the popular view been correct. The last reference is in Revelation 22:16, "I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto these things in the churches." The reason for this being, that as yet, the Church of Christ has no tangible and corporate existence, either in glory or upon earth all that He now has here is His local "churches."

In further proof that the kind of "church" which is emphasized in the New Testament is a local and visible one we appeal to other facts of Scripture. We read of "The church which was at Jerusalem" (Acts 8:1), "The church (Continued on page 4, column 3)

with spiritual insight. He, like John on the Isle of Patmos, was commissioned to preach what he saw (Rev. 1:11). Consider also Acts 4:20 and I John 1:1.

"In the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel." In these two kings we have a vivid contrast (II Kings 15:1-3), although he was not a perfect king (Vs. 4; II Chron. 26:14-21; II Kings 14:23, 24). This is a sad commentary on most of the kings of the divided kingdom.

"Two years before the earthquake." Although there were many earthquakes, this is mentioned probably because it was in connection with God's righteous judgment soon to fall. God may wait two years or 120 years before He deals with sin and disobedience, but He will deal.

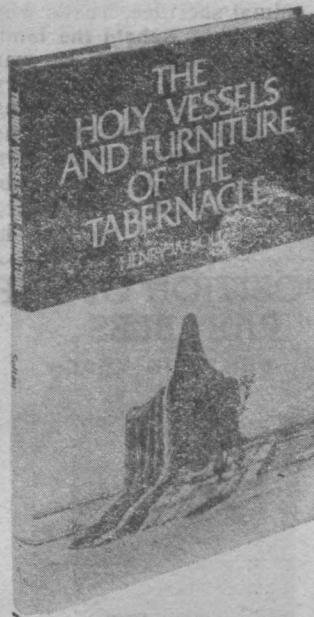
VERSE 2

"And he said, The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem." Compare this roaring against Israel to the one in Joel 3:16 when He roars against Israel's enemies. Read also Psalm 18:13 and Jeremiah 25:30. Judgment will begin at the house of God, Jerusalem and Zion, and revolve outward (I Pet. 4:17, 18). This roaring and voice signify authority and power even though Jesus was "led as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before His shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth" (Isa. 53:7), yet on the cross He cried with a loud voice. He was Master of the situation. Yes, the winds and waves obey His voice.

"And the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither." Total judgment shall fall even unto the top of Carmel which is rich in pastures, oliveyards, and vineyards. If

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it withers, how great the desolation elsewhere!

VERSE 3

"Thus saith the Lord." The authenticity of Amos' message is verified as from God (II Pet. 1:19-21; Jer. 1:9). This expression begins every reference to the judgment to be executed. God's messenger can therefore speak with authority.

"For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four." An oft repeated expression to show the fullness of sin for which judgment is about to fall. We have expressed here the habitual sin which neither warnings nor examples of judgment has had any effect.

"I will not turn away the punishment thereof." As has been well said, "The punishment cannot be turned away; it is inevitable, it is irrevocable." Therefore it will be surely executed.

"Because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron." It is a mark of this sinful world to make weapons of cruelty and to inflict all manner of torture. Observe the Dark Ages when thousands died at the hands of religious people who strove by force to subdue and to subvert converts (Contrast II Cor. 10:4).

VERSE 4

"But I will send." God's arrows of judgment never misfire or go off course. They cannot be diverted or stopped. Man must take into account that the sins they commit will eventually bring the wrath of God. How we need to pause and praise God that He in mercy sent His Son to save His people from their sins (John 3:16; Matt. 1:21; Gal. 4:4,5).

"A fire into the house of Hazael, which shall devour the palaces of Benhadad." The fire which goes out from the Lord has been seen in the case of Nadab and Abihu and in the time of Korah's disobedience. (Gen. 19:24; Lev. 10:1,2; Num. 16:35). In this case we have two of the most grievous oppressors of Israel who are the targets of God's wrath.

"Which shall devour the palaces of Benhadad." All of the accomplishments of any earthly man, regardless of how spectacular, amount to nothing when God sends His judgment.

VERSE 5

"I will break also the bar of Damascus." No stronghold of security or defense can keep out the messengers of God. The walls of Jericho fall down at the shout of the servants of God (Joshua 6:20; Jer. 51:30; Lam. 2:8, 9).

"And cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven." From the peaceful suburbs to the city, God's stroke will fall. All of the people will feel the affects.

"And him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden." Both the ruler and his subjects; the rich and the poor are equal; so neither wealth nor position can alter the judgment. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" and "every sin and disobedience shall receive a just recompense of reward."

"And the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir." God determines the extent of the judgment as well as the means (Acts 4:27, 28). He regulates the kingdoms of this world even in judgment (Dan. 4:32,35; 5:28).

"Saith the Lord." God hath spoken and it shall be. Let him that readeth take heed (Rev. 1:3).

Conclusion: An interesting study is to search out the fulfillment of these prophecies (Isa. 46:9-11).

(EDITOR'S NOTE:—If you would like to write to Bro. Pyle expressing your appreciation for the lessons or ask Him questions about his exposition of the Scripture his address is Rt. 11, Box 1198, Fort Myers, Fla. 33908.)

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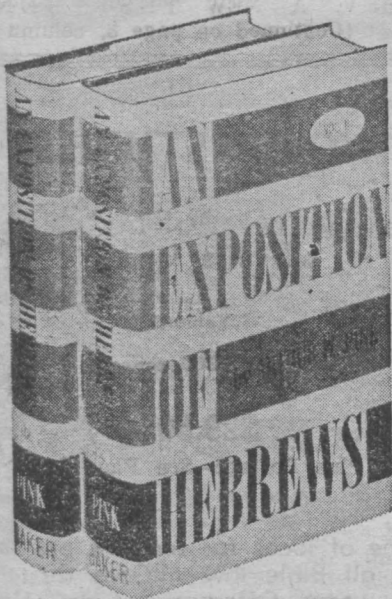
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"Why is there no reference to animal sacrifices in the New Testament after the death of Christ?"—South Shore, Ky.

JON RULE
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Zion Missionary
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Because Christ was the "Lamb of God" (John 1:29) who fulfilled all previous sacrifices which were types of Him. Many Scriptures could be used to make this point, but look at the following to start: Hebrews 7:23-27; 9:11-14; 9:25-28; 10:1-14. Whether the Jews still offered sacrifices after Calvary is a moot question for there was no value, even typical, in them after Calvary. Of course, after 70 A.D. Judaism as given in the Mosaic law was virtually eliminated from earth.

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Since the animal sacrifices were types pointing to the death of Christ, therefore, there is no place nor need for these sacrifices after they have been fulfilled by the death of Christ. Types point forward to something that is to be fulfilled later on. Then when that thing comes on the scene the types are no longer needed for anything except for us to point out the fact that the type did point to its fulfillment. So when our Lord fulfilled all those types when He died, there is no longer a need for them to be found in the New Testament.

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I am confident the inquirer is aware that all the N.T. was written this side of the death of Christ, and that some of it was written many years after. Following the sequence of events as outlined in the record God gave of His Son, we find there are many references to animal sacrifices which post-date the crucifixion. Especially is this true of the book of Hebrews, which was written near the year A.D. 64, and is referred to by some scholars as the Leviticus of the N.T.

One of the key words of the book of Hebrews is "better," it is used to describe the covenant which superceded the law, and it is also used saying, the sacrifices of that covenant are "better" than those of the old covenant. Every time the Mosaic law is referred to it is either a direct or indirect reference to animal sacrifices. When the author of Hebrews says, "... Without shedding of blood is no remission" (9:22), he not only has in mind the precious blood of Christ, but also the many sacrifices offered under the ceremonial law of Moses. While the authors of the N.T. belaboured the negative aspect of animal sacrifices, they never lost sight of what the

blood of those animals pre-figured. The force of the teaching of Hebrews regarding the sacrificial system is, that no salvation is possible apart from faith in the shed blood of Christ, but we learn from the blessed Page that saving faith was not shut up to this age. Enoch, Noah, Abraham, etc. etc. were all saved by faith in the shed blood of Christ, they took the shadow and by God-given faith turned it into substance (Heb. 11:1).

The O.T. saints looked forward to the shed blood of Christ, N.T. saints look with an eye of faith to Calvary, yet both look to the same efficacious blood for the forgiveness of their sins. Christ was the supreme sacrifice, fulfilling every type which heralded His coming, yet the Holy Spirit-tored heart can be immensely blessed by studying O.T. types, and seeing the Lord of glory revealed therein. Hebrews 9 gives a clear distinction between the prescribed animal sacrifice, and that of the perfect sacrifice which wrought eternal redemption for His people. Read and rejoice.

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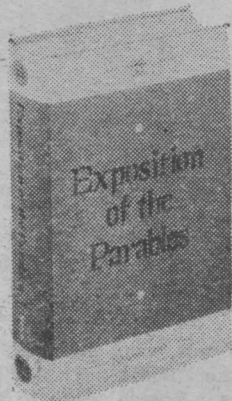


It is not difficult to know why there is no further reference in the N.T., what is difficult to understand is why the Jewish people have apparently stopped the sacrifices. When Christ, the antitype, completed His sacrifice, there was no longer any necessity for the type. Actually, I don't recall any mention of sacrifice or sacrificial animals after Christ drove out the money changers in Matthew 21:12-16. Perhaps this cleansing of the temple involved more than just driving out the thieves.

After Christ became the true sacrifice, it would be unnecessary to teach animal sacrifice. That's why John said, "... Behold the lamb of God ..." (John 1:29). He was the true sacrifice. "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:11, 12). Thus there is no more references to animal sacrifice in

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the N.T.

The interesting thing is that we never hear of the Jewish people offering up animal sacrifices. If they are still looking for the Messiah then they should still be offering sacrifices. I believe God is working even in this so that they no longer practice what is not necessary.

Churches Of God

(Continued from Page Three)

that was at Antioch" (Acts 13:1), "the church of God which is at Corinth" (I Cor. 1:2)—note carefully that though this church is linked with, yet it is definitely distinguished from "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord"! Again; we read of "churches" in the PLURAL number: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria" (Acts 9:31). "The churches of Christ salute you" (Rom. 16:16), "Unto the churches of Galatia" (Gal. 1:2). Thus it is seen that, that which was prominent and dominant in New Testament times was local and visible churches.

II. A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH IS A LOCAL BODY OF BAPTIZED BELIEVERS. By "baptized believers" we mean Christians who have been IMMERSUED IN WATER. Throughout the New Testament there is not a single case recorded of any one becoming a member of a church of Jesus Christ without his first being baptized; but there are many cases in point, many indications and proofs, that those who belonged to the churches in the days of the apostles WERE baptized Christians.

Let us turn first to the last clause of Acts 2:47: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be (the R. V. correctly gives it "WERE") saved." Note carefully — it does not say that "God" or "the Holy Spirit," or "Christ," but "THE LORD added." The reason for this is as follows: "The Lord" brings in the thought of AUTHORITY, and those whom He "added to the church" HAD SUBMITTED to His Lordship. The way in which they had "submitted" is told us in verse 41, 42: "Then they that gladly received his word were BAPTIZED; and the same day there were ADDED about three thousand souls," etc. Thus in the earliest days of this dispensation, "the Lord added" to His church saved people who were baptized.

Take the first of the Epistles. Romans 12:4, 5 shows that the saints at Rome were a local church. Turn back now to Romans 6:4, 5 where we find the apostle saying to and of these church members at Rome, "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." Thus, the saints in the local church at Rome were baptized believers.

Take the church at Corinth. In Acts 18:8 we read, "Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were BAPTIZED." Further proof that the Corinthian saints were baptized believers is found in I Corinthians 1:13, 14; 10:2, 6; I Corinthians 12:13 rightly translated and punctuated (we hope to deal with this passage separately in a further article) expressly affirms that entrance into the local assembly is by water baptism.

Ere passing to the next point let it be said that a church made up of baptized believers is obviously and necessarily a "BAPTIST CHURCH"—what else could it be termed? THIS is the name which GOD gave to the first man

whom He called and commissioned to do any baptizing. He named him "John THE BAPTIST." Hence REAL "Baptists" have no reason to be ashamed of or to apologize for the scriptural name they bear. If someone asks, Why did not the Holy Spirit speak of the "BAPTIST church at Corinth" or "The BAPTIST churches of Galatia"? We answer, for this reason: there was, at that time, no need for this DISTINGUISHING adjective; there were no other kind of churches in the days of the apostles but BAPTIST churches. They were ALL "Baptist churches" then; that is to say, they were all composed of scripturally-baptized believers. It is MEN who have invented all other "churches" (?) and church-names now in existence.

III. A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH IS A LOCAL BODY OF BAPTIZED BELIEVERS IN ORGANIZED RELATIONSHIP. This is necessarily implied in the term itself. An Assembly is a company of people met together in organized relationship, otherwise there would be nothing to distinguish it from a crowd or mob. Clear proof of this is found in Acts 19:39. "But if ye inquire anything concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a LAWFUL ASSEMBLY." These words were spoken by the "town clerk" to the Ephesian multitude which was disturbing the peace. Having "appealed the people," and having affirmed that the apostles were neither robbers of churches nor blasphemers of their goddess, he reminded Demetrius

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and his fellows that "the law is open, and there are deputies," and bade them "implead one another." The Greek word for "assembly" in this passage is "ecclesia," and the reference was to the Roman court, i.e., an organization governed by law.

Again, the FIGURES used by the Holy Spirit in connection with the "church" are pertinent only to a local organization. In Romans 12 and in I Corinthians 12 He employs the HUMAN "body" as an analogy or illustration. Nothing could be more unsuitable to portray some "invisible" and "universal" church whose members are scattered far and wide. The reader scarcely needs to be reminded that there is not a more perfect organism than the human body—each member in its appointed place, each to fulfill its own office and perform its distinctive function. Again, in I Timothy 3:15 the church is called the "HOUSE of God." The "house" speaks of ORDERED RELATIONSHIPS: each resident having his own room, the furniture being suitably placed, etc.

Further proof that a New Testament "church is a local company of baptized believers in or-

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ganized relationship is found in Acts 7:38, where the Holy Spirit applies the term "ecclesia" to the children of Israel—"the church in the wilderness." Now the children of Israel in the wilderness were a redeemed, separated, baptized, organized "Assembly." Some may be surprised at the assertion that they were baptized. But the Word of God is very explicit on this point. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all BAPTIZED unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (I Cor. 10:1,2). So, too, they were ORGANIZED; they had their "princes" (Num. 7:2) and "priests" their "elders" (Ex. 24:1) and "officers" (Deut. 7:1). Therefore, we may see the propriety of applying the term "ecclesia" to Israel in the wilderness, and discover how its application TO THEM enables us to DEFINE its exact meaning. It thus shows us that a New Testament "church" has its OFFICERS, its "elders" (which is the same as "bishops"), "deacons" (I Tim. 3:1, 12), "treasurer" (John 12:6; II Cor. 8:19), and "clerk"—the "number of NAMES" (Acts 1:15) clearly implies a register.

IV. A New Testament church is a local body of baptized believers in organized relationship, PUBLICLY AND CORPORATELY WORSHIPPING GOD IN THE WAYS OF HIS APPOINTMENT. To fully amplify this heading would necessitate us quoting a goodly portion of the New Testament. Let the reader go carefully through the book of Acts and the Epistles, with an unprejudiced mind, and he will find abundant confirmation. Attempting the briefest possible summary of it, we would say: First, by maintaining "the apostles' doctrine and fellowship" (Acts 2:42). Second, by preserving and perpetuating Scriptural baptism and the Lord's Supper: "Keep the ordinances" as they were delivered to the church (I Cor. 11:2). Third, by maintaining a holy discipline: Hebrews 13:17; I Timothy 5:20, 21, etc. Fourth, by going into all the world and preaching the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15).

V. A NEW TESTAMENT (Continued on page 8, column 3)

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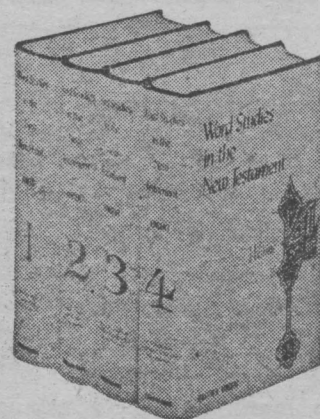
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Dan Parks

(Continued from page one)

- church;
2. Independence from other churches;
3. Independence from higher ecclesiastical orders than the Lord's church; and
4. Separation of church and state.

I have found that I am now laboring in a situation wherein these convictions are not shared. The Cruz Bay Baptist Church, Incorporated, is an ecclesiastical body which owns the lands and properties of other churches, and whose officers dictate to and have authority over subordinate churches. In this alone, the first three distinctives of Independent Baptists are violated. The vice-president of the incorporation, Emmanuel Jagger-nauth (pastor of the Cruz Bay Baptist Church) informed me in a meeting I had with him July 11, 1979, that there would be no changes in that structure.

I am facing 3 alternatives:

1. Stay and work within the bounds of the present ecclesiastical machine;
2. Leave; or
3. Stay and establish an Independent Baptist church.

Alternate No. 1 is not feasible, for I can compromise my convictions no longer.

Alternative No. 2 is not feasible due to the following reasons:

1. God gave me a peace about my call to this place. I invested all I had in moving here, and all bridges I crossed have been burned behind me. Furthermore, I have not felt God calling me to leave, and I have a peace about staying.

2. I am committed to many of you who have invested in my ministry, and as the steward of that investment, I hope to see you receive a Christ-exalting dividend.

3. I have been advised by those of my supporters who are knowledgeable of our present situation to start an Independent Baptist church. The only (so called) Baptist work on St. John is under the subjection of the incorporation mentioned above.

4. I feel a commitment to many here who have expressed to me their desire for "their" church.

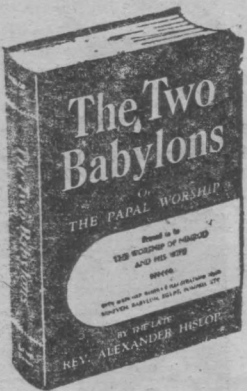
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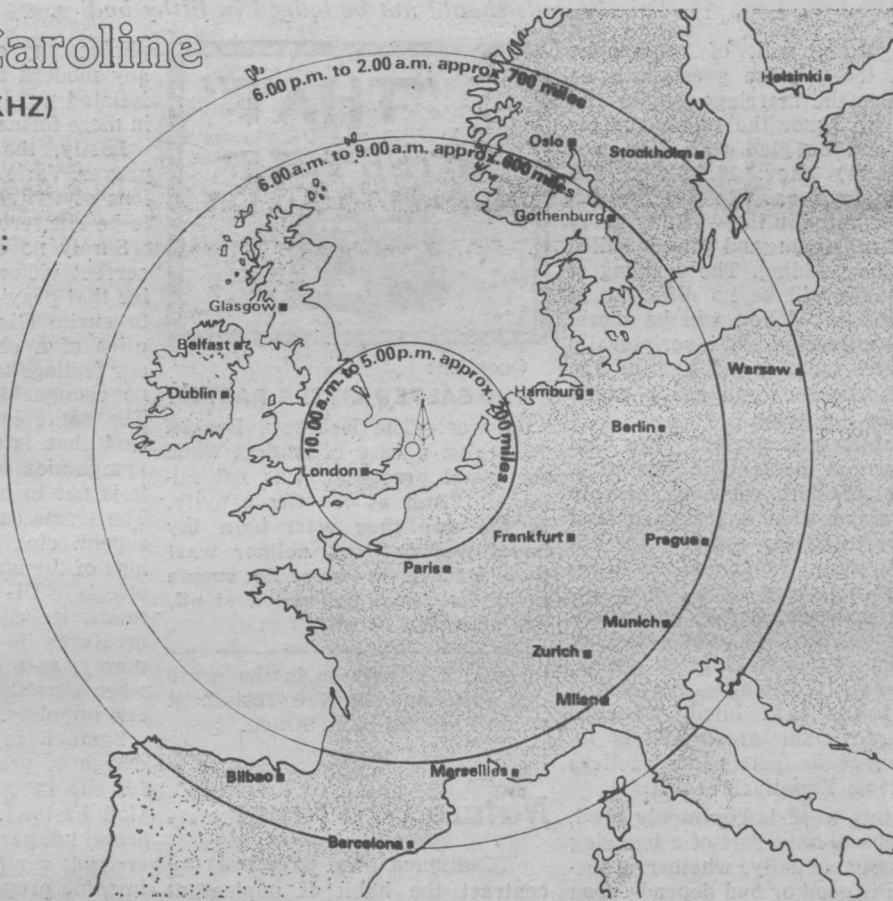
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and have intimidated to me their desire for my help in establishing an Independent Baptist church.

Alternate No. 3 is, therefore, the only alternate I can be peaceful with. Therefore, my involvement with the Cruz Bay Baptist Church, Incorporated, is dissolved. My labors are now directed toward the establishing of an Independent Baptist church on St. John that is in line with the guidelines of paragraph No. 2.

I am now the missionary of the Hillcrest Baptist Church (Elder E. W. Parks, Pastor) 4580 South Main Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27107 (Tel. 919-788-7093).

Our membership is now in her body, and our supporters are now asked to send our financial support to her. She is aiding, but not controlling, the work we are striving to establish. She is also an Independent Baptist church.

Many of you will have questions concerning the things I have discussed with you. Please feel free to ask them, for I shall be as happy to answer them as ever before.

In everything we are giving thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us. You will probably note that I have written to you using the first person singular pronoun (I instead of we). This has been done in an effort to be more personal with you, and I am glad to say that Sandy has been an ever present source of comfort through all of my recent time of trouble with the present situation, and together we trust that the God of Peace, Who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, make you (and us) perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you (and us) that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen (Hebrews 13:20-21).

The Daniel E. Parks Family

Real Tragedy Of . . .

Continued from page one) honestly." (This is the same kind of omniscience that cost us the Panama Canal and Vietnam, and continues to prop up communist failures with technology, wheat, and credits.)

What about the human dignity of the murder victims? And what about their rights? The accused has his case heard and reheard, appealed and reappealed, up and down the state court system—then a similar route through the federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court. For example, Spengelink had twenty-two appeals, including four before the Supreme Court, over a six year period. Appeals

were granted on many frivolous and insane arguments for absolute guarantees against any possible miscarriage of justice.

Who is going to be so tenacious in protecting the rights of victims and society at large? Not abolitionist Alan Goldstein, lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union, who contends that victims don't

decision, stipulates every step and procedure in capital cases, pretty much abolishes forever any chance of getting the wrong man. About the same probability as your being hit by Skylab! Even Hugo Adam Bedau, a vigorous opponent of the death penalty, eschews this argument, calling it "false sentimentality." (Harper's Magazine, June 1979).

And finally, to claim that Jesus repudiated the death penalty is to deceive and confound; it is also dishonest and includes a selective approach to the Scriptures. Moreover, the psychopathic enthusiasm of some church bodies to abolish God's moral law on the death penalty is enough to suffocate the Holy Ghost. We are talking about the official positions of the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church US, the United Presbyterian Church USA, and the National Council of Churches, among others.

Let me cite an instance of ecclesiastical double-dealing. 2,200 delegates to the 1979 Virginia United Methodist Conference voted themselves some resolutions: One opposed the death penalty and another supported abortions-of-convenience. They said: Kill the unwanted little babies but coddle the degenerate murderers!

When the Conference was accused of hypocrisy, Methodism's Norfolk spokesman, David M. Hindman, said: Not so, even Christ

declined the death penalty when the adulteress was about to be stoned, saying, in effect, which-ever one of you is guiltless may throw the first stone. Further, Hindman said, there's no demand; in the New Testament for the death penalty; and besides, the prerogative of vengeance belongs to God alone.

Well, these are the classic crutches of the "Christian" abolitionists. Let's examine them. The Master was talking about adultery, not murder, and He simply challenged the woman's accusers to stone her if they were without sin. The sin was adultery, not murder.

Contrary to Hindman's contention, many passages in the New Testament support the death penalty; and sincere students of the Bible know it. Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:17-22) that He came to fulfill the law, every jot and tittle. This included the Sixth Commandment against murder. Also, there's Acts 25:11; John 19:11; Luke 13:1-5; Romans 13:1-6; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13-17—all of which recognize the governor as God's representative to execute God's wrath upon the murderer. Therefore, God has confirmed civil authorities as God-ordained ministers to use the death penalty against criminals in accordance with His law. This is clear enough.

The Old Testament is also clear, containing some twenty-five passages on murder. Each of the five books of the law (Genesis through Deuteronomy) prescribes capital punishment for murder. In the selection of Scripture on this subject, these are "selected out!" Never mind that Jesus included them in His teachings.

The rationalizations of this Methodist Conference against capital punishment and for abortion confirm a selective approach to the Scriptures. In fact, in the background of the explanations, one can almost hear the faint flutter of angel's wings. We remember the midnight marches just prior to the executions of Gilmore and Spengelink. One thinks of a maudlin mob of candle-carrying hypocrites—too ignorant to understand the issue, too pious to think, and too self-righteous to be out of bed! We should pray for God's forgiveness and ask Him to show us the way.

Are we to believe that theologians are the only ones who understand the Bible? That the common man can't handle it? The Bible is clear on the death penalty. God doesn't want sentimental people. He wants obedient and Scriptural people.

He expects Christians to support His laws and judgments, including the death penalty for capital murder. Human life is sacrificed, but it is not absolute. Other things are even more important: Truth, justice, love and obedience to God's Holy Word. The real tragedy in the case of the death penalty is the failure of Christians to stand fast and loyal in carrying out this difficult duty.

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have rights! The rights of Charles Manson, Richard F. Speck, and even an American-style Idi Amin are guarded to the nth degree; but how about the rights of the victims' wives, children, and parents to justice and the rights of all society to protection and security?

Then, there's the argument that it's the blacks who are discriminated against. This one just doesn't wash! The record shows that over half those arrested for murder are black; but so are over half the victims! If black murderers are pampered, does this place a low value on black victims? We think not, and expect the black community will agree. Moreover, since 35 state legislatures have enacted new death penalty laws, believing that they deter murder, doesn't it follow that abolition of capital punishment would be detrimental to the poor and the blacks, who are disproportionately the victims of murder? ("Crime in the United States, 1975").

This brings us to the third argument of the abolitionists: You might execute the wrong person. The record shows that only one innocent person has been executed in this country: Jack O'Neill was hanged in 1898 for a murder to which a soldier later confessed. (Federal Probation Quarterly, March 1962).

The mandatory appeals system and the Supreme Court's 1976 Greg

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

AUGUST 25, 1979

PAGE FIVE

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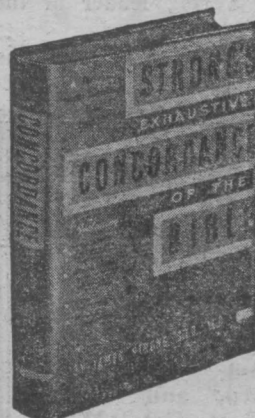
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Baptist "Briders"

(Continued from page one)

are Judas and John the Baptist. Judas was baptized by John the Baptist (Acts 1:21-22) and he was a charter member of the Lord's first (Baptist) church (I Cor. 12:28; Mark 3:13-19). But, like many today, Judas was never saved in the first place and will not be in Heaven not to mention being in the Bride (John 6:70; Acts 1:25). Also John the Baptist will not be in the Bride. He was filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb, called a Baptist and sent to baptize by God, and named the greatest prophet among men by the Lord, but he did not identify himself as part of the Bride but rather as a friend of the Bridegroom (John 3:29).

To simplify the matter, let us state very briefly and basically that a Baptist Brider believes that only the saved who have scriptural baptism will enjoy that special place of intimacy with the Bridegroom that a Bride has. They are drawn to this conclusion mainly because of their strict stand on the local church and the reference of the scriptures to the church being the Bride (Eph. 5:23-27). It should be remembered that a proper use of the Greek word EKKLESIA, which is translated as church in our Bibles, significantly denotes a local visible assembly or congregation. This was the kind of church Jesus started during His earthly ministry and it is the same kind that He has in various locations all around the world today. It was to people in this kind of a church that Paul said, "... I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Cor. 11:2). Never once are words like these ever spoken to anyone else.

Being saved will put you in Heaven, but it does not automatically put you in the bride. Some brethren detail certain other doctrinal and practical requirements for the Bride but for the sake of simplicity and brevity we will draw the line at trusting Christ as Saviour and following Him in scriptural baptism. This is about all that can be said for many of the members of the church at Corinth mentioned above.

The marriage of the Lamb will be a blessed event. The bride will have made herself ready and the

Bridegroom, will, of course, be there, too. All the guests will be called to the marriage supper and they will honor the Lamb and rejoice and be glad with Him and His Bride (Rev. 19:7-9). It has always been easy to tell the difference between the wedding party in a marriage and those called unto the wedding. The wedding of the Lamb will be no different. If you are saved you will be there. If you are saved and a scripturally baptized member of one of the Lord's churches you are a candidate for the Bride.

What is a sectarian? Now that we have a basic definition of a Baptist Brider, we need also to understand what a sectarian is if we are to rightly consider the initial question. Webster's New Illustrated Dictionary says that a sectarian is a member of an organization devoted to one belief or doctrine; a narrow, bigoted person. The same dictionary says that a bigot is one who is blindly attached to a particular creed and is intolerant of the beliefs and practices of others; Fanatical.

As this word is commonly used, it seems to have sort of a bad ring to it. But actually, whether a sectarian is good or bad depends upon the sect that he is identified with. Jesus sounded rather sectarianish when He said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Dr. Scofield, a champion of the universal church theory, has given the title "Sectarianism Rebuked" to verses 40 and 50 of the ninth chapter of Luke, but this could have just as easily have been called "wise council" or "independent cooperation." Beware of the subtly of those in the sect of the universalists! Baptist Briders rejoice over any truth preached anywhere, and all the while they stand for the whole council of God themselves.

Are Baptist Briders sectarians? As you may have guessed by now, the writer admits to being a Baptist Brider. So, the question can be made more personal. Is the writer a sectarian? Well, he is a member of an organization devoted to the Word of God. It is his only creed. He is as narrow as the Bible forces him to be. He is not blindly attached to the truths of God's Word for they have been illuminated to him by the enlightening of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:18). Ecclesiastically, he is intolerant of the beliefs and practices of non-Baptists and Baptists in name only, but he defends their civil right to believe as they do. If these convictions make him a sectarian, then so be it. Most other Baptist Briders will probably admit that they feel the same way.

Paul was called a ring leader of the sect of the Nazarenes (Acts 24:5). This is not a reference to the modern denomination that teaches an on-again, off-again salvation and so-called sinless perfection. It is just another nickname like Baptist Briders that was tagged on churches and men who faithfully followed the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. Universalists often quote I Corinthians 3:9 as if it gave strength to their theory, but they forget that it was written to a local New Testament (Baptist) Church by a ring leader of the Baptist Briders.

In conclusion, if those known as Baptist Briders today are sec-

IS "THAT" IN THE BIBLE?



Question:

WHO SALTED LITTLE BABIES?

Answer:—The Hebrews, Ezekiel 16:4, give a case of neglect when the usual procedure was not followed. "And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy naval was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all."

tarians, it is only so in the sense that Jesus and the New Testament writers are. So be it. Amen.



Nature Of Prayer ...

(Continued from page one)

contract the habit of unpleasant tones in prayer; while others are so rapid in their enunciation as if the hearers were all afflicted with deafness. Some whine most piteously, while others rant most unpleasantly.

There are many improper phrases and words on the lips of persons who lead in prayer, and especially preachers, who have not been taught how to pray as they ought. We have neither time, space, nor inclination to specify a tithe of the incongruous expressions used in prayer. For the defects of plain, unlettered brethren, who make no pretensions to public gifts, we can bear many mistakes, but for preachers, who may be taught, and who ought to relieve themselves from unfortunate habits, and who do not try, we have but little patience.

Often do we hear at the close of public prayers, "Be with us in the hour and article of death." We understand hour to be a figure of speech, signifying "time of," but for the "article" our learning is too limited for an explanation. "In a world without end," is substituted for "World without end," signifying the eternal state. In view of the gracious aid God has promised to His ministers, the prayer is, "Give matter and form," which, if it has any meaning, must signify that God would reveal thoughts for a subject, and method in the arrangement. "Hand us down the slippery steep of time," is a bombastic expression in "prose run mad."

Without any illusion to the metaphor of a voyage on water, the preacher will pray that God would "land us on the banks of everlasting deliverance." Another exceptional expression is "on time's side of eternity." But with some, who have an untutored poetic imagination, there are metaphors piled on metaphors, and all sorts of incongruous poetic imagery in their prayers. Nothing is more disgusting to a pure, chaste mind, and a cultivated taste, than the inflated style some men use in praying. Many of the words and figures, they have caught from others, and use them without ever thinking of the irreverence and folly of speaking to the Infinite and Omniscient God, in such language.

The antidote to all improper expressions in prayer is this. Study simplicity of expression. Read carefully and critically the prayers recorded in the Scriptures. Here we recommend for models of prayers, those forms in the BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Of course we except those specially pertaining to that church, but a very large proportion of the prayers in the compilation are appropriate for all classes of Christians. The morning and evening prayers for public worship, are, in style, simplicity, brevity, and holy unction inimitable. They are peculiarly scriptural, and in the terse old Saxon English of the sixteenth century. The

phraseology cannot be mended by any modern revision. They are no inflated words, nor poetic imagery in these forms of prayer.

Lastly, the design or end of prayer. Various have been the opinions of writers respecting the end to be answered by praying to God.

Surely no one, entertaining any correct views of Deity, can imagine that praying to God is intended to excite His compassion, as the cries of a child in distress move our feelings to give relief. God has no changeable passions like men. The same language is applied to God that is used to express the sympathies of human nature, but it is not to be construed literally. The terms compassion, pity, grief, repent, etc., express not the feelings of the unchanged God, but the effects of His providence and grace to us. He deals with His rational creatures in infinite justice and mercy, as men do to their fellows when moved by just and sympathetic impulses.

Some have maintained that the design of prayer is to prepare us for the reception of the blessings God bestows. This effect is incidental not paramount. Devout prayer leads our minds out to God, and in some proper appreciation of the mercies received, but that cannot be its principle design. For,

The Scriptures nowhere convey this idea in the frequent directions and admonitions to this duty, and the frequent accounts we have of the prayers of the saints.

Other means are appointed to prepare our hearts for the reception of the blessing, which are more likely to produce the desired effect.

Something more is intended in the prayers of holy men on special occasions as recorded in the Scriptures.

The great end of prayer is to procure the blessings we need. Though this is not the express design of all parts of prayer, it is the express object of petition and pleading, and is implied in all the branches of the subject.

Prayer has been appointed of God as the means to this end. It is no more inconsistent with the purpose of God, than the use of means in the ordinary concerns of life.

That the design of prayer is to procure the blessings we need may be seen from the following considerations:

1. The design of a beggar when he asks for a morsel of food is to procure it as a needful good. He begs for that express purpose. Other ends may be gained at the same time, but this is his chief end. By acting in the capacity of a beggar, he may qualify himself to receive the favor bestowed with thankfulness, and to use the favor in a right manner, but no one would say this was his design in begging. It is true that the cases of a beggar and a praying, penitent sinner are not parallel in all respects. The beggar may inform the one he addresses of his unfortunate circumstances; he may excite his sympathies to give that which otherwise he would withhold, which should never be conceived in the case of a supplicant for spiritual favors. The cases would be parallel by supposing, one knows a miserable object and all the circumstances of his destitution, and has determined to relieve him, but chooses to withhold the favor until he petitions for aid. In such a case it would be folly for the beggar to say, "I shall be just as likely to partake of the rich man's bounty without asking, and I will therefore not trouble him with my petitions. He knows my case and if he purposes to help me he will do it. I will not call on him for it."

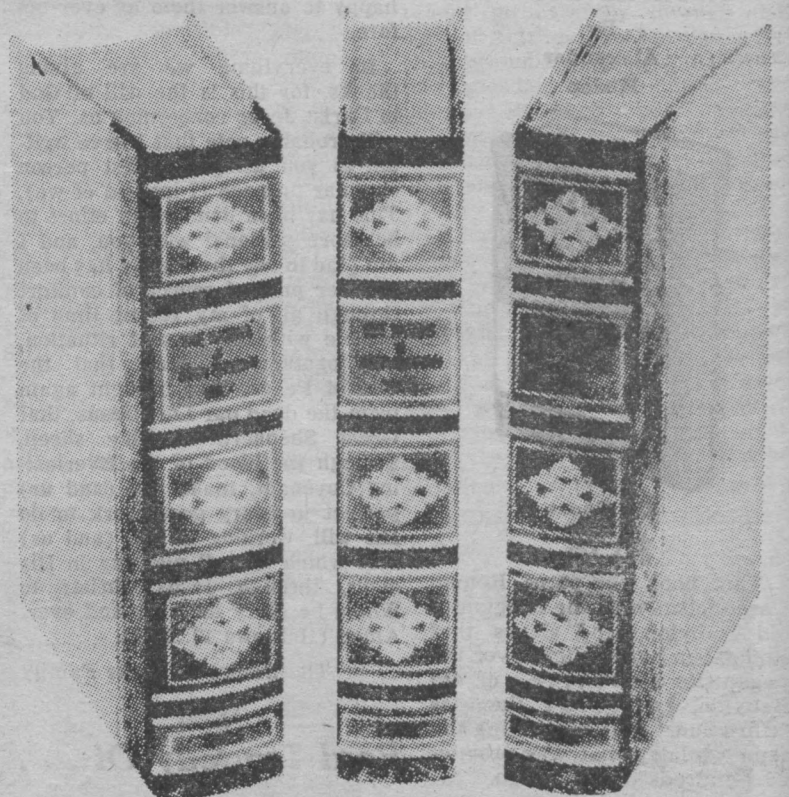
Not less absurd are the objections made as an excuse for not praying to God for mercy, and the excuses offered for the neglect of this duty.

2. That the design of prayer is to procure the mercies we need, may be urged from the relation we sustain to God.

God is our Father, and praying believers are his children. A kind father is supposed to know the wants of his children, and disposed to relieve them. But what kind-hearted father is not delighted to give to that child, who in an humble and submissive manner petitions for a favor. So Christ has taught us that God is more ready to give to those who ask Him, than parents are to bestow good things on their children. See Matthew 7:9-11; Luke 11:11-13; Matthew 18:19; John 14:13, 14.

3. The various promises in the gospel are so many assurances that God will answer our requests. Amidst a store of rich and precious promises we refer to the following (Continued on page 8, column 1)

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

AUGUST 25, 1979

PAGE SIX

WHAT IS ORDINATION TO THE MINISTRY?

S. H. FORD
(1819-1930)

How are the ministers of Christ to be introduced into their sacred work?

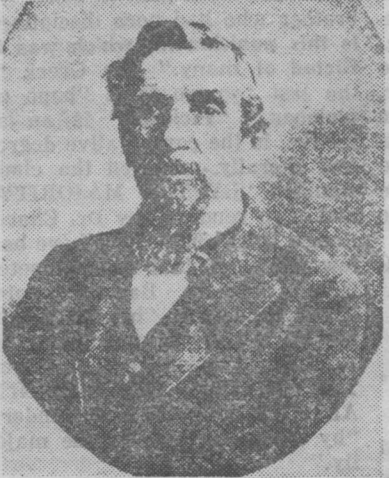
In the first place, the candidate must have a strong persuasion in his own bosom, that he is called of God to preach the gospel; in the next place, the church to which he belongs must obtain good evidence of the same. No church has a right to urge a man into the ministry, contrary to his own convictions. On the other hand, no man has the right to urge himself into the ministry, contrary to the convictions of his brethren. However strong his own desires for the sacred work, he should hold himself in doubt of his divine call, unless he is sustained by the concurrent convictions of his brethren.

We have frequently heard young men complain that they were anxious to commence a preparatory course of study for the ministry, but that they could not obtain the recommendation of their church. They had not scrupled to ascribe this to some unjust prejudice; and have seriously inquired whether they ought not to ask a letter of dismission, and unite with some church more likely to favor their wishes. In such cases, a young man has reason to distrust his own feelings. He ought to wait, and pray that the same God, whom he trusts, has led him to desire the ministry, would also dispose his brethren to encourage him to enter the sacred work. He has no authority for leaving the church for such a reason; and we question whether any other church has a right to receive him for such a reason. A young man carries with him but a poor recommendation, when he represents himself much higher in the confidence of God, than he does in the esteem of his brethren.

But where an individual is himself convinced that God has called him to the work of the ministry, and the church receives the same conviction, it is as much the duty of this church to encourage him, as it is his to enter upon the work; for this is one main design for which churches are organized—that they should search out and send into the ministry, and sustain, those who give evidence of being divinely called for this purpose. It is of little importance how such conviction first came to take possession of the candidate's mind;—it may have originated in his own meditations, or in some season of prayer, or some brethren in the church may have first communicated to him their own convictions as to his duty; or the attention of the pastor may have been directed to him, as one whom the Lord seemed to be preparing for his work, and he may have pressed the young man to a serious consideration of the subject; this would be perfectly proper; it is one of the important duties of the pastor to seek out and bring into exercise all the gifts with which

God is blessing the church. All that is necessary is, that the candidate himself, and especially the church to which he belongs, should have good reason to believe that he is called of God. Then after he has been properly instructed, there is a divinely sanctioned mode, by which he may be appointed to his work, and officially invested with authority to discharge all the duties of the sacred office. This is usually denominated "ordination."

What then is ordination, and to whom does the power of ordaining belong? The advocate of prelacy would entrust this power



S. H. FORD

only to a prelatical bishop. Others, wishing to be as far removed from this system as possible, would invest the church with this power, and make ordination consist simply in the election or choice of the church. We cannot regard either of these views as correct. There is no one word which is uniformly employed in the Scriptures to express the act of ordination.

Whenever the word ordain occurs in our version, as having any reference to setting one apart for the work of the ministry, it will be seen that different terms are used in the original, whose signification may be expressed in English by the simple word, appoint. Comp. Mark 3:14. Acts 1:22, 14:23. I Timothy 2:7. Titus 1:5. Hebrews 5:1. But neither of the words here used can be fairly rendered by the words choose or elect; and consequently, could not have been designated to indicate the election or choice of a church.

In Acts 14:23, it is said, "When they had ordained them elders in every church," etc. The verb here used is thought to be sufficiently explicit as to manner in which these elders were appointed. The word, in its literal and etymological import, signifies "to stretch forth the hand," and is the same which is employed among the Greek republics to signify an electing or choice to office in a popular assembly, which was done by raising the hand. But usage often invests words with a secondary signification, in which their strict etymological import is neglected; and this is undoubtedly the case with the word in question. It is nowhere used in the New Testa-

ment to signify an election by popular suffrage.

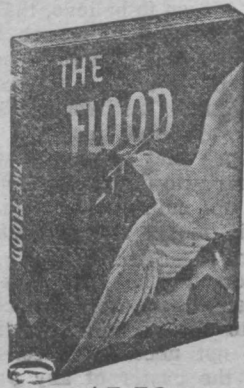
To say that Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every church, by simply presiding at a church meeting, and taking the vote of the people, is to say nothing more nor less, than that Paul and Barnabas did not ordain elders at all, but that the churches themselves ordained them by their own election. But this is not the inspired testimony. It is expressly stated, that Paul and Barnabas ordained elders for the people. The same word is used in 2 Corinthians 8:19, in reference to one who was chosen of the churches to travel with Paul, for the purpose of conveying their contributions to the saints in Jerusalem. But here it is very plain, that the apostle designed to indicate the appointing power, rather than the mode by which the appointment was made; and for such a purpose as is here alluded to, undoubtedly, the churches had the appointing power. They could appoint whomsoever they pleased, to accompany Paul to Jerusalem.

But this was a very different thing from setting apart men to the work of the ministry. When the act of election or choosing is designed to be indicated, there is another word, which is generally used in the New Testament. This

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is EKLEGOMAI, "choose," (Acts 1:24; 6:5). But no one will dispute that the power of appointing their own pastors belongs to the churches. If a church finds one who has been appointed or ordered in a proper manner to the work of the ministry, they are at liberty to appoint him as their pastor; this is a matter with which the surrounding ministry who has not been ordained as a minister, they must first present him to those to whom the ordaining act belongs, that he may be ordained or set apart to the work of the ministry according to the divinely sanctioned mode.

Now, if inspired precedent is to be our guide, the ordaining act resides with the ministry themselves, and not with the church as a popular assembly. Hence Paul and Barnabas ordained elders for the churches; and Titus ordained elders in all cities of Crete, in accordance with apostolic directions. Timothy was set apart to the work of the ministry by the laying of Paul's hands, and the hands of the presbytery; and as he was authorized by virtue of his office as a minister to ordain others to the ministry in the same way, he was exhorted "to lay hands suddenly on no man." Indeed the principal directions in the Scriptures, relating to the qualifications of ministers and their

introduction into the sacred office, are contained in epistles directed to ministers—to Titus, and especially to Timothy.

But if the ordaining act belongs to ministers, does it follow, that they are to exercise it independently of the church, and that they are at liberty to obtain whomsoever they pleased? Assuredly not. They are at liberty to ordain no one who has not been chosen and presented by some church. But they are not under obligation to ordain all whom the churches may choose or recommend. They themselves have a distinct responsibility, in a matter of so much importance. They are to examine the candidate for themselves, and judge of his qualifications and of his divine call; if they are not satisfied, the mere election of the church cannot constitute ordination. Such, at least, is the case where there is an existing and authorized ministry. But should a church be raised up in a region of country where there are no ministers, or in the midst of an heretical and corrupt ministry, then this church must, from the necessity of the case ordain her own ministers, and the consecrating hands of private individuals may be laid upon him, to set him apart for his sacred work.

Should any one ask for our authority for this, we reply that the same divine requirement which obliges a church to have a pastor at all, would constitute a sufficient divine authority for such a procedure. . . .

As ordination at the hands of ministers does not confer qualifications, but is only a public recognition of those which God confers, therefore, where the aid of Christ's ministers cannot be obtained, churches must content themselves with exercising their own judgment in relation to the evidences of the divine call of one whom they may wish to introduce into the ministry, and their own recognition of him as one called of God to preach the gospel, is all that is necessary to invest him with the sacred office.

But where the ministers of Christ are accessible, no church is at liberty, as a mere matter of convenience, to dispense with their aid; to do this, would be to despise the inspired precedent, and to trample upon the authority of Christ. So, where the aid of ministers is sought by a church on such an occasion, they are not at liberty to withhold it; and where they become satisfied in relation to the divine call and qualifications of a candidate for the ministry, it then becomes their duty to admit him to a participation in their labors, and to recognize him by a public act of theirs, as one called of God to preach the gospel. This was done in the primitive church, it seems, by prayer and the laying on of hands. It matters not whence this matter was originally derived, it is sufficient that it constitutes an inspired precedent which we are to follow.

Ordination, it should be remembered, is an appointment on the part of the ministry only in this

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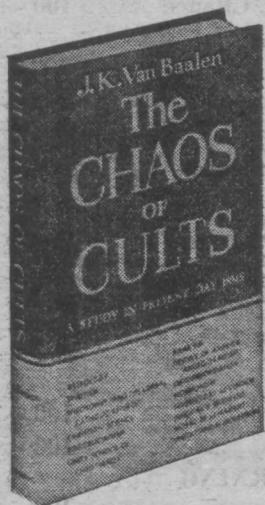
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sense, that it is a public recognition and acknowledgment of what is believed to be the appointment of God. It is therefore, one of the most solemn and responsible acts in which a minister can possibly engage. It requires the exercise of a careful and impartial judgment; it does not supersede, or dispense with, the judgment of a church, but it presupposes their choice and election; it does not arrogate to man the authority to send forth ministers, it distinctly recognizes this as belonging exclusively to God; it is also the acknowledgment of a solemn duty on the part of the officiating ministers to second and sustain God's appointments, and carefully to protect the churches from sustaining any other.

Ordination is of great utility to the candidate. He receives the advice of men older and wiser than himself, at a most important crisis of his life; and, if sincere in his profession, he has reason to expect and confidently to believe, that the prayer heard and answered in his behalf, and that he will receive grace and wisdom from above, to qualify him for his work. In addition to this, although it does not invest him with a character indelible, yet a certificate of his ordination will always be evidence, wherever he goes, that

(Continued on page 8, column 3)



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Nature Of Prayer . . .

(Continued from page six)
ing: Matthew 7:7; 21:22; Luke 11:9; John 15:16; 16:24-26; James 1:5; 5:15; I John 3:22; 5:14, 15.

4. That God hears and answers the prayer of faith is evident from the repeated exhortations to this duty in both the Old and New Testaments. See Ezekiel 36:37 in which God, by the prophet, declared what He would do to His covenant people, Israel, and the vast blessings He would bestow upon them by delivering them from their captivity in Babylon, and through this event as a typical illustration, their recovery to the gospel in the last days. Yet these distinguishing favors could be bestowed only in answer to prayer. "Thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock."

5. The end of prayer may be seen in the numerous instances of the prayers of the saints procuring blessings, and averting judgments.

When God denounced a fearful judgment on the cities of the plain, Abraham prevails with God to withhold His hand if even then righteous men be found in the cities. The want of the requisite number is no objection to the assurance drawn from the circumstances. The account shows the efficacy of prayer, and the readiness of God to answer the requests of those that pray to Him.

See Genesis 18:16-33.

The account of Jacob wrestling with the Angel of the Covenant, and his name being changed to Israel, "For as a prince hast thou power with God and with men and hast prevailed," is additional evidence that prayer is designed to obtain a gracious answer. In Hosea 12:4, we learn that this wrestling was importunate praying; the burden of his petition was deliverance from the vengeance of his brother Esau, who had solemnly sworn to kill him a score of years previous, and who was then but a short distance from him with four hundred armed men. He prayed till the dawn of day, and God answered the prayer in a marvelous way by the conversion of his offended brother, and his becoming a warm friend from that eventful night. See Genesis 32.

Moses repeatedly sought the Lord on the behalf of Israel, and the apparent (not real) purpose of God was changed in answer to the prayer of His servant. Israel had rebelled, made the image of a calf, and worshipped it in limitation of the gross idolatry of the Egyptians (Exodus 32:9, 10).

"And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people."

"Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them, and I will make of thee a great nation."

All that Moses could perceive of

the divine purpose was their destruction, and a great nation to be raised up from him as their patriarchal and covenant head. Never was a man placed under such trying circumstances. Yet he prays with great importunity that God would remember His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and spare the guilty nation. The great body of the nation were spared on the intercession of Moses, and vengeance overtook only the leaders and the most active of the rebels; about three thousand men.

We might enlarge greatly under this head, but instances enough have been given to confirm our faith and teach us that by prayer, and not without, we may expect the favors we need.

We seriously exhort our brethren in the ministry to examine, carefully and critically, all that the Scriptures teach, about prayer, note the mistakes that have been made about the nature, form and object of prayer, and see if there is not room for improvement in the church, the family, and the closet devotions.

(THE CHRISTIAN REPOSITORY, April, 1856, pp. 209-216).

Ordination To The . . .

(Continued from page 7)
has furnished some church, and some minister or body of ministers, reason to believe, that he was called of God to preach the gospel; and that, therefore he is one of Christ's own ministers, introduced into his work in Christ's own way. And this is a kind of evidence that no church would be at liberty to despise, so long as he does not nullify it by some defect in his moral and religious character.

Ordination to the work of the ministry is an essential pre-requisite to the pastoral relation; yet does not necessarily constitute a man the pastor of any particular church. This can be done by the election or choice of the church alone; and this relation exists only by the mutual consent of the church and pastor, and may be dissolved at the will of either, provided the interests of Christ's kingdom requires it. But the dissolution of this relation does not deprive the pastor of the character of a minister, which was accorded to him by his ordination. He is at liberty to enter into the same relation with any other church.

(FORD'S CHRISTIAN REPOSITORY, pp. 241-246, October, 1889).

Churches Of God

(Continued from page four)
CHURCH IS INDEPENDENT OF ALL BUT GOD. Each local church is entirely independent of any others. A church in one city has no authority over a church in another. Nor can a member of local churches scripturally elect a "board," "presbytery," or "pope" to lord it over the members of those churches. Each church is self-governed, compare I Corinthians 16:3; II Corinthians 8:19. By church-government we mean that its work is administrative and NOT legislative.

A New Testament church is to do all things "decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:30), and its only authoritative guide FOR "order" is the Holy Scriptures. Its one unerring standard, its final court of appeal, by which all issues of faith, doctrine, and Christian living are to be measured and settled, is the Bible, and nothing but the Bible. Its only Head is Christ: He is its Legislator, Resource, and Lord.

The local church is to be governed by what "the Spirit saith unto the churches." Hence it necessarily follows that it is altogether separate from the State, and must refuse any support from it. While its members are enjoined by Scripture to be "subject unto the higher powers that be" (Rom. 13:1), they must not permit any dictation from the State in matters of faith or practice.

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The administration of the government of a New Testament church resides in its own membership, and NOT in any special body or order of men, either within or without it. A MAJORITY of its members decide the actions of the church. This is clear from the Greek of II Corinthians 2:6, "Sufficient to such a man (a disorderly brother who had been disciplined) is this punishment, which was inflicted of many." The Greek for the last two words is "hupo ton pleionon." "Pleionon" is an adjective, in the comparative degree, and literally rendered the clause signifies "BY THE MAJORITY," and is so rendered by Dr. Charels Hodge, than whom there have been few more spiritual and competent Greek Scholars. Bagster's Inter-linear renders it "by the greater portion," and the margin of the Revised Version gives "GREEK THE MORE." THE DEFINITE ARTICLE obligates us to render it "by the more" or "by the majority."

To sum up. Unless you have a company of regenerated and believing people, scripturally baptized, organized on New Testament lines, worshipping God in the ways

of His appointing — particularly in having fellowship with the apostles, doctrine and fellowship, maintaining the ordinances, preserving strict discipline, active in evangelistic endeavour—it is NOT a "New Testament church," whatever it may or may not call itself. But a church possessing these characteristics is THE ONLY INSTITUTION on this earth ordained, built, and approved of by the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, next to being saved, the writer deems it his greatest privilege of all to belong to one of HIS "churches." May Divine grace increasingly enable him to walk as becometh a member of it.

(STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, DEC. 1927, VOL. VI., No. 12).

(Editor's Note: This article was published some years ago in TBE. After its publication liberal Baptists denounced the article, saying Bro. Pink never wrote it. This article was written by Pink and it is in our file to show any critic. I am at this time offering a reward of \$100 to anyone who can prove A. W. Pink did not write this article. I ask my critics to put up or shut up).

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