

THE WAY OF SALVATION

A. 10:17
W. R.

Introduction.

1. There are three (1) divine beings, who consist of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
2. The Holy Spirit is the divine being who is the source of all life and power.
3. Yet the Holy Spirit is the divine being who is the source of all life and power.
4. Man must do his part in becoming a Christian.
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100. Man must do his part in becoming a Christian.

Discussion.

I. MAN'S SALVATION IS BY

- A. Works, A. 11:14.
- B. Faith, B. 1:10.
- C. Love of the Father, C. 1:10.
- D. Receiving the Word, D. 1:10.
- E. Receiving the Word, E. 1:10.
- F. Works of Faith, F. 1:10.
- G. Obedience, G. 1:10.
- H. Hearing, H. 1:10.
- I. Faith, I. 1:10.
- J. Receiving, J. 1:10.
- K. Confession, K. 1:10.
- L. Baptism, L. 1:10.
- M. Calling on his name, M. 1:10.
- N. Keeping in mind the Gospel, N. 1:10.
- O. Hearing and believing in the Gospel, O. 1:10.
- P. Hope, P. 1:10.
- Q. Faith, Q. 1:10.
- R. Love, R. 1:10.
- S. Faith, S. 1:10.
- T. Love, T. 1:10.
- U. Faith, U. 1:10.
- V. Love, V. 1:10.
- W. Faith, W. 1:10.
- X. Love, X. 1:10.
- Y. Faith, Y. 1:10.
- Z. Love, Z. 1:10.

II. THE QUESTION IS NOT WHO OR WHAT

- A. All combined factors to be salvation.
- B. If one can be left out which one?

Conclusion.

1. Man's salvation results from believing and accepting the commands.
2. How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

Introduction.

1. Our world is one full of uncertainties.
 - a. The business world is uncertain.
 - b. The boy just out of high school is uncertain about his future.
 - c. Many men are uncertain about their jobs.
 - d. The whole world is in a state of uncertainty because of the war situation.
2. Yet in the midst of the world of uncertainty certainty is greatly desired by every man.
 - a. A great jury goes to great length to be certain about a decision.
 - b. Many hesitate to make decisions because they want to be certain.
3. Isn't it wonderful that in the midst of uncertainty there are so many certainties:
 - a. Rom. 8:26
 - b. 1 Cor. 15:58
 - c. 1 Pet. 1:18
 - d. 1 Jn. 2:3,5.
4. The certainties that we want to discuss at this time are:

Discussion:

- I. THE CERTAINTY OF ETERNAL LIFE. 1 Jn. 5:13.
 - A. In other words we can logically accept the fact that we are saved.
 - B. But how can I know?
 1. First, by accepting what God has done for us in his Son.
 - a. He was manifested to take away our sins. 1 Jn. 3:5.
 - b. Again as God's children we have Christ as our Advocate when we sin. 1 Jn. 2:1,2.
 2. Second, by believing what God has told us in his word.
 - a. He promises us eternal life. 1 Jn. 2:25.
 - b. His promises are yea. 2 Cor. 1:20; 2 Pet. 3:9.
 - c. He definitely says we have eternal life. 1 Jn. 5:13.
 - C. Eternal life is beyond our greatest comprehension.
 1. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be like." 1 Jn. 3:2.
 2. "We shall be like him." 1 Jn. 3:2b.
- II. THE CERTAINTY OF PRAYER. 1 Jn. 5:14,15.
 - A. It is certain because we always try to ask according to his will. v. 14; Cf. Mt. 7:
 - B. It is certain because we have an understanding high priest that gives us boldness to come to the throne of grace. Heb. 4:14-16.
 - C. The ears of the Lord are always open to his children. 1 Pet. 3:12.
- III. THE CERTAINTY OF HOLY LIVING BEFORE GOD. 1 Jn. 5:18.
 - A. The man that is born of God does not practice sin. 1 Jn. 3:9; v. 18.
 1. Reason---His seed remaineth in him. 4:9; Cf. Lk. 8:11.
 2. The Psalmist said "Thy word I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Psa. 119:11.
 - B. The man that is born of God is kept from the wicked one. 1 Jn. 5:18.
 1. God provides a way of escape. 1 Cor. 10:13.
 2. Job. Job. 1
- IV. THE CERTAINTY OF SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD. 1 Jn. 5:19.
 - A. When we obey the gospel we become a new creature. 2 Cor. 5:17.
 - B. We put off the old man and put on the new. Eph. 4:22-32.
 - C. Our high priest is separate from sin. Heb. 7:26.
 - D. The final separation will take place at the judgment. Mt. 25:31-33.

Conclusion.

Beloved, it is only as we are convinced of the certainties of life that we become the devoted servant that God wants us to be. There are some things of which one can be certain.

Introduction

1. Our world is one full of uncertainties.
- a. The future world is uncertain.
- b. The boy just out of high school is uncertain about his future.
- c. Many men are uncertain about their jobs.
- d. The world itself is in a state of uncertainty because of the war situation.
2. Yet in the midst of the world of uncertainty every man is keenly desiring every day to make decisions because they want to be certain.
3. And in the midst of this uncertainty I want to share with you some of the things that I have learned about this.
- a. I have learned that we want to be certain about the things that we are doing.
- b. I have learned that we want to be certain about the things that we are saying.
- c. I have learned that we want to be certain about the things that we are thinking.
- d. I have learned that we want to be certain about the things that we are feeling.
- e. I have learned that we want to be certain about the things that we are doing, saying, thinking, and feeling.

Discussion

- I. The Certainty of the Future.
a. In the Bible we are told that the future is certain.
b. But how can I know?
c. I know by the promises of God.
d. He has promised to take care of us.
e. Again as God's children we have Christ as our advocate when we are in trouble.
f. He will take care of us.
g. He will take care of us.
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z. He will take care of us.
- II. The Certainty of the Present.
a. It is certain because we always try to do what is right.
b. It is certain because we have an understanding of the things that are going on.
c. It is certain because we have an understanding of the things that are going on.
d. It is certain because we have an understanding of the things that are going on.
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y. It is certain because we have an understanding of the things that are going on.
z. It is certain because we have an understanding of the things that are going on.
- III. The Certainty of the Past.
a. Reason—this man was born in the past.
b. The Bible tells us that this man was born in the past.
c. The Bible tells us that this man was born in the past.
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- IV. The Certainty of the World.
a. The Bible tells us that the world is certain.
b. The Bible tells us that the world is certain.
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z. The Bible tells us that the world is certain.

Conclusion

Beloved, it is only as we are convinced of the certainty of the things that we are doing, saying, thinking, and feeling that we can be devoted servants of God who are able to do the things that he has called us to do.

Introduction.

1. "We are now living in a time when the whole inherited body of our theological language is disappearing into the past and a new history is dawning in our midst before which theology is increasingly becoming speechless The Christian can no longer find security in an absolutely sovereign God who exercises a beneficent and providential government over the world That God has disappeared from view. We can no longer truly know God in the present. The God who appears is alien and lifeless in no sense a source of redemption and life. . . . Theology must resolutely confine the Christian name of God to the past and wholly refrain from proclaiming his redemptive presence in our historical presence Only the death of God can make possible the advent of a new humanity All America is called to freely accept and will the death of God." (Christianity Today, Dec. 17, 1965; p. 22)
2. The statement just read is not the ranting of a Communist Fanatic, but part of a speech delivered by Thomas J. J. Altizer, Associate Professor of Religion at Atlanta's Emory University.
3. During recent years both in our nation and throughout the world there has been a definite trend away from God and from religion.
 - a. Several years ago the Supreme Court handed down the opinion that it was unconstitutional to read the Bible and have class prayers as religious exercise in the public schools.
 - b. Recently the Supreme Court upheld the ruling of New York's Education Department that forbade Kindergarten Children in state school to offer thanks for their cookies before they ate them.
 - c. It was a common practice in years past to have a baccalaureate sermon at the end of the school year---this is on the decline.
 - d. In England only seven percent of the British people go to church services as much as three times a year. 93% do not attend even three times a year.
 - e. In America 60% of the American people have their names on a church roll, but less than 8% can be found at church services on any Sunday morning.
 - f. The 'image' of the church generally has declined in the last generation.
 - g. The 'image' of the preacher is far down the list on desired vocations.
4. In view of recent decisions and presents trends one wonders:
 - a. How long it will be before the express "In God We Trust" will disappear from our coins.
 - b. How long will it be before someone, under the principle of separation of church and state, introduce a bill to remove the chaplaincy from the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate.
 - c. How long will it be fore the chaplain is removed from our armed forces?
 - d. How long will it be before the Presidential oath of office will be administered without the Bible?
 - e. How long will it be before the tax exemption status of religious property will be eliminated?
5. Let us consider:
 - I. THE TREND AWAY FROM GOD IS NOT NEW.
 - A. David wrote "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." Psa. 14 :1.
 - B. The prophets lived in an age of spiraling prosperity when men turned away from God and need to be called back.
 1. Isaiah wrote of this need. Isa. 1:17-19,20.
 2. Hosea wrote of this need. Hos. 4:1,2,6.
 3. There is a basic truth. Prov. 14 :12,34.
 - C. In April, 1822, the French philosopher Auguste Comte said as man matures he puts away childish and superficial beliefs.
 - D. Karl Marx sought to deny God when he said "religion is the opiate of the people.
 - E. Sigmund Freud attacked the idea of God and Christian Faith as a kind of self-illusion.

F. Nietzsche placed this thought in the mind of the madman, Hitler.

G. Walter Reuther recently declared that "Man is God."

II. THERE IS A TRAGIC ABSENCE OF RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

A. In our large public institutions the trend is toward atheism.

1. In the training in the fields of science, social studies, etc. there is the finest, but in ethical and moral principles, it is deficient.
2. Under the principle of academic freedom Communists may speak on campuses, but a preacher may not be welcome.
3. Some Communists even occupy faculty positions.
4. Just remember one elementary truth: If one does not plant flowers in a garden, one has weeds. If one does not teach honesty, self-control, etc. one will reap degeneracy.

B. In the absence of moral and religious instruction to the living masses of young America, our nation is in peril.

1. There is a rising crime rate. Each quarter's report shows a rise. Ours is the highest in the world.
2. There is a breakdown of the home.
 - a. One out of four marriage fail, and each year 750,000 children become part of a divorced home.
 - b. The decline of parental authority.
3. There is rebellion and anarchy among the people.
 - a. Mobs in the streets protest laws they do not like, rather than changing them in proper legal ways.
 - b. Thousands marching in various cities protesting govermental policies.
 - c. Public burning of draft cards with assurance that the press will be present.
 - d. Resentment of authority on every hand by young and old alike.
4. There is a new morality that declares that chasity and virtue are no longer needed.
5. Immoral and degrading entertainment is openly advertised.
6. There is an amazing growth of alcoholism and drug addiction.

III. THE ANCIENT FOUNDATIONS ARE STILL NEEDED.

A. The only foundation on which morality and ethics can be built is religion.

1. Take God out of the picture and one has no absolute standard, but personal preference.
2. Try convincing a young man that he ought not to steal with God and the Bible out of the picture.
3. Try convincing a young man that he ought not to be immoral with God and the Bible out of the picture.

B. Our Lord came into the world when men were turning away from God. **Rom. 1:21-31.**
Rom. 3:10,18.

C. Jesus Christ began with the individual to try to save the world. **Jn. 1:14; 14:6.**

Conclusion.

1. Jesus Christ is the hope of the world---the only hope. If those of us who claim to be Christians will speak out in word and deed we can reverse the trend away from God.
2. @ sick, unhappy, confused and despairing world awayits our message. Let us be up and doing.

Introduction

1. Read or quote the text.
2. Probably the most sensational aspect of dispensational premillennialism is the so-called "battle of Armageddon."
3. Every major war that has ever been fought has been preceded by the declaration "the Battle of Armageddon."
 - a. In the 1860's when the Civil War was fought it was this battle.
 - b. Hugh headlines blazoned the "battle of Armageddon" just before World War I began.
 - c. World War II was the battle of Armageddon.
4. Hal Lindsey, the most widely read advocate of dispensational premillennialism today, describes the battle of Armageddon like this. "Lindsey asserts that political indications suggests that likely Israel will soon be invaded by a confederation of Arab-African forces headed by Egypt. When this happens, Russia and her allies will use such as an occasion to invade and conquer (for a short time) the Middle East. Subsequently, the Russians learn of the progressive mobilization of Oriental forces (under Red China) and Western European forces (under the Anti-Christ, a fuehrer-like dictator). She will prepare to fight but will be completely destroyed (probably in a nuclear attack) by wester Europe (which is supposed to be the revived Roman Empire). Accordingly, this sets the stage for 'the final climatic battle of Armageddon: the combined forces of the Western civilization under the leadership of the Roman Dictator and the vast hordes of the Orient probably united under the Red Chinese war machine.' This mighty battle between the Oriental forces (with 200 million soldiers) and the armies of the Anti-Christ will occur 'with the vortex centered at the Valley of Megiddo.' So many will be illed that 'blood will stand to the horses'bridles for a distance of 200 miles northward and southward of Jerusalem', in fact, Lindsey claims, this war will spread over all the earth destorying cities like London, Paris, New York, etc. Finally, 'as the battle of Armageddon reaches its awful climax and it appears that all life will be destroyed on earth--in this very moment Jesus Christ will return to save man from self-extinction." (Wayne Jackson, "The Battle of Armageddon", Pre-millennialism, True or False, Edit., Wendell Winkler, Fort Worth: Winkler Publications, 1978, p. 130)
5. In this study let's consider:

Discussion.

I. THE NATURE AND DESIGN OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION.

- A. The book of Revelation is a book of signs and symbols. Rev. 1:1
 1. The language of symbolism "was a mode of expression frequently adopted by Jewish writers toward the close of the Old Testament dispensation, when, owing to foreign oppression, it would have been ddangerous to speak plainly in matters affecting the national interests." (J.A. M'Clymont, The New Testament and its Writers, London: A. & C. Black, 1893, p. 277)
 - a. It revealed the truth to those "initiated in the significance of the word pictures."
 - b. It concealed the truth from those who would abuse them.
 2. "Westcott and Hort's Greek New Testament lists over five hundred references and illusions from the Old Testament in Revelation. The Christians, being familiar with the Old T estament Scriptures, would understand the symbols, hence grasp the message; their enemies would not." (Wayne Jackson)
- B. Victory is the key of Revelation.
 1. "overcome" is one of the key words of Revelation.
 2. "The Greek word nikao (overcome, conquer, victory) is found twenty-eight times in the New Testament and seventeen of these are in Revelation." (Wayne Jackson)
 3. The ultimate victory over God's enemies and the "glorious triumph of Christianity are the objects of Revelation.

II. AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE HISTORY OF MEGIDDO WILL HELP US.

- A. Megiddo was "an important city of N Central Palestine, overlooking the Plain of Esdraelon. It dominated the intersection of important trade routes and served as the key to the defense of the Jordan Valley (from the S) and the Coastal Plain (from the N)." (Charles F. Pfeiffer, Baker's Bible Atlas, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961, p. 309)
1. Har-Magedon literally means mountain of Megiddo.
 2. "The fact that the hill of Megiddo was about 70 feet high in John's day, and was in the vicinity of Carmal Range, justifies the use of Hebrew har used loosely in the Old Testament for 'hill' and 'hill country' . . ." (R.J. A. Sherriffs, The New Bible Dictionary, J.D. Douglas, ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974, p. 505)
- B. ". . . more battles have been fought on this plain than on any other in the world." (Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, A Bible Atlas, New York: Rand McNally, 1954, p. 15)
1. "It is not unlikely that the deliverance under Deborah is regarded as setting the pattern. Then Sisera had 900 chariots of iron (Judg. 4:13) but in Israel there was scarce a shield or spear among 40,000 (Judg. 5:8). Israel's position was completely hopeless. But when the battle was joined 'the Lord routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army' (Judg. 4:15 RSV). So will it be at the last day. However strong the forces of evil may appear, and however hopeless the position of those of good, God will win the victory. He will resoundingly overthrow the evil." (Leon Morris, The Revelation of St. John, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973, p. 192)
 2. It was here that Gideon won a great victory over the Midianites. (Judges 7)
 3. Josiah was killed in battle here. (2 Kgs. 23:29)
 4. "What Marathom is in Greek history; what Austerlitz is in French history; what Sedan is in German history; what Gettysburg is in American history; what Waterloo is in English history; that was Armageddon in Hebrew history."
- C. Its not uncommon for places to become symbols for concepts.
1. The Greek word gehenna for hell relates to the Valley of Hinnom. (2 Kgs. 16:3)
 2. Zion (Rev. 14:1) and Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2) are symbols of God's spiritual city.
 3. Babylon is symbolic of all that is opposed to God (Rev. 14:8)
 4. "The Old battle-ground becomes the symbol of the decisive struggle. It is raised in meaning: it is a type, not a locality." (W. Boyd Carpenter, Ellicott's Commentary On The Whole Bible, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959, VIII, p. 609)
 - a. Armageddon is used as a symbol of "the final overthrow of all the forces of evil by almighty God." (Morris, op, cit.)
 - b. "We seem to be on safe ground when we understand the ancient battle-ground at Megiddo as a type of the final stand of the enemies of righteousness against the Lord at His appearing." (Russell Bradley Jones, The Triumphant Christ And His Church---An Exposition of the Revelation, Birmingham: Jones, 1971, p. 88)
 - c. ". . . it will be remembered that this is apocalypse. Har-Magedon may stand for the battlefield without indicating any particular locality." (ISBE, Vol. II, p. 1340)
 - d. "Hence, Har-Magedon is the symbol of every battle in which, when the need is greatest and believers are oppressed, the Lord suddenly reveals his power in the interest of his distressed people and defeats the enemy . . . That final tribulation and that appearance of Christ on clouds of glory to deliver his people, that is Har-Magedon." (W. Hendriksen, More Than Conquerors, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1952, pp. 196-97)

III. A STUDY OF THE CONTEXT OF REVELATION 16 IN WHICH ARMAGEDDON IS MENTIONED.

- A. First, this is the only place in the Bible where this term is found.
- B. Second, it occurs near the end of Revelation 16 which pictures God's bowls of wrath "designed to be universal, strictly punitive, and final." (Wayne Jackson)
- C. Third, the plain of Megiddon is only 20 miles long and 14 miles wide--far too small to accomodate the hundreds of millions of soldiers to engage in this battle.
- D. Fourth, surely no one believes that literal frogs are coming out of the mouths of literal creatures to literally lead the literal soldiers in the literal valley of Megiddo. (Rev. 16:13)

- E. Fifth, "that great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14c) is "the day of God's final judgment." (William Arndt & F. W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967, p. 347) Acts 2:20; Rom. 13:12; Phil. 1:6,10; 2:16; 1 John 4:17; Jude 6, Rev. 6:17.
- F. Sixth, the expression "come as a thief" is used quite often in connection with the Lord's second coming to judgment. Matt. 24:43; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10
- G. Seventh, the warning to watch is used regularly in connection with the day of the Lord. Matt. 24:42,44; 25:13; 1 Cor. 16:13; 1 Thess. 5:6
- H. Eighth, the battle is vividly described in Revelation 19:11-16.
1. First, the one described here is truly Christ.
 - a. "faithful and True"---Rev. 3:14
 - b. "His eyes were as a flame of fire"---Rev. 1:14; 2:18
 - c. "his name is called the Word of God"---John 1:1,14
 2. Second, white is used throughout the book as a symbol of victory.
 - a. "a white stone"---Rev. 2:17
 - b. "walk with me in white"---Rev. 3:4,5
 - c. "clothed in white Raiment"---Rev. 4:4
 - d. " behold a white horse"---Rev. 6:2
 - e. "white robes"---Rev. 7:13,14
 3. Third, "in righteousness he doth judge and make war". 19:11c
 - a. The Lord's judgment is in righteousness and truth. Rom. 2:2
 - b. But he will judge at his second coming. Matt. 25:31ff; Rev. 20:11-15
 4. Fourth, he will smite the nations at his coming. 19:15
 - a. The sharp sword no doubt symbolizes the word of God. Cf. Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16; 2:12
 - b. He will judge with his words. John 12:48
 - c. 2 Thess. 2:8 shows he will destroy his foes "with the spirit of his mouth" at his coming.
 5. Fifth, Wayne Jackson gives the following summary of argument on these verses, and I believe he teaches the truth.
 - a. "The battle of Armageddon will occur when Christ comes to judge (Rev. 16:16; 19:11).
 - b. But He will judge at His Second Coming (Matt. 25:31; Jn. 12:48).
 - c. The battle of Armageddon will thus take place at his second coming.
 - a. The Armageddon war will take place when Jesus destroys his enemies with the breath of His mouth.
 - b. But such will occur at His coming (parousi).
 - c. Therefore, Armageddon is the punishment inflicted by Christ at His Second Coming.
 - I. Ninth, the battle described here is the same battle described in Revelation 20:8-10 in which God's chief enemy ^{the devil} will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

Conclusion.

1. The idea of a literal physical battle being the battle of Armageddon is totally false.
2. Those who are ready at the Lord's coming will go into the Supper (Rev. 19:6,7) but those unprepared will be destroyed in the battle of Armageddon---the last day.

Introduction.

1. Over twenty thousand Americans take their own lives every year. Every day fifty-five men and women die by their own hand. Two die every hour. One dies Every thirty minutes.
2. Why? Simply, The answer to this wide-spread, self-inflicted carnage lies in the belief that life is not worth living.
3. Suicide is now the nation's tenth ranking cause of death.
 - a. One account told of a young girl in England that leaped to her death from a high window of a famous cathedral.
 - b. Another told of a young man in New York who climbed out onto a promontory of a building and was about to jump. Everyone pleaded with him in vain. Among his last words were these "I wish someone could convince me that life is worth living?"
4. The rising rate of suicides seems especially strange at a time when our living standard is higher than ever before..
 - a. Never have people been so wellfed, clothed and housed.
 - b. Never have there been so many luxuries.
 - c. Never has there been so much entertainment.
 - d. Never has there been a time when science has extended life for most people.
5. Strangely enough people are questioning whether life is worth living.

Discussion.

I. WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF SUICIDES?

A. Sociologists and psychologists mention a number of factors.

1. Such things as illness, distress, financial reverses, frustration, loneliness, aimlessness, and a failure to love and be loved.
2. Suicides appear in some instances in lives fraught with difficulties and sufferings.
 - a. A person finds circumstances so hard he feels he cannot go on.
 - b. Immanuel Kant, the noted philosopher, pictures man's struggle to live like the dove might regard the resistance of the air.
 - c. Actually it is the resistance which enables the dove to fly and planes to remain aloft.
 - d. Many of the difficulties of life add challenge and zest to life.
 - (1) Paul's conflicts were his challenge. 2 Cor. 11:24-27.
 - (2) He was not overcome, but helped. 2 Cor. 12:10,15.
3. Suicides sometimes come out of a background of luxury and affluence.
 - a. A movie star occasionally commits suicide. "He had everything to live with, but nothing to live for."
 - b. The words of the Bible are appropriate here.
 - (1) Jesus. Lk. 12:15.
 - (2) Solomon. Prov. 30:8,9
 - (3) Paul. 1 Tim. 6:6.
4. The despondent negative attitude toward life results not so much from the circumstances which surrounds a person, as from the inner reaction to such circumstances.
 - a. One person possesses little, but is truly grateful.
 - b. Another person has everything, but finds no joy in life.
 - c. One mother beams with joy over a new baby while another has eyes full of hatred and resentment.
 - d. One person is crushed by life while another is challenged by life.

II. IN VIEW OF THE DISTURBING STATISTICS AND FACTORS THAT LEAD TO SUICIDE, IT WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST FOUR SIMPLE, BUT PROFOUND RULES, FOR LIVING.

A. Dependence Upon God.

1. Man, regardless of his education, is unable to cope with all the problems of life. Jer. 10:23.

2. Man still needs God's guidance. Psa. 23:4.
 3. Jesus emphasized his eternal presence. Mt. 28:20.
 4. Paul showed our great need of God. Phil. 4:6,7,13.
 5. The greatest deterrent to suicide and the ability to face difficulties is a strong religious faith. 2 Cor. 4:8,9,16;17; Rom. 8:31,35,37.
- B. Willingness to accept our lot.
1. Paul had learned to accept his lot. Phil. 4:11-13. Cf. Acts 16 :25ff.
 2. It is often difficult to accept:
 - a. Poverty in the face of luxury.
 - b. Illness in the face of health.
- C. Live in the present.
1. William Osler wrote "If the load of tomorrow be added to that of yesterday and carried today, it will make the strongest falter. Live in day-tight compartments. Don't let yesterday and tomorrow intrude into your life. Live one day at a time. You will avoid the waste of energy, the mental distress, the nervous worries that dog the steps of the man who is anxious about the future."
 2. Jesus said "Be not therefore anxious for the morrow; for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Mt. 6:34.
 3. Living one day at a time enables us to overcome difficulties that would overcome us if we saw them all at once.
 4. It is good to encourage our young people to look to the future, but it can be hurtful to the present.
 - a. We can leave our pre-school child dissatisfied until he reached school; the grade school child is dissatisfied until Junior High, and so on until death comes, we continue to live in the future.
- D. Accept a worthwhile challenge for life.
1. Paul was able to undergo tremendous persecutions because he had a tremendous dedication to Christ. Phil. 3:13,14.
 2. Victor Frankel, in his book "Man's Search For Meaning, tells about his unfortunate existence in a concentration camp during World War II. He was herded together with undreds of othermen, fed and treated generally like an animal. Life became unbearable, in the filth and deprivation of the concentration camp. Men came to lose all of their previous civilized sensitivities and behaved almost like ferocious animals. Frankel makes the comment that many died and many others lost touch with reality. Those who survived, he observes, were those who continued to have purpose in life. Then, he suggests quite penetratingly, that in our modern high-complicated, sometimes ruthless twentieth century civilization, the ones who will survive are the ones who have worthwhile purpose in life. This that Christ provides for our life.

Conclusion.

1. We remember with appreciation the words of Longfellow, in his A Psalm of Life,

"Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art,
To dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul."
2. To those who have found life burdensome and overwhelming, we would say in the words of the familiar hymn,

"Bring Christ your broken life, so Marred by sin,
He will create anew, make whole again;
Your empty, wasted years He will restore,
And your iniquities remember no more."

Introd.

1. At this time of the year many of you have or will be busily engaged in taking inventory. You are examining last year with a view to ~~this~~ year. You are testing your profit or loss:
 - a. You might take for granted that you made a profit and not even check.
 - b. You might possibly get by with this for a year or two, but the day of reckoning would come and you might realize that you were operating at a loss.
2. The automobile industry has what they call "proving grounds" and all automobiles must be proven or tested before they are put on the market.
3. Paul's admonition. **2 Cor. 13:5. Notice:**
 - a. What to do?
 - (1) "Examine"—To test, prove, approve. (PEIRAZO)—
 - (2) "Prove"—Test, prove, with the expectation of approving.
 - (3) "Know yourselves"
 - b. Who? "Yourselves"
 - c. Why?
 - (1) "whether ye be in the faith". Cf. **Acts 6:7; Gal. 1:23; Jude 3.**
 - (2) "whether Christ be in you"
 - d. Results? Approved or Reprobrates
4. Let us observe:

Discussion.

- I. WHAT IS TO BE THE METHOD OF SELF-EXAMINATION?
 - A. It should be done with perfect candour or honesty. Its easy to examine someone else with complete honesty, but refuse to apply the same rule to our own lives.
 - B. It should be carried on as under the eye of the omniscient and all-searching God.
 - C. The standard by which we judge ourselves should be the high and infallible word of God because this is the standard by which we will be finally judged.
 - D. There should be no attempt to exalt self and run-down others.
- II. WHAT ARE TO BE THE FIELDS OF SELF-EXAMINATION?
 - A. In Christian Living. **Rom. 12 :1,2.**
 1. A man proves an ax by trying it under varying circumstances.
 2. A man proves his religion to himself and to others by seeing it work under varying circumstances.
 - B. In observance of the Lord's Supper. **1 Cor. 11:28.**
 - C. In love. **2 Cor. 8:24.**
 - D. In our works or deeds (test them by God's word). **Gal. 6:4; Eph. 5:10.**
 - E. In our growth. **1 Pet. 2:1,2; 2 Pet. 3:18; Heb. 5:12-14.** (Are you stronger spiritually than you were one years ago?)
 - F. In our interest for lost souls. **Rom. 10:1.**

Conclusion.

1. After the examination what do you find? Is Christ in you or have you just been pretending?
2. Are you a reprobate or a growing, dedicated Christian in God's service?

EXAMINE-PEIMAZO - To endeavor - scrutinize, entice,
discipline . . . assay,

PROVE-DOKIMAZO - To test, prove with the idea or
expectation of approving. Cf. Rom. 12:2

Reprobate-ADOKIMOS - not standing the test - rejected
Castaway -

Int.

1. When General George Pickett alerted his troops for the famous charge at Gettysburg, another commander, Wilcox, rode up to him and taking a flask of whiskey from his pocket said, "Pickett, take a drink with me. In an hour you will be in torment or in glory." Pickett refused to drink, saying: "I promised a little girl who is waiting and praying for me down in Virginia that I would keep fresh upon my lips, until we should meet again, the breath of the violets she gave me when we parted. Whatever my fate, Wilcox, I shall try to do my duty like a man." Thus, for his word's sake he rode to glory without the smell of liquor upon his breath. He was true to his word.
2. A commitment is a promise, vow, oath, trust, etc. Observe some uses of the word in the Bible.
 - a. **Gen. 39:8**—" . . . he hath committed all that he hath to my hand."
 - b. **1 Kgs. 14:27**—"Rehoboam" . . . committed them unto the hands of the chief of the guard."
 - c. **Psa. 31:5**—"Into thine hand I commit my spirit . . ."
 - d. **Rom. 6:16**—"Whosoever commiteth sin is the servant of sin . . ."

Discussion.

- I. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT WHEN THE JEWS MADE AN OATH OR TOOK A VOW TO THE LORD, THEY KEPT IT.
 - A. The law required that they keep any promise they made. **Deut. 23:21-23; Num. 30:2; Eccle. 5:4;**
 - B. So binding were vows under the law that Jephthah kept his rash vow. **Jud. 11:30f**
- II. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT THE FORCE OF COMMITMENT IS TRULY REALIZED.
 - A. Paul said unto the Jews were committed the oracles of God. **Rom. 3:2.**
 - B. A dispensation of the gospel was committed unto Paul. **1 Cor. 9:17; Cf. Gal. 2:7.**
 - C. "Keep that which is committed to thy trust. . . ." **1 Tim. 6:20.**
 - D. We have committed our souls to God. **2 Tim. 1:12.**
- III. TODAY WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE LORD.
 - A. When a boy is inducted into military service he is sworn in, to defend the constitution, to fight for his country, to march and fight under its flag.
 - B. When a couple are married vows are taken---commitment are made.
 - C. Christians are married to Christ. **Rom. 7:4.**
 1. Baptism was our marriage ceremony. **Rom. 6:1-5.**
 2. Bro. Marshall Keeble told at Freed-Hardeman in 1965 about going up into Kentucky to hold a meeting. He was staying with a widow who was the head of a Baptist Church. She went to hear him preach and he taught her the truth. She desired to be baptized, so she went to a trunk and got out the beautiful dress she had been married in years before. Some friends objected that she could not be baptized in that because it was her wedding dress. She said I am getting married to the Lord.
 - D. Preachers have a commitment to the Lord. I committed myself:
 1. To war a good warfare. **1 Tim. 1:18,19.**
 2. To be an example and to study. **1 Tim. 4:12,13,16.**
 3. To preach the word. **2 Tim. 4:1-5.**
 - E. Elders have a commitment to the Lord. Elders commit themselves:
 1. To be an example and to lead the flock. **Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2,3.**
 2. To labor in the Lord's work. **1 Thess. 5:12,13.**
 3. To watch in behalf of the members of the congregation. **Heb. 13:17.**
 - F. Deacons have a commitment to the Lord. You committed yourself:
 1. To use the office of a deacon well. **1 Tim. 3:13.**
 2. To serve this congregation. **Acts 6:1-7.**
 - G. Bible class teachers have a commitment to the Lord. You committed yourself:
 1. To mould the lives of those that you teach.
 2. To recognize the great responsibility of a teacher. **Jas. 3:1.**

H. Every Christian has a commitment to the Lord. When you confessed Jesus Christ as Lord and were baptized you committed yourself to:

1. Give self to the Lord. **Rom. 12 :1.**
2. Abound in the work of the Lord. **1 Cor. 15:58.** Aboy was asked if his father was a Christian. He replied, "Yes, but he is not working much at it just now." Now as many church workers as members.
3. To go to others with the gospel. **Mk. 16:15.**
4. To sing praises to God. **Eph. 5:19.**
5. To assemble with God's people. **Heb. 10:25.**
6. To grow in grace and knowledge. **2 Pet. 3:18.**
7. Love your brother. **1 Pet. 1:22.**
8. To do good unto all men. **Gal. 6:10.**
9. Assume a responsibility in the local congregation and its work.
 - a. Each Christian is to be identified with a local congregation and to work within its framework. This congregation belongs to all of us. This building and this work belongs to all of us.
 - b. In Nigeria three men were baptized by a missionary recently come from the United States. The date of their baptism was Sept. 26, 1964. Two of them lived in one small village and the third, Lazarus, lived about ten miles away. The preacher promised to meet with the the two the following Sunday. Lazarus promised to be there. The missionary didn't believe Lazarus would come for he said, "You see, I am from America where too many converts of a yester year would not walk ten blocks, much less ten miles, to study God's word. I am from America where people who have money sufficient to buy many Bibles still seldom see fit to seriously study one." He could have said I am from America where members of the church promise but feel no compulsion to keep it." It did not seem likely that Lazarus, who did not own a Bible, who could hardly feed; who was an elderly man with ten miles to walk, would come. No, by American standards, he would not be there. But he was, and a second and third time. The missionary went to his village to teach after his third walk. In six weeks, seventy-five souls were baptized in that one area. The First was Lazarus' own brother.

Conclusion.

1. God and Christ were and are faithful to their commitments for us.
 - a. God is faithful. **1 Cor. 1:9.**
 - b. Christ was true to his commitment. **Mt. 20:28.**
2. One that claims to be a child of God must be true to the commitments one has made to God. To be otherwise would be like a woman who has played the harlot insisting that she is true to her husband, or to a traitor claiming he is loyal to his country while giving secrets to the enemy. One cannot be true nor loyal to God and Christ without being true to the commitments one makes to them.
3. If you have been faithless to your commitments, now is the time to change all that.

Phil. 2:12-16

Introduction

1. Have you ever been around someone that murmured and complained all the time? How do you feel? Sometimes husbands and wives complain to each other about their feelings all the time.
2. Are you ~~one~~ that is never satisfied? Do you murmur and complain?
3. I propose to talk with you about the "sin murmuring."

DiscussionI. WHAT DOES "MURMUR" MEAN?

- A. It means to "mutter, murmur, grumble, say anything in a low tone."
- B. It is used of "indignant complaining."
- C. It means "indignant complaining or displeasure."
- D. Murmurings then stand for all sorts of ill-concealed, half checked, and half-uttered complaints.
- E. Disputings are murmurings come to the surface and breaking out into captious and angry discussions.
- F. A murmurer is one who complains. Jude 16.

II. SOME BIBLE EXAMPLES OF MURMURING AND WHY

- a. Three days after the children left Egypt they were murmuring about not having any water. Ex. 15:23,24; Cf. 17:1,3.
- B. They next murmured about not having food. Ex. 16:1,2. They later murmured because of the food they had. Num. 11:6.
- C. After the spies gave report about the giants they murmured about his. Num. 14:1,2; Deut. 1:27 (to be discontented.)
- D. Later they murmured about the authority of Moses and Aaron. Num. 16:3,11.
- E. After God caused the ground to swallow up Korah and company the people murmured against Moses and Aaron. Num. 16:41.
- F. The laborers in the vineyard murmured against the goodmen because of their pay. Mt. 20:11.
- G. Israel murmured against princes because they kept their word. Josh. 9:16-18.
- H. When Jesus ate with Matthew the scribes and Pharisees grumbled. Lk. 5:30.
- I. The Jews grumbled because Jesus said "I am the bread which come down from heaven." Jn. 6:41.
- J. There was murmuring in the early church. Acts 6:1 ff.

III. SOME WAYS IN WHICH WE MURMUR AND COMPLAIN TODAY.

- A. Some are called upon to suffer persecutions, sickness, etc. We may murmur and complain.
- B. We may murmur and complain about our jobs.
- C. We can murmur and complain about the work we do in the church of how much we give.
- D. We may murmur and complain about the way things are done.
 1. Question: Is it because they are done wrong?
 2. Question: Or because they are not done our way?

IV. SOME CONSIDERATIONS WHICH MAY ACT AS CURES OR CORRECTIVES.

- A. God's attitude toward murmuring.
 1. "But with many of them God was displeased....." 1 Cor. 10:5.
 2. "Neither murmur ye....." 1 Cor. 10:10.
 3. "Do all things without murmuring.1..." Phil. 2:14.
- B. The injurious moral effect of murmuring.
 1. It effects the murmur himself by making him unhappy.
 2. It effects society in general for it is very distressing to all that hear it.
- C. Christ example should keep us from murmuring in our trials. 1 Pet. 2:21-23.
- D. The hope of the future when all our reasons for complaints will be over.

1. Our light afflictions but for a moment. 2 Cor. 4:17.
2. Sufferings of this life not worthy to be compared. Rom. 8:18.
3. 1 Pet. 4:12,13.

CONCLUSION

1. Thankfulness for God's blessing will cure murmuring.
2. Greater dependence on God.

Introduction.

1. Man is a free moral agent and has the power to choose--Josh. 24:15.
2. Most of us choose to do about what we want to do. Our choices are generally governed by our likes and dislikes.
3. There are things in regard to this life that we often say men have to do:
 - a. Have to pay taxes--In this man has a choice-Pay taxes or go to jail.
 - b. Eat food and drink water--En this man has a choice--Eat food and drink and live or refuse and die.
4. But, it is our purpose in this lesson, to call to our attention three things in which we will have no choice, we're going to do them whether we want to or not. Every man is:

Discussion.

I. GOING TO DIE--HEBREWS 9:27.

- A. Although we are going to die, and cannot avoid it, we can determine what kind of death it will be, Meaning:
 1. Death to a Christian is:
 - a. A sleep--1 Thess. 4:13ff.
 - b. The putting off of this earthly tabernacle in readiness to receive a greater--2 Cor. 5:1.
 - c. Not the end of everything--1 Cor. 15:51-55.
 2. Death to the sinner is:
 - a. The end of all opportunity to prepare--This truth taught by the rich man and Lazarus--Luke 16:19-31.
 - b. Since he dies unprepared he will rise one day unprepared and be condemned--John 5:28,29.
- B. Friends, we do 't have the power to keep from dying, but we do have the power to die as a Christian.

II. GOING TO STAND IN THE JUDGMENT--MATT. 25:31; REV. 20:11,12.

- A. Stand in the judgment to give an account of ourselves--2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12--(To give an account means a reckoning; a statement and explanation, as to one's discharge of responsibilities; The act or fact of accounting, as to God, for one's conduct-Webster) Some of the things for which men are going to give an account.
 1. Christians and sinners alike, forevery idle word--Matt. 12:36,37.
 2. Christians for the way we have forgiven our brethren--Matt. 18:23-35.
 3. Christians for the way we have used our talents--Matt. 25:14-30.
 - a. Relate the account emphasizing verse 19. b. Some have buried their talents.
 4. Sinners, that speak evil of Christians, are going to give an account for it--1 Pet. 4:3-5.
 - a. This same thought is expressed in God's promise to Abraham--Gen. 12:1-3.
 - b. Men ought to be afraid to speak evil of C^hristians.
 5. For the way we have heard the word of God--Luke 8:18.
 6. Elders are going to give an account for every soul that is lost through their negligence--Hab. 13:17.
 7. Preachers are going to give an account for the way they have handled God's word--2 Cor. 4:1,2.
- B. Going to stand in the judgment to have our whole life made known--1 Tim. 5:24,25-Eccle. 12:14.
- C. To receive rewards and punishments.
 1. They that have done good an eternal home--Matt. 25:34.
 2. They that have done evil or failed to do good, eternal punishment--Matt. 25:41.
- D. Although we have no choice about standing in the judgment we do have a choice as to how we will stand.
 1. With boldness if we have loved God and our fellowman--1 John 4:17.
 2. With fear if unprepared.

III. GOING TO CONFESS CHRIST: ROMANS 14:11

- A. We should be willing to confess Jesus Christ--Phil. 2:9-11. Rom. 10:10.
- B. If we confess him in this life he will confess us before the Father--Matt. 10:32, 33.
- C. If we confess him in this life it will be unto salvation--Rom. 10:10.
- D. But, if we wait until we stand in the judgment to make that confession, which every man is going to make, it will be to condemnation.
1. By way of summary let us observe that every man is going to die, stand in the judgment, and confess the name of Christ. Our whole life made known--Rom. 10:10.
2. Friends, in view of the fact that you're going to confess the name of Christ, we are begging you to make that confession unto salvation--Rom. 10:10.

6. Elders are going to give an account for every soul that is lost--For the way we have heard the word of God--Luke 8:18.
5. Men ought to be afraid to speak evil of Christians--Gen. 12:1-3.
- a. This same thought is expressed in God's promise to Abraham--Gen. 12:1-3.
4. Sinners, that speak evil of Christians, are going to give an account for it--1 Pet. 4:3-5.
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- a. Relate the account emphasizing verse 19. b. Some have buried their talents.

2. Christians for the way we have given an account--Matt. 18:23-35.
1. Christians and sinners alike, foreverly idle words--Matt. 12:36, 37.
- fact of accounting, as to God, for one's conduct--Webster) Some of the things for which men are going to give an account.
- Rom. 14:12--(To give an account means a reckoning; a statement and explanation, as to one's discharge of responsibilities; The act or stand in the judgment to give an account of ourselves--2 Cor. 5:10; A. Stand in the judgment to give an account of ourselves--2 Cor. 5:10; B. Friends, we do 't have the power to keep from dying, but we do have the power to die as a Christian.

- B. Friends, we do 't have the power to keep from dying, but we do have the power to die as a Christian.
- a. The rich man and Lazarus--Luke 16:19-31.
- b. Since he dies unprepared he will rise one day unprepared and be condemned--John 5:28, 29.
3. Death to the sinner is:
- a. The end of all opportunity to prepare--This truth taught by the rich man and Lazarus--Luke 16:19-31.
- c. Not the end of everything--1 Cor. 15:51-55.

- d. The putting off of this earthly tabernacle in readiness to receive a greater--2 Cor. 5:1.
- a. A sleep--1 Thess. 4:13-15.
1. Death to a Christian is:
- a. Although we are going to die, and cannot avoid it, we can determine what kind of death it will be, meaning:
1. GOING TO DIE--HEBREWS 9:27.

- Discussion.
4. But, it is our purpose in this lesson, to call to our attention three things in which we will have no choice, we're going to do them whether we want to or not. Every man is:
- a. Have to pay taxes--In this man has a choice--Pay taxes or go to jail.
- b. Eat food and drink water--In this man has a choice--Eat food and drink and live or refuse and die.
3. There are things in regard to this life that we often say men have to do:
- a. Most of us choose to do about what we want to do. Our choices are generally governed by our likes and dislikes.
2. Man is a free moral agent and has the power to choose--Josh. 24:15.
1. Introduction.

Int.

1. Read or quote Phil. 1:1-21
2. On Tuesday evening Bro. Maurice Hall said "God has used the war situations and tension in Saigon to advance the gospel in Vietnam."
3. Listen to Paul: "But I would you should understnad, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel." 1:12.
 - a. Give a few comments on first eleven verses.
 - b. Paul was able to turn difficulties into doors because his life was Christ-centered and gospel-saturated. Listen:
 - (1) "Your fellowship in the gospel"—it means more to me than I can tell." 1:5.
 - (2) "the furtherance of the gospel"—the outcome of my imprisonment. 1:7.
 - (3) "the defense of the gospel"—this is my occupation and everybody who knows me knows it. 1:17
 - (4) "the faith of the gospel"—this is the scheme of reality in which I want all my Christian friends to stand. 1:27.
4. Libilities can become assets. Frustrations can be transformed into fulfillments. The very troubles that might stop the gospel can be captured and made to serve the gospel. It's not what happens to us, but how we react to what happens. It's not the tragic event but the turning of the event into something other than tragic—this is the victory.
5. Difficulties can become doors. But what are some difficulties that may become doors?

Dis.I. PHYSICAL HANDICAPS OR LIMITATIONS MAY BECOME DOORS.

- A. Paul's physical handicap or limitation had become a door to the furtherance of the gospel. How? 1:12.
 1. "So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places." 1:13. Wider publicity for the gospel.
 2. "And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds . . ." 1:14. Greater courage for the brethren.
- B. Many doors of opportunity were opened to Helen Keller through her blindness.
- C. Fannie Crosby wrote many of the songs that we sing in our worship to God even though she was blind.
- D. Leslie Fortune, paralyzed from the waist down has had many doors opened to him since his paralyzis.
- F. Yesrs ago a professor in Richmond, Virginia, was lecturing to his students and quoted Rom. 8:28. One of his student said: "But, professor, you don't believe that 'all things work together for good'—all the pain and suffering and misery—do you?2 His reply "The things themselves may not be good, but you can make them work together for good." Before that day's sun went down his wife was killed in and automobile accident and he was left a cripple. When the President of the college visited him he said "Tell my students that Rom. 8:28 still holds good." Before a year had passed he died. They inscribed Rom. 8:28 on his tomb. Grippled, he conguered. Physically deprived, he grew spiritually.

II. PERSECUTIONS OPEN DOORS.

- A. God opened a door of faith unto the gentiles to Paul on his first journey even in the midst of stoning. A. 14:27, 19ff.
- B. A "great door" was opened in ~~Corinth~~ Ephesus even though the adversaries were many. 1 Cor. 16:9. EPHESUS
- C. A "door of utterance was opened while he was in ponds." Col. 4:3.
- D. The persecution of the Jerusalem church was that which opened doors. A. 8:1-4.

III. THWARTING OF ONE'S OWN DESIRES MAY SEEM DISASTEROUS AT THE TIME, BUT MAY OPEN DOORS.

- A. Paul wanted to preach the word in Asia, but God forbade him. Acts 16 :6-8.
- B. But God was opening a door for Paul. A. 16:9ff; 2 Cor. 2:12.
- C. One should not struggle against the hindrances of God, but use them to open greater doors.

IV. DIFFICULTIES THAT SEEM USELESS AT THE TIME MAY OPEN DOORS OF HELPFULNESS LATER.

- A. Joseph's sale into Egypt seemed useless and terrible at the time, but God used it "to save much people alive." **Gen. 50:20.**
- B. Joseph's imprisonment seemed unfair since he had done no wrong, but through that occurred it opened a door to a position of prominence and power. **Gen. 39,40.**
- C. Ahasuerus's choice of Esther to be his queen may have seemed adifficulty for her, but it opened a door of salvation for her people later.
- D. Daniel's night in the lion's den for refusing to quit praying may seem foolish to some, but it opened the door for opportunity to glorify God's name. **Dan. 6.**
- E. The young high school girl's refusal to reign as Queen of the High School Ball may look out of place. But once she gave her reasons why, it brought the whole school to their feet in respect for her convictions.

Conclusion.

1. Difficulties can become doors, frustrations can become joys, if you and I will let them.
2. In the midst of difficulties Paul was thankful and joyful. **Phil. 1:14-21.**

The Conversion of Saul

Acts 9:1-18

Int.

1. Read or quote Acts 9:1-18.
2. There are four main points we want notice in the next few lessons about the conversion of Saul.
 - a. First, what is conversion.
 - b. Second, what does one do in conversion.
 - c. Third, the actual conversion of saul
 - d. Fourth, the conversion of Saul becomes one of the greatest proofs of the truthfulness of Christianity.
3. Let's consider:

Dis.

I. WHAT IS CONVERSION?

- A. It means "to turn about, turn towards; a turning from and a turning to."
- B. The original Greek word Strepho, occurs 18 times in the N.T., and is translated turn, in every instance, except Mt. 18:13. In all these instances except one, that which was turned, turned itself.
- C. The original Greek word epistrepho, occurs 30 times.
 1. It is translated turn 22 times.
 2. It is translated convert or converted 8 times.
 3. In a large majority of these cases that which was turned turned itself.
 4. There is nothing in the word itself showing which way the turning is, whether from good to bad or bad to good. The context must determine: For example:
2 Pet. 2:22.
- D. "Converted to God, means turned to God, and nothing else."

II. WHAT DOES ONE DO IN CONVERSION OR IN TURNING TO GOD?

- A. A person that turns to God properly or in the Bible sense must undergo three distinct divine changes:
 1. A distinct divine change in the heart.
 2. A distinct divine change in the life, or character.
 3. A distinct divine change in the state or relation.
- B. In order to these three distinct changes God has three distinct appointments:
 1. Faith is appointed to change the heart.
 2. Repentance is appointed to change the life.
 3. Immersion is appointed to change the relation.
- C. Let's notice first the distinct divine change in the heart.
 1. What is meant by a distinct divine change in the heart? Such a change destroys the love of sin and establishes the love of God in the heart.
 2. What produces this change? Faith, as we have seen, but to illustrate more fully let's suppose a man of 45 in our community. (Check: Gospel Preacher, Vol. 1, p. 138ff)
 3. One grand mistake supposed by many about the change of heart is that it is evidence of pardon. "Pardon is not a change in us, but an act of pardoning in heaven for us." Ill. A man condemned to die. Pardon is obtained in Nashville, but he hasn't heard about it yet. Does he rejoice. No. Because he doesn't know it yet. It does not take place in him, but in Nashville for him.
- D. Now let's notice the distinct divine change in life.
 1. A change in ~~life~~ ^{heart} is useless unless there is a corresponding change in life.
 2. Repentance is appointed to change the life because it means a change of purpose.
A. 17:30; 2 Cor. 7:8-11.
 3. Repentance does not change the past life, but the penitent regrets the past life and looks to the future.
 4. It's only when the sinner is changed in heart--the love of sin destroyed, and changed in mind or life so as to quit practicing sin that he is a proper subject of pardon.
- E. Next, let's observe the ~~change~~ ^{CHANGE} of state or relation.

1. Though the sinner is changed in heart and mind by faith and repentance, his relation remains unchanged. When Israel of old followed Moses to the Red Sea they were changed in heart by their faith in him and changed in mind by there following him, but their state or relation to Egypt remained the same.
2. It is immersion into Christ that changes the state. It has not power to change the heart and life. That's why you find good people that have not been immersed and you find bad people that have been immersed.
3. Illustration:
 - a. No two persons can properly enter a marriage relationship without three changes
 - (1) Change of heart
 - (2) Change of mind or life
 - (3) Change of state
 - b. When they begin to date their heart is gradually changed, and then you begin to see a change in their life. But has their state changed? When does it change? Not until the marriage ceremony.

Con.

1. The person whose heart has been changed by faith, whose life has been changed by repentance and whose state has been changed by immersion is a converted person.
2. Just like on Pentecost and Acts 3. Peter told them to "turn" because faith has already changed their heart, repentance has changed their life and nothing remained but a change of relation---this was the turning commanded.

CONVERSIONS IN ACTS (VI) SAUL OF TARSUS

Steve Miller

BACKGROUND

Doremus Hayes noted the impact Saul's conversion had on the world when he wrote:

The greatest event in the history of the human race was the birth of Jesus. The greatest event in the life of Jesus was his resurrection from the dead. After these two moments of primary importance in the history of the human race and of the Christian Church, the next most momentous occurrence in their history was the conversion of Paul (*Paul and His Epistles*, p. 27).

In Paul's inspired words, he reflected on his early life: "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women" (Acts 22:3-4) and "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless" (Phil. 3:5-6).

At the stoning of Stephen, "the witness laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul" (Acts 7:58). Here is the first mention of Saul of Tarsus in the New Testament, Paul the persecutor! Concerning Stephen, "Saul was consenting unto his death" (Acts 8:1). "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison" (Acts 8:3).

Saul was very zealous in his opposition to Christianity. "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest. And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem" (Acts 9:1-2).

Later, Paul reflected on his previous lifestyle, as, "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious" (1 Tim. 1:13). He counted himself the "chief of sinner" (1 Tim. 1:15).

HIS CONVERSION

"And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is

hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink" (Acts 9:3-9).

The Lord then appeared to Ananias and sent him unto Saul (Acts 9:10-19). Ananias obeyed and went to Saul (Acts 9:17-18; 22:12-16). Ananias followed the instructions of Christ and went to the house of Judas where Saul had been instructed to stay. When Saul regained his sight, Ananias stated: "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:14-16).

What did Saul do? He believed in Christ (Acts 22:10). He repented of his sins and was willing to obey the Lord, "And I said, What shall I do, Lord?" (Acts 22:10). He was baptized. He was not a Christian until he had been baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:26-27).

Jesus Christ appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus to make him an apostle (Acts 26:16-18). One of the qualifications of being an apostle was to have seen the risen Lord (2 Peter 1:16). Saul was chosen by the Lord (Acts 9:15-16).

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus to the Christian faith is one of the great evidences of Christianity.

The remarkable change effected in Paul's life by his conversion affords one of the strongest internal proofs that Biblical teaching and history are true, especially in their testimony to Christ. How to account for Paul's conversion has been a conundrum for skeptics and liberalists second only to the problem of Christology. If Paul's account of his own conversion is true, it establishes the truth of Christ and Christianity. Thus, we see its crucial place in Christian Apologetics. It is another keystone in the arch (L. S. Keyser, *A System Of Christian Evidence*, p. 117).

Saul went from being a persecutor of Christians to being a faithful disciple of Christ. He received remission of sins after he was immersed (Acts 22:16). He was called to be an apostle and minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ.--13 Preston Estates, Paintsville, KY 41240-8641.

~~~~~

*"We need to be careful lest we become so involved in the mechanics of the Scriptures that we miss the message of the Scriptures."*



(Continued From Page 19):

to maintain their faith in a hostile educational setting, as in our state schools. This was and is a great idea! Why do brethren who operate our schools use false teachers, allow them to teach their error and then to remain silent when they do teach error? With the teaching of Grady, and others like him, why should brethren pay the extra funds to send their children to schools, operated by brethren, where their faith can be undermined and destroyed, rather than strengthened? Why do brethren send their money to colleges who allow teaching to destroy the very unity of the church for which Jesus prayed (John 17)?

To some our colleges have become more sacred and more important than the church of our Lord for which He shed His blood (Acts 20:28). The colleges, and many of their teachers along with some brethren, believe that what is taught is above being questioned.

When questioned one is often rebuked with the remark: Who are you to question any college or teacher in a college? Many assume, and wrongly so, that whatever is taught in our colleges is always in harmony with the Bible. We can prove this is not the case. However, this ought not be so.

**The Lord did not die for ANY college among us. The church of our Lord is above ANY college among us. The church began without ANY college and does not need our colleges to survive and to be strong.**

I am not opposed to Christian colleges. We have three children who attended and graduated from two different Christian colleges. We need to understand the Scriptures, the role of the church, the purpose of our colleges and the amenability of all men to God and His Word, Christian and non-Christian.--Editor, 148 Alta Street, Marietta, OH 45750-2607.

~~~~~

To sin is human; to persist in it is idiocy.

(Continued From Page 22):

could eat and live forever. If sin had not entered the picture, Adam and Eve could have lived and would still be married to each other. Alas, sin did enter (Gen. 3:1-13) and with sin came death (Gen. 3:3,19). Marriage, by God's design is for a lifetime. Since death ends the mate's life, it also ends the marriage. By Divine design marriage is to last until "death do us part" (Rom. 7:1-4; 1 Cor. 7:39).

What do you think? One man and one woman enjoined by God in a lifelong relationship committed to fulfilling each other's spiritual, emotional and physical needs. It is so simple! It just might work. After all, it was designed to work this way.--P. O. Box 351, Hundred, WV 26575.

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Int.

1. Read or quote Gal. 1:1-24.
2. Galatia was one of the fourteen states or provinces of Asia Minor. The inhabitants of Galatia were a Celtic race. In physique they resembled the Germans—men of large stature, fair skin, blue eyes and light hair. In temperament they were restless and impulsive.
 - a. Paul preached to the Galatians on his second journey and established churches. A. 16:6.
 - b. On his third journey he "went over all the country of Galatia and phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples." A. 18:23.)
3. The main lesson in Galatians 1 and 2 is Paul's defense of his apostleship.
 - a. First, he declares that he did not receive his message from man. Gal. 1:6-12a.
 - b. Second, it came by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Gal. 1:12b.
 - c. Third, he gave several reasons to prove his points.
 - (1) He couldn't have learned it from his past. Gal. 1:13,14.
 - (2) Immediately after his conversion he preached in Damascus. Gal. 1:17.
 - (3) It was three years before he went to Jerusalem and then he saw just one of the apostles and stayed but 15 days. Gal. 1:18.
 - (4) 14 years later he went up to Jerusalem and told the gospel he preached to the Gentiles and the apostles accepted him and it. Gal. 2:1-10.
4. But there is another lesson that is less prominent, but not less important, and certainly not less needed.
5. Let's consider the "Fickleness of Human Nature."

Discussion.

I. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF FICKLE?

A. Webster defines fickle thus:

1. "False, deceitful, inconstant . . ."
2. "Marked by lack of steadfastness, constancy, stability; given to ready change, inconstancy, whimsical choice, or unpredictable variability."

B. In view of the meaning of fickle, a fickle person is described in a number of ways in the Bible:

1. Jesus described him as one that hath not root in himself. Mt. 13 :20,21.
2. Paul shows that such a one is a child "carried about with every wind of doctrine." Eph. 4:14.
3. Such a one, as James shows "is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." Jas. 1:6.

II. SOME EXAMPLES OF FICKLENESS OF HUMAN NATURE.

- A. Ahab's servants, faithful to him while he lived, willing turned over the heads of his 70 sons to Jehu. 2 Kgs. 10:1ff.
- B. When Jesus Christ made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem the people "took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." Jn. 12:13. But one week later these same people shouted "crucify him." Jn. 19:15.
- C. When Paul and Barnabas healed a cripple at Lystra the people shouted "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men" (A. 14:11) but at the persuasion of certain Jews they stoned Paul (A. 14:19).
- D. When Paul preached at Galatia they received him as an angel, "even as Christ Jesus" and would have plucked out their eyes for him (Gal. 4:14,15) but certain false teachers quickly turned them against him.
- E. Fickleness is a trait possessed by many of our day.
 1. We see it in basketball fans who idolize a team as long as it wins, but turn against it when it loses.
 2. We see it in the rise and ebb of popular applause for public leaders. President Theodore Roosevelt returned from Africa, Egypt and Europe with rare specimens for the Smithsonian Institute and crowned with the highest academic honor of Great Britain was welcomed by a million shouting, cheering, waving

enthusiasts in New York. The same day he said to his sister "and they soon will be throwing rotten apples at me."

3. We see it when a new preacher moves to work with a congregation. Members run over themselves to do him honor, but time cools the ardor and everything is wrong. They fickle members loved him so much they almost ate him, and later when he bears down with the gospel, such members wish they had eaten him up.
4. We see it in every congregation. There are many members of the church that the elders never worry about and there are others that give them ulcers.

III. WHAT ARE SOME CAUSES AND CURES FOR FICKLENESS?

- A. A desire for a change.
 1. "Give us a king to judge us." 1 Sam. 8:6.
 2. The Galatians were satisfied with the gospel for a while until something different thing came along. Gal. 1:6.
 3. Too many today are looking for novelty and gimmicks, etc.
- B. Ignorance. Rom. 10:1.
- C. Good words and fari speeches. Rom. 16:17,18.
 1. Outward appearance changes us too often. 1 Sam. 16:7.
 2. We can easily pay too much attention to the way one says something rather to what one says.
 3. One church member remarked concerning his handsome preacher, that it was worth his salary just to see him walk down the street.
- D. Itching ears. 2 Tim. 4:1-4.
 1. If one desires to hear merely what pleases then one will change according as one is pleased.
 2. If one desires to hear what pleases then a former friend may be considered an enemy because they tell us truth. Gal. 4:16.
- E. Inexperience or Immaturity. Heb. 5:12-14.
 1. A child can easily be moved from one thing to another.
 2. An immature member of the church can easily be swayed.

Conclusion

1. A fickle member is the very opposite of what a Christian is supposed to be. Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 15:58; Phil. 1:27.
2. What kind of member are you? Are you established in the truth?

Int.

1. In 1967 the Presbyterian Church is coming out with a new Creed. This church will be doing something in the Creed that no church has ever done before. "Speak of the Bible without bearing witness to its inspiration." Does this emphasize the thinking of our time that Christianity is out of date and needs revision. If so, does this not emphasize more the need of lessons on Evidences.
2. Last Sunday evening we noted a lesson on conversion and studied seven main points:
 - a. Conversion means a turning to God.
 - b. In conversion one undergoes three distinct changes:
 - (1) Change of heart
 - (2) Change of mind or life.
 - (3) Change of state
 - c. These three distinct changes are brought about by:
 - (1) Faith
 - (2) Repentance
 - (3) Baptism
3. Now in our study of the conversion of Saul, if he was truly converted, we will expect to find three distinct changes brought about by these three distinct divine appointments.
4. Let's consider:

Conclusion.I. WAS THERE A DISTINCT DIVINE CHANGE OF HEART IN SAUL?

- A. In order to answer this question we need to observe the kind of man Saul was.
 1. He was a very religious man. Gal. 1:13; A. 26:5.
 2. He was a zealous individual. Gal. 1:14;
 3. He was man with a good conscience. A. 23:1.
 4. He was a man that thought he was doing right. A. 26:9.
 5. He was a well educated man. A. 22:3.
 6. He was a persecutor of the church. A. 8:3.
 - a. He made havock of the church.
 - b. He was breathing threatenings and slaughter.
 - c. He persecuted it unto death. A. 22:4; A. 8:1.
 7. Even though Saul had all these great points he was the chief of sinners. *Tim. 1:15*
- B. A change of heart means one dies to the love of sin and establishes God in his heart. It is very evident that Saul died to the love of his former manner of life.
- C. Since a change of heart is brought about by faith, if Saul was changed in heart, then we would expect to find evidence of faith.
 1. Faith comes by hearing the word of God. Rom. 10:17.
 2. Saul heard God's instructions and shewed his faith by obeying them. A. 9:6-8.

II. WAS THERE A DISTINCT DIVINE CHANGE IN THE MIND AND LIFE OF SAUL?

- A. Saul's mind before the occasion was to destroy Christianity. A. 8:4.
- B. Saul's life before this occasion was busily filled with destructive acts to the church. A. 7,8,9.
- C. After the Lord appeared to him on the road he went three days without sight, neither did eat nor drink. Also he prayeth. A. 9:9,11.
- D. Since repentance brings about a change of mind its very evident that Saul's mind was changed which resulted in a change of his life.

III. WAS THERE A DISTINCT DIVINE CHANGE OF STATE IN SAUL?

- A. Some would say "Certainly there was a change of state since Saul was saved or converted when the light shined around him." But, if so:
 1. He was saved before he knew the Lord, so he would be converted even before his heart was changed. A. 9:5.
 2. He was saved before he even had faith which changes the heart. A. 9:3,4.

- B. Others would say "Certainly his state was changed since he was saved or converted somewhere on the road." But, if so:
1. He didn't know it. A. 9:6.
 2. The Lord didn't know it. A. 9:6.
 3. Ananias didn't know it. A. 9:17.
 4. He was yet in his sins. A. 22:16.
 5. He was an unhappy saved man. A. 9:9.
- C. Still others would say "Certainly he was saved or his state changed before Ananias came because he called him Brother Saul." A common manner of address among the Jews. Cf. A. 2:29,37.
- D. It is true that faith and repentance had already changed Saul's heart and mind, but if baptism is God's appointment to change the state, and it is, then We would expect to find baptism a part of Saul's conversion.
1. Ananias told him to ". . . arise and be baptized, and wash away they sins . . .". A. 22:16.
 2. ". . . and arose, and was baptized." A. 9:18.

Conclusion.

1. My friends, in these first two less we have observed that true Bible conversion involves (1) A change of heart, (2) A change of mind and life, and (3) A change of state. These changes are brought about by (1) Faith, (2) Repentance, and (3) Baptism.
2. The two main purpose have been to impress us with (1) true Bible conversion and (2) to determine if Saul's conversion was a true conversion.
3. Having determined that it is a true conversion then any evidence based on it can be accepted with reservation.

Introduction.

1. In Galatians e the apostle Paul shows a contrast of the bondage of the law and the freedom in Christ.
2. In Gal. 5:1-12 Paul shows that to serve the law was to abandon Christ.
 - a. The free are commanded to stay free. 5:1.
 - b. It's either circumcision or Christ. Which? 5:2-4.
 - c. The teue basis of hope. Gal. 5:5,6.
 - d. A friendly and stern word. Gal. 5:7-12.
3. In Gal. 5:13-6:18 Paul gives some stern warnings against abusing our liberty in Christ.
4. The above thoughts constitute the basis lesson of Gal. 5, but in the midst are found other great lessons. From this chapter we lift four great verses for our consideration.

Discussion.

- I. GALATIANS 5:1---"STAND FAST THEREFORE IN THE LIBERTY WHEREWITH CHRIST HATH MADE US FREE, AND BE NOT ENTANGLED AGAIN WITH THE YOKE OF BONDAGE."
 - A. "Stand fast" means "stability and steadfastness."
 - B. In the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.
 1. The service of a slave is a service of bondage and fear. (Old Law)
 2. The service of a child is one of joy and love. (The New Law)
 - C. The Galatians were about to become entangled agin with the bondage and requirements of the law. Cf. A. 15 :10.
 - D. It is possible for usto fail to stand fast and become entangled agin in the ways of the world. 2 Pet. 2:20-22.
- II. GALATIANS 5:7---"YE DID RUN WELL: WHO DID HINDER YOU THAT YOU SHOULD NOT OBEY THE TRUTH?"
 - A. "Ye did run well"
 1. We are admonished to run the race well. 1 Cor. 9:24-27.
 2. We are to lay aside everything that would hinder us from running well. Heb. 12:1,2.
 - B. "Who did hinder you"
 1. Paul assures them that he had not hindered. v. 8.
 2. So many people allow people and things to hinder them.
 - a. Some allow friends to hinder. Some would not hesitate to leave friends to go to work, but the same ones will not leave them to go to worship.
 - b. Some allow family to hinder. This is more understandable than allowing friends but neither is excusable. Mt. 10:37.
 - c. Some allow pleasure to hinder. One must not allow it to choke the word. Lk. 8:14.
 - d. Some allow business. This is dangerous. Mt. 16:26.
- III. GALATIANS 5:15---"BUT IF YE BITE AND DEVOUR ONE ANOTHER, TAKE HEED THAT YE BE NOT CONSUMED ONE OF ANOTHER." (ASV---"BUT IF YE BE BITING AND EATING UP ONE ANOTHER.")
 - A. "Biting and eating up" are images drawn from carnivorous animals furiously fighting with each other.
 - B. "Devour"---"eat up" here means that intense desire to vex and damage an antagonist.
 - C. The idea is taken from wild beasts which tear their victims to pieces till nothing is left.
 - D. In Acts 7 we have a scene of people actually rushing upon Stephen grinding and gnashing their teeth. Acts 7:54.
 - E. Cannibalism---(1) The eating of human flesh by a human being; (3) the pecking and tearing of the live flesh of its own members in the domestic poultry flock. (4) the act or practice of weakening or destroying a competitor or rival.

F. Spiritual cannibalism is all too prevalent among God's people.

IV. Galatians 5:17---"FOR THE FLESH LUSTETH AGAINST THE SPIRIT, AND THE SPIRIT AGAINST THE FLESH: AND THESE ARE CONTRARY THE ONE TO THE OTHER: SO THAT YE CANNOT DO THE THINGS THAT YE WOULD."

- A. The constant battle between the spirit and the flesh is the reason we cannot always do the things we would.
- B. A recognition of the works of the flesh will help us to overcome the flesh. vv. 19-21.
- C. A recognition of the fruit of the Spirit will help us to follow the leadership of the Spirit. vv. 22,23.

Conclusion.

1. We must follow the directions of the Holy Spirit.
2. If we follow the directions of the Spirit we will produce the fruit of the Spirit in our life.

Introduction.

1. How many of you have ever been to London, England? Now is there anyone here that does not believe London is a real place? Why do you believe there is a place like London even when you have never seen it? "Oh, the evidence is sufficient to convince me!"
2. In the same manner one accepts or rejects Christianity on the basis of evidence. Cf. Jn. 20:30,31. Now, if you are as honest about Christianity as you are about London, you will readily accept it if the evidence is sufficient.
3. In what way then does the conversion of Saul constitute evidence?
4. Let's consider:

Discussion.I. THE EFFORTS OF TWO SKEPTICS TO DISPROVE CHRISTIANITY.

- A. George Lyttleton was born at Haggley, Worcestershire, England, January 17, 1709, and died on Tuesday morning, August 22, 1773, aged sixty-four years.
 1. He belonged to a very distinguished family.
 2. He was educated at Eton and Oxford.
 3. He soon entered Parliament and for many years the name of George Lyttleton was seen in every account of debate in the House of Commons.
 4. He was rapidly advanced to some of the highest posts that England had to offer.
 5. He wrote many letters and books.
 6. He was at first led to reject the Christian religion.
- B. (George Lyttleton and his friend, Gilbert West, fully persuaded the Bible was an imposture set out to prove it. Lyttleton chose the "Conversion of Saul" and West chose "The Resurrection of Christ." Both men sat down to their respective tasks full of prejudice.
- C. Later, in a letter to Gilbert West, Lyttleton wrote: "The conversion was of itself a demonstration sufficient to prove Christianity to be a divine revelation.")

II. THE PROCEDURE FOLLOWED BY LYTTLETON.

- A. First, he brings before us all the facts we have in the Bible about the conversion of Saul. Acts 9,22,26; Gal. 1:11-16; Phil. 3:4-8; 1 Tim. 1:12,13; 1 Cor. 15:8; 2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1.
- B. Second, he laid down four propositions which he considers exhausts all the possibilities of the case.
 1. Either Paul was "an imposter who said what he knew to be false with an intent to deceive", or
 2. He was an enthusiast who imposed on himself by the force of an over heated imagination", or
 3. He was "deceived by the fraud of others", or, finally
 4. What he declared to be the cause of his conversion did all really happen; "And therefore the Christian religion is a divine revelation."

III. THE FIRST PROPOSITION, "WAS PAUL AN IMPOSTER?"

- A. Is the story of Paul conversion so often repeated in Acts and the Epistles a fabrication, put forth by a designing man with the deliberate purpose and intention of deceiving/
- B. This raises the question of motive. What could have induced him while on his way to Damascus, filled with implacable hatred against his whole sect, to turn around and become a disciple of Christ?
 1. Was it wealth?
 - a. All the wealth was on the side of those he left.
 - b. He cast in his lot with those that were poor.
 - c. (1) Some sold their possessions to help others.

(2) Saul suffered hunger many times. 1 Cor. 4:11,12.

(3) Saul worked with his own hands. A. 20:33,34.

(4) Saul is the picture of a shivering old man in a Roman prison near the end.

2/ Was it reputation?

2 Tim. 4:13

a. Reputation was on the side of those he left.

B. Those with whom he united were held in universal contempt.

(1) Their leader had been put to death as a common criminal.

(2) The leaders were ignorant fishermen.

(3) They were accounted as filth of the earth. 1 Cor. 4:13.

3. Was it power he was after?

a. It is true that men have put forth spiritual claims to gain power and prominence Was this true of Saul?

b. His whole career shows the absence of self seeking.

(1) He didn't interfere with civil power or try to form any temporal power of his own.

(2) He assumed no preminence over other Christians.

(3) He didn't consider himself worthy to be called an apostle.

(4) He spoke of his co-workers as "fellow-laborers."

(5) He didn't flatter the churches or pander to them, but rebuked them severely.

4. Was his motive the gratification of any other passion?

a. Many have pretended to receive divine revelations as a pretext in order to indulge in loose conduct.

b. Paul's whole life is to the contrary.

(1) 1 Thess. 2:10.

(2) 2 Cor. 7:2.

5. Was it a pious fraud? That is, did Paul pretend to receive a divine revelation in order to give him prestige in advancing Christianity?

a. Saul had set out to destroy Christianity, but why the sudden change regarding the unpopular teaching of Christ?

(1) Would he have endured the loss of all things for a fraud? Phil. 3:4-8

(2) Would he have spent such a life for a fraud?

(3) Only the strongest conviction he had received a revelation could have changed him.

b. But suppose Paul had attempted such a fraud without any motive. He would have failed.

(1) He could not have become so adept in the mysteries of Christ through that learned from those that looked upon him as their worst enemy.

(2) Had he made up the story he would have located it in a place so there could be no witnesses to refute it. (Cf. Joseph Smith and the Golden Plates)

(a) His conversion took place in the open with witnesses.

(b) Had it not really occurred the witnesses could have refuted what Paul said.

(c) Paul told Agrippa none of these things were done in a corner. A. 26:26.

(d) If he were an imposter then all his miracles were simply tricks. Could he have converted the Gentile world on deception against all the powers of evil?

Conclusion.

After viewing the first proposition we must conclude (1) That Paul was not a cheat telling a trumped-up story about his conversion, and (2) if he were he could not have succeeded.

Int.

1. Read or quote Gal. 6:1-6.

Discuss, in the introduction, verses 1,3,4.

- a. The responsibility of Christians in restoring the erring. Cf. Jas. 5:19,20.
- b. The responsibility of thinking soberly and humbly.
- c. The responsibility of proving one's own work.

3. Verses 2 and 5 teach the fact of burdens.

- a. The value and worth of burdens should be known. They develop the best in us.
 - (1) A diamond is a lump of coal that stayed on the job when the pressure was on.
 - (2) A gem is not polished without rubbing and a man is not perfected without trails. Jas. 1:2,3.
- b. Difficulties strengthen and life is made useful.
- c. Life is such that we all have burdens.
 - (1) The circus is a place of fun, but even if one dies the show must go on.
 - (2) Rich and poor alike have burdens.
- d. In life there are physical, mental and spiritual burdens.
 - (1) Christ manifested his interest in the physical when he healed the blind.
 - (2) He manifested his interest in the mental when he raised Lazarus.
 - (3) He manifested his interest in the spiritual when he died for us.

4. Our text reveals that there are:

- a. Burdens we help one another bear and (2) burdens each one must bear.

Dis.

I. "BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS AND SO FULFILL THE LAW OF CHRIST." GAL. 6:2.

A. "Burdens" (boros) has reference to a crushing load.

- 1. These are burdens in which the Christian may reasonably accept help.
- 2. These are burdens in which Christians must practice helping one another.

B. What are some burdens in which we must share loads?

1. Burdens of sorrow.

- a. Paul said the sorrowing of a brother should be ours. 1 Cor. 12:26.
- b. I cannot take your place, but I can put my hand on your shoulder and let you know that I stand by.

2. Burdens of sickness and care.

- a. Christians are to have the same care one for the other. 1 Cor. 12:25.
- b. I cannot be sick for you but I can mow your lawn, cook your meal, carry you to the doctor.
- c. The doctor cannot be sick for you but he can lighten and shorten your sickness by his advice.
- d. Your boss cannot be sick for you, but he can continue your pay while you are sick.

3. Burdens of weakness.

- a. Christ bore the burden of our sin and weakness. 1 Pet. 2:24.
- b. The strong are to bear the infirmities of the weak. Rom. 15:1.

4. Burdens of sin.

- a. Sin is a bondage (Rom. 6:17); a weight (Heb. 12:1); and sentence of death over us (Rom. 6:23).

C. Who are the people that we can help bear their burdens?

- 1. You can help the elders bear their burdens.
 - a. By causing them no undue concern about your faithfulness.
 - b. By taking part in the work they plan.
 - c. By commending them for their vision.
 - d. By offering to help teach, visit, etc.
- 2. You can help bear the burdens of the song leader.
 - a. By arriving on time and not distracting by arriving late.
 - b. By sitting near the front and joining wholeheartedly in the singing.
 - c. By commending him for his efforts and work.

3. You can heap bear the burdens of the Bible School directory and teachers.
 - a. By being present for the classes.
 - b. By studying your lessons.
 - c. By bringing others.

II. "FOR EVERY MAN SHALL BEAR HIS OWN BURDEN." GAL. 6:5.

A. "Burden" means responsibility—it is like a soldier's pack.

1. Christ bears some burdens for us. Mt. 11:28-30.
2. Others can help us bear some burdens. Gal. 6:2.
3. But there are some burdens that we must bear ourselves.

B. What are some of these burdens that each one must bear?

1. You must bear your own cross in following Christ. Lk. 14:27.
2. You must bear the consequences of your own sin. You may repent, receive pardon, but you may still suffer the consequences. Cf. David.
3. You may need to bear the burden of disfigurement.
4. You must bear the burden of making a choice of whom you will serve. Heb. 11:23-27. Josh. 24:15.
5. You must bear the burden of Christian duties. Prayer, singing, visiting, etc.
6. You must face the death. Heb. 9:27.
7. You must face the judgment. 2 Cor. 5:10.

Conclusion.

1. The two verses we have noticed seem contradictory, but it is not really so you can see.
2. The kingdom of God is in reality a community of souls in which each must bear his own burden as well as each helping the other to bear his burdens.

Int.

1. In our previous lesson we began to notice the efforts of two skeptics to disprove the Bible. One of the skeptics took the "conversion of Saul".
2. Lord Lyttleton laid down four propositions which exhausts all possibilities of the case. We noted the first one last week regarding the possibility of Paul being an imposter. It was impossible!
3. Now let's observe:

Dis.

I. WAS PAUL A DELUDED ENTHUSIAST WHOSE OVERHEATED IMAGINATION IMPOSED ON HIM SO THAT HE IMAGINED TO BE TRUE THAT WHICH HAD NEVER REALLY TAKEN PLACE?

A. Who is an enthusiast?

- a 1. He is a person who is or believes himself to be inspired or possessed by a divine power or spirit.
 - b 2. A person who is visionary, extravagant or excessively zealous in his religion beliefs or emotions----rapture, madness, marked emotionalism.
- 2 B. What are the elements that make up the character of this type of man?

1. Great heat of temper.

- a 1) a. It is ~~true~~ Paul had intense fervor, but his zeal was his servant and not his master.
- 2) b. He had tact which proves self-control---he became all things to all men. 1 Cor. 9:19-23.
- 3) c. Paul did not have the blind, inconsiderate, indecent zeal of an enthusiast.

2. Melancholy. (Depression of spirits, moody)

- a 1) a. There was great sorrow over his former persecution of the church, but no gloomy melancholy such as fanatics inflict.
- b. In whatever state he was he had learned to be content. Phil. 4:10.

3. Ignorance. Paul could not be accused of ignorance. A. 22:3.

4. Credulity. Belief or readiness of belief on slight or uncertain evidence.

- a 1) a. Paul could not be a stranger to the miracles of Christ.
- b. He had all the evidence from Pentecost to Stephen.

5. Vanity or self-conceit.

- a 1) a. Men of this type generally flatter themselves that on account of their superior worth they receive special gifts.
- b. All of such is absent from the life of Paul.
- 2) (a) (1) When Paul had to speak of himself to prove his apostleship he apologized. 2 Cor. 11:1ff.
- (2) When he had a vision of heaven he spoke in the third person to cover his own name. 2 Cor. 12:1-12.
- (3) He always gave God the credit. 1 Cor. 3:4-7.

6. But suppose Paul was in some way swept away by enthusiasm and imagined the whole thing.

- a 1) a. In such circumstances men always see what they want to see and imagine what is already imprinted on their mind.
- b. In view of Paul's fixed purpose if this last be true then what would Paul have imagined and what vision would he have seen? One urging him toward his fixed purpose, surely.
- c. It would be just as impossible to change the whole line of Paul thinking without a cause, as for the mighty river to rush back up a mountain steep, without a cause.

II. WAS PAUL DECEIVED BY THE FRAUD OF OTHERS?

- 1 A. It would be morally impossible for the disciples of Christ to imagine such a fraud at the instant of Paul's greatest fury.
- 2 B. It was physically impossible for them to do it.
- 3 C. No fraud could have produced the subsequent miracles and the powers upon which Paul called to prove his apostleship.

III. CHRISTIANITY IS PROVEN TO BE A DIVINE REVELATION.

A. We have furnished sufficient evidence to show:

- a. 1. That Paul was not an imposter deliberately proclaiming what he knew to be false with intent to deceive.
- b. 2. That he was not imposed upon by an overheated imagination.
- c. 3. That he was not deceived by the fraud of others.
2. B. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to lay aside the use of our understanding and all the rules of evidence by which facts are determined we must accept the whole story of Paul's conversion as historically and literally true.
3. C. We have therefore the supernatural and the Christian religion is proven to be a revelation from God.)

Conclusion.

1. Christianity is a divine revelation. Gal. 1:11,12.
2. If you reject Christ where will you go? Jn. 6:68.

Int.

1. Read or quote Ephesians 1:1-12.
2. One of the main discussions of our time is between those who think:
 - a. That God is working his eternal purpose in this world, or
 - b. That man - with all else - is the product of blind, irrational forces, created by a chain of accidents, and soon to be destroyed by a man made accident.
3. Many think that God has no particular plan for man and the earth, but he just made them, wound them up, and is waiting for them to run down.
4. But the Bible says:
 - a. "according as he hath chosen us in him Before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:4.
 - b. "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. 3:11.
 - c. "... to them who are the called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28.
5. It is in the Ephesian letter that God's eternal purpose is discussed in great detail.

Dis.

- I. "BLESSED BE THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO HATH BLESSED US WITH ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST: ACCORDING AS HE HATH CHOSEN US IN HIM BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, THAT WE SHOULD BE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME BEFORE HIM IN LOVE: HAVING PREDESTINATED US UNTO ADOPTION OF CHILDREN BY JESUS CHRIST TO HIMSELF, ACCORDING TO THE GOOD PLEASURE OF HIS WILL, TO THE PRAISE OF THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE, WHEREIN HE HATH MADE US ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED." Eph. 1:3-6.
 - A. God is the source of all our blessings.
 1. He is the source of physical blessings. Jas. 1:17; Acts 14:17; Phil. 4:19.
 2. He is the source of spiritual blessings. These blessings are in Christ. 1:3.
 - B. God has chosen us in him. v. 4
 1. God chose us in Christ---the place.
 2. God chose us in him before the foundation of the world---the time. (Discuss Rom. 8:28-30 here.)
 3. God chose us that we should be holy and without blame before him in love,---the purpose.
 4. That we should be to the praise of his glory. 1:12.
 - C. God has adopted us as his children.
 1. The word adopted means "to take by free choice into a close relationship previously not existing..." It is used five times in the Bible, all in Paul's epistles. Rom. 8:15,23; 9:4; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5
 2. Adoption means sonship and brings:
 - a. Privileges.
 - (1) Wear the family name. A. 11:26.
 - (2) Share in the family inheritance. Rom. 8:16,17.
 - (3) Enjoy fellowship of the father. 1 Jn. 1:3.
 - b. Duties---obedience, honor, trust, cooperation, etc.
- II. SOME OF THE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN CHRIST ARE ENUMERATED. 1:7-12.
 - A. Redemption and forgiveness of sins. v. 7.
 1. "The word 'redemption' implies that our former existence was one of slavery from which we required to be ransomed." (Bruce)
 2. Forgiveness denotes release or separation.
 3. The place of our redemption is in Christ. v. Rom. 3:23-25.
 4. The price of our redemption is the blood of Christ. v. 7; 1 Pet. 1:18,19.
 5. The fact of our redemption has been made known by God. v. 9,10.
 - a. The prophets of old spoke of this salvation, but didn't understand it. 1 Pet. 1:9-12.
 - b. It was revealed by the apostles and prophets. Eph. 3:1-6.

c. It meant both Jew and Gentile being one in Christ. Eph. 2:14-16.

B. Inheritance or heritage.

1. It is in Christ.
2. It is according to God's eternal purpose.
3. It is reserved for us. 1 Pet. 1:4,5.

Con.

1. All spiritual blessings are in Christ. v. 2.
2. The Ephesians got into Christ when they heard, believed, and were baptized. Eph. 1:13; A. 19:1-5; Cf. Gal. 3:26,27.

Introduction.

1. There is nothing more clearly taught in the New Testament than that God wants all his people to be one.
 - a. Christ prayed for it-Jn. 17:20,21.
 - b. The apostles taught it-Eph. 4:3-6.
 - c. 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 1:27.
2. In light of these truths it is hard to see how anyone can have the proper regard for God without striving for this unity. But in our study let us begin by considering:

Discussion.

I. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PEOPLE COMPOSING THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH.

- A. They were united in their creed, that is, in what they believed, for that is the literal meaning of the term "creed."

1. John 3:16; 20:30,31.

2. To believe in Christ is to give assent to all the New Testament teaches about him.

- B. They wore the same names.

1. No group, with divine approval, wore a peculiar name to distinguish them from other Christians--1 Cor. 1:10-16.

2. As individuals they were:

- a. In their relation to Christ---disciples(Acts 6:70; believers 1 Pet. 1:21); Christians(Acts 11:26).

- b. In their profession--saints(1 Cor. 1:2).

- c. In their relation to each other---brethren(Acts 15:36).

3. Collectively they were:

- a. the church(Eph. 1:22); church of God(1 Cor. 15:9)

- b. as congregations--churches of Christ(Rom. 16:16)

- C. They were one in their effort to evangelize the world-Acts 8:4;

- 1 Cor. 4:17; Gal. 1:6-9.

- D. Those who obeyed the gospel became a happy brotherhood-Acts 4:32;

- 2 Cor. 8-9.

- E. They were united in worship.

- F. United in organization--Elders or bishops, deacons-Phil. 1:1; Acts 20:28.

✓II. CONTRAST THE ORIGINAL STATE OF THE CHURCH WITH PRESENT DAY CONDITIONS.

- A. Every phase of original unity violated.

1. One church then--Over 250 different today and each claiming some relation with Christ.

2. In early days it was enough to say I am a Christian, but today expected to give denominational affiliation.

- B. Some facts to help us see the difference between then and now.

Original State

Present Day

1. One creed-All believed the same thing.

1. Numbers of creeds-No two in perfect agreement.

2. All wore the same name.

2. Have adopted human names.

3. United in effort to evangelize the world.

3. Divided into parties each teaching his own peculiar doctrine.

4. Happy brotherhood.

4. Bitterness, envy, jealousy, etc. Why? 1 Cor. 3:1-3.

5. Simple Worship

5. Find nearly everything in worship today.

6. United in organization

6. All forms--Very few, if any, churches have elders and deacons like in New Testa.

C. Protestant Denominationalism is a product of the 16th century

1. It exists without divine authority. (Give a brief picture of its gradual rise Acts 20:28-30--Lasted over 1200 years "dark ages. First Protestant denomination was after Columbus discovered America.)
2. It is anti-scriptural. 1 Cor. 1:10; 12:12,13; Eph. 4:1-6; 2 Tim. 3:16,17. (Actually condemned in the scriptures)
3. Directly opposed to Christ's prayer. John 17:20,21. "that they world may believe thou didst send me." John 17:21b. (Give example of one preacher preaching conflicting doctrines and several preachers preaching conflicting doctrines.)
4. Divides homes and contributes materially to family unhappiness. (Play together, work together, but worship separately)
5. Hindering the progress of primitive Christianity.
6. During early days thousands obeyed the gospel and were a happy brotherhood.
7. Today unfaithfulness and division exists and very few obey the gospel.

Conclusion.

It is the solemn duty of every Christian to try to restore and preserve New Testament Christianity. "No one can read the New Testament and not be impressed with this idea. However, such unity will never be restored and preserved unless professed Christians recognize and accept the New Testament as the only and absolute standard of authority in all matters of religion." Matt. 17:5; 28:18; Heb. 1:1,2; Acts 3:22,23.

1. As individuals they were:
 - a. In their relation to Christ--disciples (Acts 6:7); believers (1 Pet. 1:21); Christians (Acts 11:26).
 - b. In their profession--saints (1 Cor. 1:2).
 - c. In their relation to each other--brothers (Acts 15:23).
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"God Amid the Shadows" by Leslie C. Thomas, Pages 144-50.

- B. They wore the same names.
 - 1. John 3:16; 20:30,31.
 - 2. To believe in Christ is to give assent to all the New Testament teaches about him.
1. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PEOPLE COMPOSING THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH.
 - A. They were united in their creed, that is, in what they believed, for that is the literal meaning of the term "creed."

Discussion.

1. There is nothing more clearly taught in the New Testament than that God wants all his people to be one.
 - a. Christ prayed for it--Jn. 17:20,21.
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 - c. 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 1:27.
2. In light of these truths it is hard to see how anyone can have the proper regard for God without striving for this unity. But in our study let us begin by considering:

Introduction.

SOME PROBLEMS AND NEEDS OF OUR TIME

INTRODUCTION.

1. How often have you heard someone say, "But the needs and problems of our time are different. The Bible doesn't seem to meet these needs."
 - a. It is time that we live in a rapidly changing world and life bears little resemblance to that of our parents.
 - b. But in the midst of all this man has not basically changed. He still has the same wants, inclinations and desires, the same needs--food, clothing, water, shelter--and commits the same sins, lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life."
2. It shall be our purpose in this study to observe:
 - a. Why men may be thinking this way, and
 - b. To observe one solution to the problems.

DISCUSSION.

- I. The New Morality Of Our Time Turns Men From The Bible.
 - A. One of the foundation stones of the "new morality" is the removal of God from man's thinking.
 1. Some try to do this by thinking of man as God.
 2. Others try to do this by trying to convince man that God is dead.
 - B. The second foundation stone is the change of attitude toward man.
 1. The Bible teaches that man is made in the image of God. Gen. 1: 26, 27; 2: 7.
 2. The "new morality" holds that man is simply a highly developed animal, without a soul and conscience.
 - C. The third foundation stone is a change of attitude toward the scriptures.
 1. In times past it has been sufficient to say "It is this way because the scriptures say it is."
 2. But today men do not look upon the scriptures as from God.
 - D. A fourth foundation stone is the teaching that there is no absolute right or wrong.
 1. The scriptures list a number of things that are sin. I Cor. 6: 9, 10; Gal. 5: 15, 21; Rom. 1: 29-32.
 2. But the new morality says such things are not necessarily wrong. Anything is right if the situation is right.
 - E. The result of such reasoning is that man has finally found "sanction for sin" cf. Isa. 5: 20, 21. If there is no law, there is no sin. I Jn. 3: 4.
- II. What America Is Today Contributes To Such Thinking.
 - A. Suppose we resurrect a character, let him travel America and I think he would tell us we are sick.
 - B. One of the first symptoms would be the secularization of our country.
 1. Secular means "relating to the worldly or temporal as distinguished from the spiritual or eternal."
 2. In 1840 the President of every major college in America was a clergyman or connected with religion. 100 years later such was not true.
 3. When villages were built in New England they centered the town and churches were built in the center.
 - C. A second symptom would be the obsession with Ease and Entertainment.
 1. Paul wrote to Timothy "men shall be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." II Tim. 3: 4.
 2. Look about you and you'll think it has come to pass.
 - D. A third symptom would be a lack of moral fiber.
 1. I believe that the signers of the Declaration of Independence meant it when they vowed to give their lives for its protection.
 2. A study of today's morals will reveal little commitment to anything. Cheating, etc. prevails.
 - E. A fourth symptom would be conformity.
 1. Individuality is being strangled in our society today.
 2. Men become part of a group and conform.

III. One Of The Greatest Needs Of Our Time Is Involvement Or Commitment.

- A. Ours is an age of alienation or unwillingness to get involved.
 - 1. In New York 32 persons heard a woman scream for help, but not one rushed to her aid because "we didn't want to get involved."
 - 2. In Oklahoma City a woman delivered her baby in the street as a taxi driver and two others sped off when they saw it.
 - 3. In Bubbalo, New York 20 people watched through the windows of a restaurant as a 66 year old man bled to death from stab wounds.
 - 4. In Sept., 1965, Hurricane Betsy killed 81 in New Orleans and left thousands homeless. Men forget the needs of others and charged enormous prices.
 - 5. The priest at the Levite didn't want to get involved. Lk. 10: 25-37.
- B. Alienation or unwillingness to get involved plagues the church today.
 - 1. Church members rush to church, get up and rush out. The person next to you becomes a face in the crowd.
 - 2. Too many members of the church today are unwilling to get involved:
 - a. In Bible Study. II Tim. 2: 15.
 - b. In Visitation. Mt. 25: 31-46.
 - c. In Personal Work. Jn. 15: 1ff; Rom. 7: 4.
 - d. In Any Phase Of The Work.

CONCLUSION.

The Bible is just as relevant today as ever. It still meets man's needs. It can fulfill you if you'll just get involved. Try it!

THE GREAT NEEDS OF OUR TIME IN INVOLVING OUR COMMITMENT

- A. There is an age of alienation or unwillingness to get involved.
1. In New York 32 persons heard a woman scream for help but not one rushed to her aid because "we didn't want to get involved."
 2. In Oklahoma City a woman delivered her baby in the street as a taxi driver and two others sped off, whether they did or not.
 3. In Buffalo, New York 20 people watched through the windows of a restaurant as a 65 year old man died to death from a car accident.
 4. In Sept., 1963, Hurricane Betsy killed 81 in New Orleans and left thousands homeless. They forgot the needs of others and charged across the bridges.
 5. The priest at the Levite didn't want to get involved. (Lk. 10: 30-37).
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Introduction.

The Ephesian letter is truly one of the great masterpieces of the Bible. It reveals that the church was in God's eternal purpose and that God's purpose was to gather all men into one body through Jesus Christ. The 2nd chapter presents one of the greatest contrasts in the Bible-the sinner's lowly condition in contrast with the Christian's exalted position. It is hoped that this lesson will cause everyone that has never obeyed the gospel to realize more fully his hopeless condition before God and will cause each Christian to be more thankful and realize more fully just how high God through Christ has exalted us. We purpose then to notice The Christian's former condition, the Christian's present condition, the means of accomplishing this great change and some things a remembrance of our former condition in contrast with our present condition should cause each of us to do.

Discussion.

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S FORMER CONDITION.

- A. "Dead in trespasses and sins"-2:1.
- B. "Walked according to the course of the world"-2:2,3a.
- C. "Were by nature the children of wrath"-2:3b.
- D. "Dead in sins"-2:5.
- E. "Without Christ"-No knowledge of Christ, life or blessings from him-2:12a.
- F. "Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel"-2:12b.
- G. "Strangers from the covenants of promise"-2:12c.
- H. "Having no hope"-2:12d.
- I. "Without God"-2:12e.
- J. "Were sometimes afar off"-2:13b.
- K. "Strangers and foreigners"-2:19a.
- L. The Bible clearly reveals man's condition with Christ-Rom. 3:23; Col. 1:21.

II. THE CHRISTIAN'S PRESENT EXALTED CONDITION.

- A. Quickened(Made alive)-2:1,5.
- B. "And hath raised us up together"-2:6a.
- C. "Made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus"-2:6b.
(The church is the reign of heaven on earth. To be a member is to be in heavenly places.)
- D. The workmanship of God-2:10.
 - 1. Created in Christ Jesus.
 - 2. Unto good works.
 - a. Works which God ordained.
 - b. Works in which we are to walk.
- E. Made nigh(brought closer) to God-2:13b.
- F. A new man-2:15; 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 3:9,10
- G. Reconciled unto God-2:16.
- H. Through Christ we now have access to God by one Spirit-2:18.
- I. Fellowcitizens with the saints-2:19a.
- J. Members of God's household-2:19b.
- K. Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets-2:20.
- L. A building growing into a Holy Temple-2:21.
- M. An habitation of "God through the Spirit"-2:22.

III. THE MEANS OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS GREAT CHANGE.

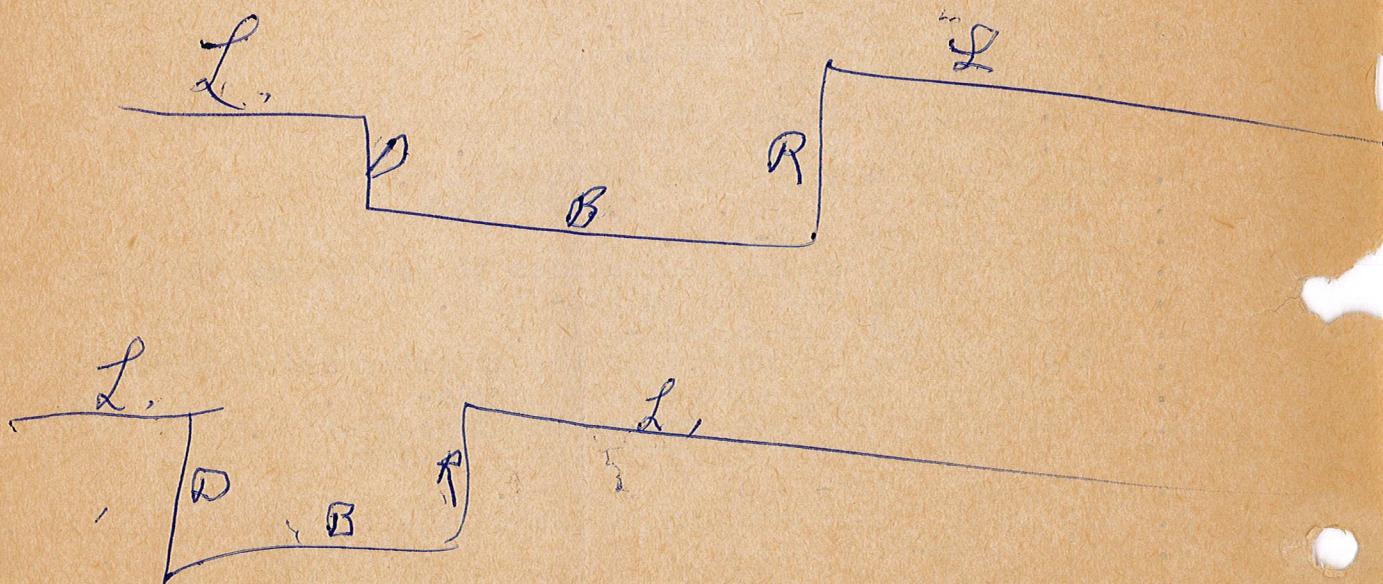
- A. God's rich mercy-2:4a; Tit. 3:4-7.
- B. "His great love wherewith he loved us"-2:4b; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8.
- C. God's grace-2:5b,8a; Tit. 2:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; 2 Cor. 8:9.
- D. Man's faith-Eph. 2:8b; Heb. 11:6.
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- F. The teaching of God's word-Eph. 2:17.

IV. SOME THINGS A REMEMBRANCE OF OUR FORMER CONDITION IN CONTRAST WITH OUR PRESENT CONDITION SHOULD CAUSE EACH OF US TO DO.

- A. Be more humble before God.
- B. Make us more grateful for our mercies and cause us to magnify the greatness and freeness of divine love.
- C. It should inspire us to have a greater love for Christ when we realize the depth from which we have been lifted to sit in "heavenly places."
- D. Quicken our zeal and activity in the work of the Lord.
- E. Help us to realize more fully the hopeless state of all that haven't obeyed the gospel and cause us to put forth a greater effort to convert them.
- F. Cause us to be more careful to walk in the works which God has before ordained for us - Eph. 5:15, 16.

Conclusion.

Let us then exclaim with Paul, "Unto him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. 3:12) for our exalted position. Sinner, friend you too can enjoy such a position by obeying the gospel of Christ. Why not now?



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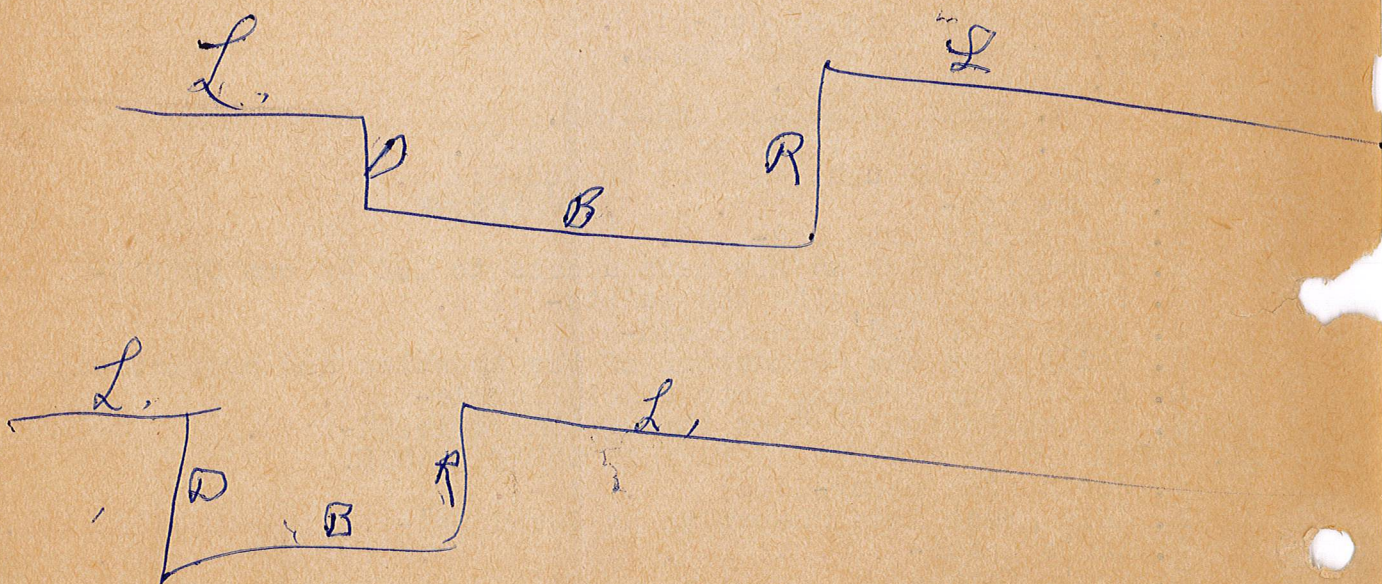
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LOVE OR THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY

1 Cor. 13:1-3

No. 1

Introduction.

1. Read or quote 1 Cor. 13:1-13.
2. There is nothing in all literature that compares with this chapter.
3. One of the last, slowly murmured sayings of Whittier, the poet, as he lay dying was this: "Give—my love—to—the world."
 - a. The supreme need of the world today is not more eloquence, more knowledge or more wealth, but more love.
 - b. The real secret of making men over is not so much in scolding them for their evil, although this has its place, but planting within them a new love.
4. It shall be our purpose ^{here} in four or five lessons to discuss the subject of "Love."

Discussion.

I. THE GREATNESS OF LOVE MUST BE REALIZED.

- A. Love is greater than eloquence. 13:1.
 1. Preaching, regardless of how eloquent and clever, which does not proceed from a Christian heart, which is not inspired by the love of souls, and whose object is not the salvation or edification of men is vain.
 2. Singing, regardless of how beautiful and lofty, is vain unless motivated by love.
- B. Love is greater than prophecy. 13:2a.
 1. Have you ever thought how wonderful it would be to be able to foretell the future?
 2. But we and have something greater and that is love.
- C. Love is greater than the knowledge of all mysteries. 13:2b.
- D. Love is greater than faith that could remove mountains. 13:2c.
- E. Love is greater than charity. 13:3a.
 1. Some men give to be seen of men. Mt. 6:1,2.
 2. Some men are willing to sell their possessions to meet the needs of others. A. 2:45.
 3. But all this is vain unless motivated by love.
- F. Love is greater than martyrdom. 13:3b.
- G. Love is the greatest commandment. Mt. 22:34-40.
- H. Love is the "fulfilling of the law." Rom. 13:10.
- I. Love is above all things. Col. 3:14; 1 Pet. 4:8.
- J. Love is the royal law. Jas. 2:8.
- K. The greatness of love motivates us to study it more.

II. WHAT IS LOVE?

- A. Love is not passion or physical attraction.
 1. Passion seeks its own gratification.
 2. Amnon's treatment of Tamar is an example of passion. 2 Sam. 13:1-15.
- B. Love is not tolerance of the opinions and views of others even if these opinions and views are contrary to God's word.
- C. Love is goodwill toward our fellowman intensified (it acts) and sanctified (It is set apart.)
- D. Our love for God is the keeping of his commandments. Jn. 14:23; 1 John 5:3.
- E. The test or measure of one's love is how much of one's own personal pleasure one is willing to forego for the well-being of the object of one's love.
 1. The test of a mother's love for her child is determined by sacrifice.
 2. A Christian's love for God and his fellowman, the objects of his love, is demonstrated by the sacrifices for them.
- F. There are many examples of what love really is:
 1. The object of Abraham's love was God and he was willing to sacrifice his son, another object of his love, to obey God. Gn. 22.
 2. Amram and Jochebed had such great faith in God and such great love for Moses that, at the risk of their own lives they hid him. Ex. 2:1ff.
 3. David's love for Absalom was so great that he would have died in his place. 2 Sam. 18:33.

4. God's manifested his love for us in what he gave. 1 Jn. 3:16; 4:7-9.

5. Love seeks the welfare of those that are loved and delights in their fellowship.

III. Insert

Conclusion.

1. In conclusion let me ask you to think:

- a. More homes would be happier and less divorces would be obtained if greater love existed between husbands and wives.
- b. Greater peace would prevail in the world and fewer wars if genuine love existed between people.
- c. More fervor and zeal would be seen in our churches if deep-seated love for lost souls prevailed in the heart of every Christian.
- d. Greater devotion and faithfulness to God would be seen if every Christian really loved the Lord.

2. Sinner, friend, do you love the Lord? Then obey his commandments.

many are thinking about war at the present time. Some of you have been called others have sons, etc.

Introduction.

1. The Christian life is presented many times as a fight, war, battle.
1 Tim. 6:12-2 Tim. 4:7-1 Cor. 9:26.
2. We are admonished to put on the armour of God to be able to fight this battle--Rom. 13:12-Eph. 6:11,13.
3. In our study about the armour of a Christian, from Eph. 6, let us keep in mind that Paul wrote this letter while in prison. He was chained to a soldier, at least one was close by, suggesting to him the armour of a Christian.

DISCUSSION.

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S FOE IN THIS BATTLE.

- A. Not flesh and blood--It is not a foe that we are always able to see--Eph. 6:12.
- B. The devil and the unseen powers of darkness.
 1. He is the "wicked one" and takes the word out of a man's heart--Matt. 13:19.
 2. He is a murderer--John 8:44.
 3. He is a liar--John 8:44.
 4. He is the prince of this world--John 12:31.
 5. He is "the god of this world"--2 Cor. 4:4.
 6. 27 different names given to the evil one.

II. HOW CHRISTIANS ARE TO MEET THIS FOE.

- A. The True Source of Strength.
 1. Be strong in the Lord--Eph. 6:10-(Joshua 1:6,7-9; 10:25; 1 Cor. 16:13)
 2. In the power of his might--(The might belongs to God and Christ--1 Chron. 29:12, but by faith it becomes ours--Eph. 3:14-17.)
- B. Put on the whole armour of God.
 1. It is the armour that God has provided and we are to put it all on.
 2. Man tried for 4000 years to save himself and could not; now he must accept God's way--1 Cor. 1:21.

III. THE DIFFERENT PIECES OF THIS ARMOUR.

- A. "Our loins girt about with the truth."
 1. The Roman soldier girded himself. He carried his possessions in this girdle and it braced him.
 2. A Christian is to gird himself with the truth to be prepared to enter the battle--the truth is--Psa. 119:151; John 17:17; Eph. 1:13.
- B. "Having on the breastplate of righteousness."
 1. The breast plate of the Roman soldier covered him from neck to thighs; made of rings or scales, flexible. Some covered front and back. Protected the vital parts of the body.
 2. The breastplate of righteousness is put on by the Christian by obeying the commandments of God--1 John 3:7; 1 John 2:29. (A man cannot successfully defend himself against Satan unless he is righteous.)
- C. "Our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel."
 1. The legs of the Roman soldier was covered with greaves and his feet bound with sandals. Spikes or nails were in the soles to give a firm foothold.
 2. The foothold of the Christian must be steady, firm and is made so by:
 - a. The peace of justification--Rom. 5:1.
 - b. The peace that guards his thoughts--Phil. 4:7.
 - c. Must always be ready to go forward to preach the gospel--Mark 16:15,16.

D. "Take the shield of faith."
1. The shield of the Roman soldier was 4 ft. long and 2 1/2 ft. wide and was held on the left arm. It was essential for his protection. Made of wood and covered on the outside with thick leather.
2. To the Christian this is a most essential part.
a. Our faith comes and is made stronger by the study of God's word--Rom. 10:17.
b. With this faith we are able to "quench the fiery darts of the devil."
E. "Take the helmet of salvation."
1. The helmet of the Roman soldier was a cap made of thick leather or brass, fitted to the head. Protected from a blow by battle-axe, etc.
2. The helmet of a Christian is the hope, the assurance of salvation. cf. 1 Thes. 5:8 -
a. To be firm and steadfast we must have scriptural assurance of pardon of past sins--Col. 1:12-14.
b. Well grounded hope of future and final salvation--Rom. 2:7-Rev. 2:10. This keeps us from despair. cf. Heb. 6:18, 19.

F. "The sword of the Spirit--the word of God."
1. The Roman soldier would have felt unarmed without his sword.
2. The Christian is to be armed with the Spirit's sword.
a. It was the weapon our Lord used against Satan--Matt. 4:11-16.
b. It is sharp and piercing--Heb. 4:12, 13--Rev. 1:16.
G. Praying always for God's help. "Communication with God."
1. A soldier depends to a great extent on the power of his leader and the leader can inspire the soldier or discourage him. Wellington calculated the presence of Bonaparte at the head of an army as equal to a hundred thousand additional bayonets.
Conclusion. "It is only by prayer that we can be victorious." H. WATCHING - *It is only by prayer that we can be victorious.*

1. The Christian that puts on this armour, that God has provided, will be able to stand against the "wiles of the devil" and overcome the "evil day."
2. And as Paul said to the Philippians--Phil. 2:12, 13

III. HOW CHRISTIANS ARE TO MEET THIS FOE.
A. The True Source of Strength.
1. He is the prince of this world--John 12:31.
2. He is "the god of this world"--2 Cor. 4:4.
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3. In our study about the armour of a Christian, from Eph. 6, let us keep in mind that Paul wrote this letter while in prison. He was chained to a soldier, at least one was close by, watching to him the armour of a Christian.

Introduction.

1. Read or quote 1 Cor. 13:1-8.
2. The greatness of love is emphasized in the first three verses of this chapter which we discussed last Sunday, also we discussed what love is.
3. As we learned in our study, love is hard to define, but easy to be seen.
4. Let's consider what love does not do.

Discussion.

III. LOVE WORKETH NO ILL TO HIS NEIGHBOR. Rom. 13:9,10.

- A. The first question we need to ask is, "Who is my neighbor?" Lk. 10:25-37.
- B. One that loves his neighbor in like manner as he loves himself will not commit against his neighbor any of the offenses named by Paul. Rom. 13:9.
- C. One that loves his neighbor as himself will practice the golden rule toward his neighbor. Mt. 7:12.
- D. One that loves his neighbor as himself will feel an obligation of teaching to one's neighbor. Rom 1:14-17.

IV. LOVE ENVIETH NOT V 4b.

- A. Envy is that unhappy feeling one has because another has that which one wants.
- B. In order to properly understand the expression "love envieth not" we need to observe:
 1. What causes men to be envious?
 - a. The possessions of others.
 - (1) The Philistines were envious of Isaac's possessions. Gen. 26:14.
 - (2) David said he was "envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." PSA. 73:3.
 - (3) Being envious of the possessions of others is one of the greatest causes of the dissatisfactions of life. We are so busy envying what others have that we fail to appreciate our own blessings.
 - b. The ability of others to do things which we are not able to do.
 - (1) Rachel envied Leah because Leah could bear children and she couldn't. Gen. 30:1.
 - (2) Envious of others ability will cause one heartaches many times.
 - c. One can be envious of affection or attention bestowed on others.
 - (1) Joseph's brothers envied him because his father loved him more. Gen. 37:4,11.
 - (2) Such envy prevails in the home and church too often.
 - d. The authority that others have.
 - (1) Korah, Dathan and Abiram envied the authority of Moses. Num. 16:1-3, Psa. 106:16.
 - (2) Many church problems today are caused, because men envy more authority than is due.
 - e. The beautiful and fair appearance of others.
 - (1) In Ezekiel 31:8,9, the prophet pictures Assyria as being beautiful and fair above all others and envied for it.
 - (2) Do you envy the beauty of others?
 - f. Popularity.
 - (1) The Jews envy the popularity of Jesus and crucified him. Mt. 27:18.
 - (2) The Jews envied the popularity of Paul and Barnabas. Acts 13:44,45.
 - (3) Sometimes preachers envy the popularity of other preachers. Phil. 1:14,15
 - (4) Elders may envy the popularity of the preacher or the preacher of the elders.

2. What envy will cause men to do.

a. To murder.

- (1) Envy caused Cain to kill Abel. **1 Jn. 3:12.**
- (2) Envy crucified the Son of God. **Mt. 27:18.**
- (3) Every envious person is a potential murderer. **1 Jn. 3:15.**

b. To sell his brother.

- (1) Envy caused Joseph's brothers to sell him into Egypt. **Acts. 7:9.**
- (2) How many members of the church have been moved by envy to sell another brother into misery, heartaches, etc., through slander, gossip, etc.

c. To destroy the property of others. Because the Philistines were envious of Isaac, they filled his wells. **Gen. 26:14,15.**

d. It caused the Sadducees to cast the apostles into prison. **Acts 5:17,18.**

e. To speak against the truth of God. **Acts. 17:5.**

f. Confusion and every evil work. **Jas. 3:16.**

C. From all of these points it is easy to see that love and envy are as opposite as black and white--no wonder Paul said, "Love envieth not."

D. Do you have trouble with the green-eyed monster of envy? Put it away.

Edgar A. Guest once said:

Put Away Envy

I wonder if the poppy shows
the slightest envy of the rose?
Or if the pansy wastes its time
Regretting that it cannot climb?
Do blossoms of a yellow hue
Complain because they are not blue?
Do birds which God designed to sing
Envy the wild duck's fletting wing?
And does the sparrow sadly mourn
Because he was not a foldfinch born?
I cannot say, but fancy not.
Each seems contented with his lot.

Conclusion.

Tis only man who thinks that he
Some other man would rather be.

Love worketh no ill to his neighbor and love envieth not. Surely one can see why
love is the fulfilling of the law.

INT.

1. Read or quote 1 Cor. 13:4-8.
2. In the long ago when farmers needed new land they cleared the stumps and trees in order to plant the seed.
3. In studying nearly any subject it is necessary to remove many obstacles before one can clearly see the truth.
4. In our study of love we have already observed two things love does not do.
5. Let's consider some more things love does not do.

Dis.

- V. LOVE VAUNTETH NOT ITSELF, IS NOT PUFFED UP. v. 4c.
 - A. "Does not show-off" (Pul. Com.); "does not parade itself" (McGarvey); "does not thrust itself forward" (Lipscomb)
 - B. Love keeps us from boasting about our superiority over others, if such we have.
 1. A lack of love was causing some of the Corinthians to exalt themselves due to spiritual gifts.
 2. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." 1 Cor. 8:1.
 3. Love makes us think soberly. Rom. 12:3.
- VI. LOVE DOTH NOT BEHAVE ITSELF UNSEEMLY. v. 5a.
 - A. Self love often betrays itself in its unbecoming behavior and cares not how offensive its actions may be to others.
 - B. Love always behaves itself decently and properly under all circumstances.
- VII. LOVE SEEKETH NOT HER OWN. 13:5.
 - A. Love that seeketh not her own does not mean unconcern for one's own self and happiness, but such is not sought at the expense of others. Examples:
 1. It denies for others---Christ. 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:5-8; A. 10:38.
 2. It becomes all things to all men---Paul. 1 Cor. 9:19-23; 10:33; 1 Thess. 2:8.
 3. It is concerned about other's welfare---Timothy. Phil. 2:19-21.
 - B. Christians are admonished:
 1. To not seek to just please themselves. Rom. 15:1-3.
 2. To seek wealth of others. 1 Cor. 10:24; Phil. 2:3,4.
 - C. Love that "seeketh not her own" is the principle that will convert the world because:
 1. There will be no lack of funds.
 2. There will be not lack of workers.
- VIII. LOVE IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED. 13:5.
 - A. It is hard to make a person angry that is under the influence of love.
 - B. Christ was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. Is. 53:7.
- IX. LOVE THINKETH NO EVIL. 13:5.
 - A. The person influenced by love tries to think evil of no person.
 - B. The person influenced by love does not impute wrong motives to one's failures.
 - C. The person influenced by love, even when evil is done, tries to think the best until evidence proves otherwise.
- X. LOVE REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY. 13:6.
 - A. It does not rejoice when someone commits evil.
 - B. It does not find pleasure when others sin.

Conclusion.

1. Beloved, can't you and I see that the world's greatest need is love.
2. Thus love can be seen by what it does not do.

LOVE ON THE MOUNTAIN WAY
I Cor. 13:4-8

1. Need or quote. I Cor. 13:4-8.
2. In the long ago when farmers needed new land they cleared the stumps and trees in order to plant the seed.
3. In clearing nearly any subject it is necessary to remove many obstacles before one can clearly see the truth.
4. In our study of love we have already observed two things love does not do.
5. Let's consider some more things love does not do.

V. LOVE WITHOUT NOT ITSELF. IS NOT POWERFUL. (1 Cor. 13:4-8)
A. "Does not show-off" (Phil. 2:3-4); "does not parade itself" (Coloss. 2:23); "does not thrust itself forward" (Ephes. 5:29)
B. Love keeps us from boasting about our superiority over others. If such we have.
C. A lack of love was causing some of the Christians to exalt themselves and to spiritual gifts.
D. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." (1 Cor. 8:1)

I. LOVE IS NOT THE WAY OF SELFISHNESS. (1 Cor. 13:4-8)
A. Self love often betrays itself in its unbecoming behavior and even not how offensive his actions may be to others.
B. Love always behaves itself decently and properly under all circumstances.
C. Love that seeks not her own does not mean weakness for one's own self and happiness, but such is not sought at the expense of others. Examples:
1. It desires for others—John 3:16; Phil. 2:3-4; A. 10:34.
2. It becomes all things to all men—1 Cor. 9:19-23; I Thess. 2:3-4.
3. It is concerned about others' welfare—1 Tim. 5:14-16.

H. Christians are admonished:
1. To not seek to just please themselves. Rom. 15:1-3.
2. To seek welfare of others. 1 Cor. 10:24; Phil. 2:3-4.
C. Love that "seeketh not her own" is the principle that will convert the world because:
1. There will be no lack of funds.
2. There will be no lack of workers.

I. LOVE IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED. (1 Cor. 13:4-8)
A. It is hard to make a person angry that is under the influence of love.
B. Christ was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. Is. 53:7.
C. Love witheth no evil. (1 Cor. 13:4-8)
A. The person influenced by love tries to think evil of no person.
B. The person influenced by love does not impute wrong motives to one's actions.
C. The person influenced by love, even when evil is done, tries to think the best until evidence proves otherwise.

A. LOVE REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY. (1 Cor. 13:4-8)
A. It does not rejoice when someone commits evil.
B. It does not find pleasure when others sin.
1. Beloved, can't you and I see that the world's greatest need is love.
2. True love can be seen by what it does not do.

1 Cor. 13 -

NO. 4 -

INTRODUCTION

1. The Bible especially speaks of twelve particulars the Christian does in love.
 - a. "holy and without blame before God in love." Eph. 1:4 3
 - b. "Does all things in love." 1 Cor. 16:14.
 - c. Edifies the body in love. Eph. 4:16. 7
 - d. Forbears one another in love. Eph. 4:2. 5
 - e. Increases in love - 1 Thess. 3:12 10.
 - f. Is truthful in love - 1 Jn. 3:18 11
 - g. Is infeigned in love - 2 Cor. 6:6 2
 - h. Keeps himself in love - Jude 21 12
 - i. Knit together in love - Col. 2:2 9
 - j. Rooted and grounded in love - Eph. 3:17 4
 - k. Speaks truth in love - Eph. 4:15. 6
 - l. Walks in love - Eph. 5:2 8
2. Love is essentially a part of the character of a Christian. There are certain ones the Christian can and will love.

DISCUSSION

I. THE FIRST OBJECT OF THE CHRISTIAN'S LOVE IS GOD. MT. 22:34-38.

A. Why should we love God?

1. He first loved us. 1 Jn. 4:9,19; Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8,9; Jn. 14:21
 - a. God's love precedes our love creating in us the eager desire to keep Christ's precepts. 1 Jn. 4:19
 - b. God's love follows our love rewarding us for keeping the precepts. Jn. 14:21.
2. He has promised a crown of life to them that love him. Jas. 1:12
3. All things work together for good to them that love God. Rom. 8:28

B. If we love God, what will we do?

1. We will put his kingdom first in ~~his~~ ^{our} life. Mt. 6:33
2. We will keep his commandments. Jn. 14:23,24; 1 Jn. 5:3. ("We will keep on keeping his commandments.")
3. We will love our brethren. 1 Jn. 4:20,21.
 - a. Loving a brother is proof of love for God.
 - b. Hating a brother while claiming to love God makes one a liar.

II. SECOND CHRISTIANS ARE TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

A. Why are Christians to love one another?

1. It is a commandment of God. Jn. 13:34; 15:17; Rom. 13:8; 1 Jn. 3:23; 2 Jn. 5.
2. It is the badge of discipleship. Jn. 13:35.
 - a. The world recognizes priests and nuns by their clothes, members of societies by their rings or badges, but disciples are to be recognized by their love for one another.
 - b. The heathen spoke of the love of the early Christians.
3. He that loveth not his brother is not of God. 1 Jn. 3:10,11.
4. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 1 Jn. 3:14.
5. Those that love one another are born of God and know God. 1 Jn. 4:7,8
6. God's love for us moves us to love one another. 1 Jn. 4:9-11.
7. If we love one another God dwelleth in us. 1 Jn. 4:12.

8. It is proof of our love for God. 1 Jn. 4:20 - 5:2.

B. How are Christians to love one another?

1. Love without hypocrisy. Rom. 12:9
2. Love with a pure heart fervently. 1 Pet. 1:22

C. What are some things loving one another will cause us to do?

1. Prefer another before ourself. Rom. 12:10
2. To minister to one another's needs. 2 Cor. 8:8,24; Heb. 6:10; 1 Jn. 3:16-18.
3. To serve one another. Gal. 5:13.
4. To try to restore those that err. Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19,20.
5. To forbear or bear with one another in love. Eph. 4:1,2.
6. To walk in love. Eph. 5:1,2.
7. To provoke one another to love and good works. Heb. 10:24.
8. To be pitiful and courteous to one another. 1 Pet. 3:8
9. To cover one another's sins. 1 Pet. 4:8 (Not by upholding them but pointing them out. 2 Cor. 2:1-4)

III. THIRD, WE ARE TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR. Mt. 22:36-40.

IV. FOURTH, WE ARE TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES. Mt. 5:43,44.

A. Why are we to love our enemies?

1. Christ loves his. Rom. 5:8,10
2. That we may be the children of God. Mt. 5:45.
3. That our reward may be great. Lk. 6:35.

B. What will we do if we love our enemies?

1. We will do them good even if they do us evil. Mt. 5:44-47
2. We will not have the "get-even" spirit toward them. Rom. 12:19.
3. We will feed and give drink. Rom. 12:20,21.

CONCLUSION

1. "And now abideth faith, hope and charity, and the greatest of these is charity."

(1 Cor. 13:13)

2. Love fills and warms our souls toward God and our fellowmen.

3. "Love is the golden chain that binds,
The happy souls above.
And he is an heir of heaven that finds
His bosom aglow with love."

Mt. 4:18; 10:2; Mk. 1:16,29; 3:18; 13:3; Lk. 6:14; Jn. 1:40,44; 6:8; 12:22; A. 1:13

Introduction

1. One of the most profitable ways to study the Bible is to study the lives of people.
2. The character that we are studying at this time is mentioned but 12 times in the Bible, but what we read each time makes us want to know more about him.
3. This character was of the city of Bethsaida.
4. This character is not one of the major characters like Moses or Paul, but it may be that the ordinary men give us more encouragement

Discussion.

I. HE HAD A GOOD NAME OR A GOOD REPUTATION.

A. Andrew means "manly".

1. It was a father's ambition and a mother's hope to have a manly son.
2. God told Jeremiah to look in the city of Jerusalem "if ye can find a man."
Jer. 5:1.
3. Diogenes walked through the streets of Athens with a lamp in his hand. When asked what he was doing, he replied: "I am looking for a man." When told there were men all around him, he said: "These are pigmies, I'm looking for real men."
4. David charged Solomon his son, just before he died, "Shew thyself a man."
1 Kgs. 2:2.

B. Andrew surely was such a man that regardless of what he said people believed him.

1. "We have found the Messiah" was as startling and hard to believe then as if someone were to announce today "Jesus has returned."
2. But Peter had lived with Andrew and knew him and if Andrew said it was so then it was so.

C. Solomon said "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches . . ." Prov. 22:1.

II. HE KEPT HIS NAME GOOD AND ADDED LUSTER TO IT.

A. Some start with a good name, but do not keep it good.

1. Jezebel was a good name until it was worn by the wife of Ahab. She wrecked it. No man would call his wife Jezebel to compliment her.
2. Judas was a good and honorable name but it was wrecked and became dishonorable.
3. Take heed that you do not wreck your name or reputation.

B. Andrew not only kept his name good but he added luster to it.

1. David added luster to his name and it appears more than 1100 times in the Bible second only to God's.
2. Paul added luster to his name by his life and work.
3. What will you do for your name.

III. HE WAS A MAN THAT WAS ABLE TO TAKE SECOND PLACE GRACEFULLY.

A. Six out of the twelve times that Andrew is named in the Bible he is referred to as the brother of Simon Peter.

1. No one likes to constantly be referred to as "so-and-so" brother.
2. Andrew seems only to have been concerned with the Master's cause.

B. John the Baptist was a man able to take second place. Jn. 3:25-30.

C. Can you take second place? Can you humbly work in a greater's shadow?

IV. HE WAS A MAN THAT FOUND SOMETHING TO DO WHERE HE WAS.

A. Solomon said ". . . the eyes of the fool are in the ends of the earth." Prov. 17:24. (Some people are always talking about what they would do somewhere else.)

B. Abe Lincoln's no-good brother was going west and Abe told him "If you are not going to work it won't do you any good to go West and if you want to work there is no need to go."

C. Mr. Conwell gave a great lecture on "Acres of Diamonds". The man in question had diamonds all about him. He was rich but did not know it.

D. Booker T. Washington frequently gave a lecture on the subject "Let Down Your Bucket Where You Are". The sermon subject originated from a story concerning a ship in the South Atlantic. It was a sailing vessel becalmed in quiet weather. It had been calm for several days. The fresh water supply was exhausted. They set out a distress signal to a steam-driven vessel approaching and said, "We

desperately need fresh water. The reply was, "Let down your buckets where you are." They were indignant and sent back the message, "You misunderstood. We are in desperate need of fresh water." They replied, "We didn't misunderstand you. Let down your buckets where you are." They were in the mouth of the Amazon River which is two hundred miles wide.

E. All of us need to let down our bucket where we are just as did Andrew.

V. HE WAS A MAN THAT BROUGHT OTHERS TO JESUS.

A. Andrew was the man that brought Peter to the Lord. Jn. 1:40-42a.

1. He finished the task which he began. He was a go-getter.
2. There might not have been the eloquent Peter on Pentecost if there had not been the ordinary Andrew before.

B. Andrew brought a small boy to Jesus with five loaves and two fishes. Jn. 6:5-9.

C. Andrew and Philip brought the Greeks to Jesus. Jn. 12.

D. Andrew recognized and was doing what is our mission in the world today----to bring souls to Jesus. To do so, we must:

1. Teach people the goodness of God, for that leads men to repent. Rom. 2:4.
2. Teach them the severity of God, for that restrains men from sin and causes them to seek to escape the wrath of God to come. Rom. 11:22; A. 24:25.
3. Teach them to count the cost of discipleship lest they become discouraged and quit.
4. Teach them how to come to Jesus because no one ever came by accident. Jn. 6:44,45.

E. IF WE HAD MORE ANDREWS IN THE CHURCH WE WOULD HAVE LESS EMPTY Pews IN THE BUILDING.

CONCLUSION.

1. We may never be a Paul but we can be an Andrew---a man with a good reputation, that kept his name good, took second place gracefully, found work where he was, brought others to Jesus.

2. Andrew was an ordinary disciple, yet extraordinary: Consider the Poem:

"AN ORDINARY DISCIPLE"

"Just an ordinary member
Of the church "I heard him say,
But you'd always find him present
Even on a rainy day.
He had a hearty handclasp
For the stranger in the aisle
And a friend who was in trouble
Found sunshine in his smile
When the sermon helped him
He told the preacher so,
And when he needed comfort,
He let the preacher know.
He always gave so freely
And tried to do his share
In all the ordinary tasks
For which some have no care
His talents were not many
But his love for God was true
His prayers were not in public,
But he prayed for me and you

"AN ORDINARY MEMBER"

I think I would say
He was EXTRAORDINARY
In a humble sort of way." Sel.

SOUND DOCTRINE

Tit. 2:1; 1 Tim. 4:6; 6:3 -

INTRODUCTION

1. Our land is filled with many different teachings, each claiming to be upheld and supported by the word of God. To a sincere seeker after God this poses a number of problems.
 - a. He sees good, sincere people in all religions.
 - b. He sees each one "proving" his doctrine by the Bible.
 - c. He sees each of the doctrines contradicting one another.
 - d. He wonders which one to accept because:
 - (1) If they are all right which one is best for him?
 - (2) If they are all wrong then how does one determine what is truth?
2. Such a state of affairs is sad indeed when one realizes that:
 - (1) Our Lord prayed that his followers all be one. Jn. 17:20,21.
 - (2) The early Christians were one. Acts 4:32.
 - (3) Paul begged Christians. 1 Cor, 1:10.
3. In this study we purpose to observe three points, namely:
 - (1) There are False Teachers and False Doctrines.
 - (2) How Can one Recognize False Teachers and False Doctrine.
 - (3) What is to be our attitude toward false teachers and doctrines?
- I. THERE ARE FALSE DOCTRINES AND FALSE TEACHERS IN THE WORLD.
 - A. Jesus warns us to "beware of false prophets." Mt. 7:15.
 - B. Some teach for doctrines the commandments of men. Mt. 15:9
 - C. Jesus told his disciples to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Mt. 16:11,12.
 - D. Elymas sought to pervert the rightways of the Lord. Acts 13:10.
 - E. Paul warned the elders from Ephesus against false teachers. Acts 20:28-31.
 - F. Paul spoke of false teachers and deceitful workers. 2 Cor. 11:13.
 - G. Do not give heed to doctrines of devils. 1 Tim. 4:1.
 - H. Speak the things that become sound doctrine implies things unsound. Titus. 2:1
 - I. Be not carried away with "divers and strange doctrines." Heb. 13:9.
 - J. There shall be false teachers among you. 2 Pet. 2:1
- II. HOW CAN ONE RECOGNIZE FALSE TEACHERS AND FALSE DOCTRINE?
 - A. One cannot recognize a false teacher by his manner of speech because many false teachers are fluent speakers. Rom. 16:18.
 - B. One cannot recognize a false teachers merely by his appearance because false teachers may appear as angels of light or in sheep's clothing. Mt. 7:15; 2 Cor. 11:13-15.
 - C. In recognizing false teachers and false doctrines.
 1. One must accept the standard that there is just one system of truth.
 - a. The Bible speaks of the doctrine of Christ in the singular.
 - (1) The Holy Spirit guided the apostles into all truth. Jn. 16:13.
 - (2) The early church continued in the apostle's doctrine. Acts 2:42.
 - (3) Many were obedient to the faith. Acts 6:7.
 - (4) "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." Rom. 1:16.

- (5) Paul taught the same thing in all the churches. **1 Cor. 4:17.**
 (a) But he taught the faith he once destroyed. **Gal. 1:23**
 (b) The faith he once destroyed was the same the other apostles taught.
 (6) There is just one gospel. **Gal. 1:6-9.**
 (7) There is just one faith. **Eph. 4:5.**
 (8) The faith has been once delivered unto men. *O. de 3*

2. One must test the prophets and their teaching by this one standard.
 a. John Admonishes Christians to try the spirits. **1 Jn. 4:1**
 b. The Bereans tested Paul's teachings by the Scriptures to see if they were so. **Acts 17:11.**
 c. In order to test false teachers one must know what they teach. Examples.
 (1) If one teaches a man's saved by "faith only" I know he is a false teacher.
 (2) If one teaches baptism is unessential he is a false teacher.

III. WHAT SHOULD BE OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD FALSE TEACHERS AND FALSE DOCTRINES?

- A. First, we must recognize the different reasons why men speak things contrary to truth.
 1. Some are more concerned with their own traditions than the truth of God. **Mk. 7:8,9.**
 2. Some are teaching merely for selfish reasons and not for the souls of men. **Rom. 16:17,18; 2 Pet. 2:3.**
 3. Some handle the word of God deceitfully to deceive people. **2 Cor. 2:17; 4:2.**
 4. Some don't love the truth. **2 Thess. 2:10.**
 5. Some are ever learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. **2 Tim. 3:7**
 6. Some are honestly, sincerely mistaken, but don't know it.
 7. Thus why one does a thing will help determine our attitude toward this one.
 B. Second, we must recognize the disaster of false doctrines, in and out of the church.
 1. Souls are lost. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. (**Rom. 1:16**) but when changed it loses its power.
 2. Men are made infidels. Which one? Jesus knew this. **John. 17:20,21.**
 C. Third, we must not try to force truth upon those that don't want it. **Mt. 7:1-5.**
 D. Fourth, we must always speak the truth in love. **Eph. 4:15.**
 E. Fifth, we must be gentle, meek, and patient in teaching those that oppose themselves. **2 Tim. 2:24-26.**
 F. Sixth, we must not in any way encourage false teachers whether it be in the church or out of the church. **Rom. 16:17; Tit. 3:9-11; 2 John 9:11.**

Con:

1 John 4:6 probably gives our best conclusion to this lesson.

Tit. 2:1; 1 Tim. 4:6; 6:3 -

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BARNABAS, A GOOD MAN

ACTS 11 : 22-26

INTRODUCTION

1. I covet your attention this evening but I do not have a novel plan to obtain it like John Smith used on one occasion. He was visiting a camp meeting and was asked to speak. "Two or three preachers had already spoken. He was relatively unknown at that time and people began leaving. And to get the attention of the people, he said, "Stay and hear what the great Augustine said, Augustine said that he would like to have seen Rome in her glory, Paul on Mars Hill and Christ in the flesh". Some of the people came back and were seated, but still others were leaving. Then Smith said, "Stay and hear what the great Thales said. He said that he was grateful that he was born a man and not a beast, a Greek and not a Barbarian, a man and not a woman." Still others remained but some were leaving. Finally, he said, "Stay and hear what old Cato said. Cato said that he regretted three things in his life: first, he spent a day in which he did nothing good; second, he made a trip by sea when he might have made it by land; third, he told an important secret to a woman." (Sermons And Lectures, Good Pasture, p. 137).
2. The minor character we are studying this evening is mentioned 29 times in the Bible.
 - a. His name was Joses.
 - b. A levite.
 - c. Of the country of Cyprus.
 - d. Introduced Paul as a Christian to the apostles at Jerusalem. Acts 9:27
 - e. Was sent by the church at Jerusalem to labor with the church Antioch Acts 11:22.
 - f. Went to Tarsus and brought Paul back to Antioch where they labored together one year. Acts 11:25,26.
 - g. Joined with Paul in carrying a contribution to the poor saints in Jerusalem. Acts 11:29,20.
 - h. Accompanied Paul on his first missionary journey. Acts 13-14.
 - i. Went with Paul to the council at Jerusalem to discuss the circumcision question. Acts 15.
 - j. Sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas about who to carry on 2nd journey. Acts 15:36 - 41.
 - k. Was carried away when Peter quit eating with Gentiles at the arrival of certain Jews from James. Gal. 2:11,13.
3. The man we are discussing is Barnabas. Acts 11:22-26.
4. Barnabas was called a good man? Why? We are not interested in the world's definition, but in God's. It is hoped it will help us to be good.

DISCUSSION

- I. BARNABAS WAS A GOOD MAN BECAUSE HE WAS GENEROUS. He was generous in three ways.
 - A. He was a man of generous hand. Acts 4:32-37.
 1. "Bar" means son- "nabas" means consolation or exhortation.
 2. The apostles gave him the name because of the quality of exhortation in which he excelled.
 3. I wonder if we were given names according to the things in which we excel in the church.
 4. The church needs more men of generous hand.
 - B. He was a man of generous judgement. Acts 9:26,27.
 1. The apostles and Christians at Jerusalem were afraid of Paul.
 2. But "Barnabas took him."
 3. The Church needs more Barnabases to help the weak and new members. - extend a friendly and warm hand.
 - C. He was a man of generous heart. Acts 15:36-41.
 1. Paul did not think it good to take John Mark with them on the second journey.
 2. Barnabas stood by Mark in his greatest hour of need as we all need someone to stand by us at times.

II. BARNABAS WAS A GOOD MAN BECAUSE HE WAS A GOOD TEACHER AND FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN.

- A. He was a man full of the Holy Spirit. Acts 11:24.
 - 1. Barnabas was completely under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. Every Bible teacher must allow his or her life to be completely guided by the Holy Spirit.
- B. He was a man full of faith. Acts 11:24.
 - 1. He was completely convicted and grounded in the truth.
 - 2. Every teacher must have conviction.

III. BARNABAS WAS A GOOD MAN BECAUSE HE WAS TRUSTWORTHY.

- A. He, with Paul, was entrusted with the offering from the brethren at Antioch to the brethren at Jerusalem. Acts 11:27-30.
- B. He, along with Paul, went to Jerusalem to discuss the question circumcision. Acts 15:1,2.
- C. When the church at Antioch needed a preacher Barnabas was chosen. Acts 11:22.
- D. A good man is a trustworthy man.

IV. BARNABAS WAS A GOOD MAN BECAUSE HE WAS MISSIONARY MINDED.

- A. Barnabas was ready and willing when chosen by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel. Acts 13:1-3.
- B. A good man is interested in telling the world about Christ Mt. 28:19,20;
Mk. 16:15,16; 2 Tim. 2:12.

V. BARNABAS WAS A GOOD MAN BECAUSE HE WAS A GOOD STICKER.

- A. He didn't quit the church when Paul became more prominent.
- B. He didn't quit when he and Paul had trouble over who would accompany them on the second journey. Acts 15:37-39.
- C. He stuck with Mark even after Mark had left them on the first journey.
1 Cor. 9:6; 2 Tim. 4:11; Acts 15:36ff.
- D. The church always needs those that will "stick".

CONCLUSION.

- 1. Very few men in the Bible are called good men, but Barnabas is one of them.
- 2. Barnabas was a good man because (1) He was generous, (2) He was a good teacher and faithful Christian, (3) He was trustworthy, (4) He was missionary minded, and (5) He was a good stick.
- 3. Now if we want to be a good man then let's be a Barnabas.

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THE SERIOUS SIN OF BEING A STUMBLINGBLOCK

Mt. 18:1 - 7 (ASV); 1 Cor. 8:9; Rom. 14:13.

INTRODUCTION

1. Read or quote the text.
2. From these passages we learn several truths:
 - a. It is possible to be a stumblingblock.
 - b. It is a serious thing to be a stumblingblock.
 - c. It is possible to be a conscious stumblingblock.
 - d. It is possible to be an unconscious stumblingblock.
3. Mark 9:42 and Mt. 18:7 will emphasize the importance of this lesson.
4. In this study we propose to notice:

DISCUSSION

I. WHAT IS A STUMBLING-BLOCK?

- A. Webster defines a stumblingblock as "a bar or hindrance to righteous living; an impediment to belief or understanding; an obstacle in the way of a planned or progressive development or act."
- B. To stumble means to so trip as to be hindered in faith or to be turned out of the way. cf. Rom. 14:11.
- C. A stumblingblock then is any cause of stumbling, perplexity, or error; an obstacle or impediment to steady progress."

II. GOD'S PEOPLE ARE NOT TO BE STUMBLINGBLOCKS.

- A. Under the law of Moses God told his people not "put a stumblingblock before the blind." Lev. 19:14.
- B. Paul said that no man is to put an occasion of stumbling before his brother. Rom. 14:13.
- C. Our liberty is not to become a stumbling block to others. 1 Cor. 8:9.
- D. Christ is against those that cast a stumblingblock before others. Rev. 2:14.

III. THERE ARE SOME INNOCENT STUMBLINGBLOCKS.

- A. Christ is an innocent stumblingblock. Rom. 9:32,33.
 1. He is a stumblingblock to some because of the way he came into the world-- his lowly birth. Mt. 13:53-57; Mk. 6:3
 2. Some stumble at the surroundings of his daily life.
 3. His crucifixion was a stumblingblock to the Jews. 1 Cor. 1:23.
- B. The word of God is an innocent stumblingblock.
 1. The word of God was given to save the souls of men. Jas. 1:21.
 2. But some stumble at the word of God. 1 Pet. 2:8.
- C. Christians are sometimes innocent stumblingblocks.
 1. We may do things and say things that cause people to stumble and yet we are never aware of it.
 2. How we need to daily practice providing things honest in the sight of all men. 1 Cor. 8:21.
- D. Our own physical features may become innocent stumblingblocks. Mk. 9:43-48.
- E. Persecutions may be innocent stumblingblocks. Jas. 1:2
 1. Trials and tribulations should strengthen our faith. Jas. 1:2.
 2. But they cause some to stumble. Mt. 13:20,21.

IV. SOME WAYS IN WHICH WE MAY BE STUMBLINGBLOCKS.

A. An improper example.

1. The Bible gives several example of this truth.
 - a. The sons of Eli became a stumblingblock to Israel and caused men, by their example to abhor the offering of God. **1 Sam. 2:17,24.**
 - b. The priests in the days of Malachi caused many "to stumble at the law." **Mal. 2:8.**
 - c. Paul warns the strong brother to not become a stumblingblock to the weak by his example. **1 Cor. 8:9,10; Rom. 14:21.**
2. Some specific ways in which our examples may be a stumblingblock.
 - a. Lack of zeal on the part of older Christians will soon cool the ardor of new converts.
 - b. Negligence in attendance will soon have new converts and weak doing the same.
 - c. Indifference toward Bible Study.

B. By things that we say. **Jas. 3:1,2.**

1. Peter was an offense unto the Lord by what he said. **Mt. 16:23.**
2. We may be a stumblingblock in this realm by the way we say things. **cf. Eph. 4:15.**
3. We may be a stumblingblock in this realm by what we actually say. Some say and then think later. **cf. Prov. 15:1,2; Jas. 1:19.**

CONCLUSION

1. Brethren, It is a serious things to be a stumblingblock. **Mt. 18:7.**
2. Let us love and obey the word of God that there be no stumblingblock. **Psa. 119:165.**
3. Let us practice self-denial rather than cause a brother to stumble. **1 Cor. 8:13; Rom. 15:1-3.**

" LOVE OF THE TRUTH "

2 Thess. 2:10

INTRODUCTION:

1. Read or quote 2 Thess. 2:1-12 & Zechariah 8:16-19.
2. There has never been an age in the history of man when love of the truth was more greatly needed. This is true for several reasons.
 - a. Our age says there is no such things as absolute truth.
 - b. Unbelief asks "What is truth with a cynical contempt for those who believe that they have found it.
 - c. Shepticism asks, what is truth with the saddest doubt as to the possibility of attaining it.
3. At the time that Jesus Christ stood on trail for his life Pilate asked "What is Truth?" (Jn. 18:38) This question rises in importance when one realizes that:
 - a. God is God of truth. Deut. 32:4
 - b. God is abundant in mercy and truth. Ex. 34:6.
 - c. Christ is truth. Jn. 14:6
 - d. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth. Jn. 16:13.
 - e. The church is the pillar and ground of truth. 1 Tim. 3:14,15.
 - f. All acceptable service to God must be in truth. Josh. 24:14; John 4:23,24.
4. In our study this evening then we propose to notice. (1) What is truth, (2) Some Reasons Why Men Ought to love the truth, and (3) Some Things A love of truth will cause Men to Do.

DISCUSSIONI. WHAT IS TRUTH?

- A. The woman of Zarephath said to Elijah "the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." 1 Kings. 17:24.
- B. The paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. Psal. 25:10.
- C. The law of God is truth. Psal. 119:142.
- D. The commandments of God are truth. Psal. 119:151.
- E. The Holy Spirit guided the apostles into all truth. Jn. 16:13.
- F. The word of God is truth. Jn. 17:17.

II. SOME REASONS WHY MEN OUGHT TO LOVE THE TRUTH.

- A. Men ought to love the truth because it is priceless. Prov. 23:23; Rev. 3:18.
 1. It is priceless because of the one that gave it. Jn. 1:17; 14:6.
 2. It is priceless because of what it is able to do.
 - a. It makes men free. Jn. 8:32. (From Sin - Rom. 6:17,18; Worry - Mt. 6:33; fear of death - Heb. 2:14,15; etc.)
 - b. One is sanctified by truth. Jn. 17:17.
 - c. One is purified by obeying truth. 1 Pet. 1:21.
 3. It is priceless because it endures forever. 1 Pet. 1:23-25.
- B. Men ought to love the truth because of God's desire for man concerning the truth. God desires that men:
 1. Obey the truth. Mt. 7:21.
 2. Speak the truth in love. Eph. 4:15.
 3. Gird himself about with truth. Eph. 6:14.
 4. Come unto a knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim. 2:4.
 5. Rightly divide the truth. 2 Tim. 2:15.
 6. Be established in the truth. 2 Pet. 2:12.

- C. Men ought to love the truth because there are so many false teachers and false doctrines in the world today. This truth is established in a number of ways:
1. Jesus warns us to "beware of false prophets." Mt. 7:15.
 2. Some teach for doctrines the commandments of men. Mt. 15:9.
 3. Jesus told his disciples to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Mt. 16:11,12.
 4. Elymas sought to pervert the rightways of the Lord. Acts 13:10.
 5. Paul warned the elders from Ephesus against false teachers. Acts 20: 28-31.
 6. Paul spoke of false teachers and deceitful workers. 2 Cor. 11:13.
 7. Do not give heed to doctrines of devils. 1 Tim. 4:1.
 8. Speak the things that become sound doctrine implies things unsound. Titus. 2:1.
 9. Be not carried away with "divers and strange doctrines." Heb. 13:9.
 10. There shall be false teachers among you. 2 Pet. 2:1.
- D. Men should love the truth because the judgment of God will be according to truth. Rom. 2:2.
- E. Men should love the truth because one cannot be saved without such love. 2 Thess. 2:10.
1. To love the truth is to believe the truth. 2 Thess. 2:12.
 2. To love the truth is to obey the truth. 1 Jn. 5:3.
- F. Men should love the truth lest they receive a strong delusion, believe a lie and be damned. 2 Thess. 2:11,12.

III. SOME THINGS LOVE FOR TRUTH WILL CAUSE MEN TO DO.

- A. It will cause men to eagerly seek the truth.
1. The rich young ruler came running to Jesus. Mk. 10:17.
 2. The common people heard the Lord gladly. Mk. 12:37.
 3. The people came to the temple early in the morning. Lk. 21:38.
 4. The Samaritans begged the Lord to stay and teach. Jn. 4:40.
 5. Bro. Phillips read the Bible 23 hours without stopping to eat or sleep so he could find answer to one question.
 6. Your eagerness for truth is an indication of your love for truth.
- B. It will cause men to try to test everything to be sure it is truth.
1. The Bereans tested Paul's teaching. Acts 17:11.
 2. John tells Christians to try the prophets. 1 Jn. 4:1.
- C. It will cause men to always with truthful in their dealings with others. Eph. 4:25.

CONCLUSION

The truth is precious. God desires all to receive it. Have you? Remember the truth makes men free (Jn. 8:32) but it must be loved (2 Thess. 2:10) believed (2 Thess. 2:13) and obeyed (1 Pet. 1:22).

Introduction.

1. The very first verse in the Bible says "in the beginning God . . ." (Gen. 1:1) There is no greater subject that can challenge the mind of man "because our concept of God determines our views of the world, sin, life, duty and conduct."
2. The thought of God has brought different responses from different people.
 - a. The Atheist asserts there is no God.
 - b. The Agnostic says he cannot tell whether there is a God or no.
 - c. The Materialist boasts that he does not require a God.
 - d. The Worldly Fool wishes there were no God.
 - e. The Christian says he cannot do without God.
3. There are so many things that we will not know about God this side of eternity but there are some things clearly revealed:
 - a. The God we serve is not brick and mortar. A. 17:22-29.
 - b. Nature tells us something about God. Psa. 19:1.
 - c. The invisible things such as his power and God head are revealed by things made. Rom. 1:20.
4. But today we purpose to notice with you two things about God of which you must be fully persuaded if you would be faithful.

Discussion.I. GOD IS ABLE. ROM. 4:21.

- A. What does it mean to be able?
 1. "Having sufficient power, skill, or resources of any kind to accomplish an object; capable, competent."
 2. God has sufficient power, skill or resources to accomplish all according to his will.
- B. What is the importance of being fully persuaded that God is able?
 1. Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego's firm belief that God is able enabled them to face and overcome the trial of the fiery furnace. Dan. 3:16-18.
 2. Daniel's firm belief of this fact enabled him to overcome the ordeal of the lion's den. Dan. 6:18-23.
 3. Being fully persuaded that he is able enabled Abraham to accept God's promises even when reason said no.
 - a. God promised Abraham a son when he and his wife were past bearing. Rom. 4:19-21.
 - b. God told Abraham to kill Isaac. Reason said God could not call his seed in Isaac if Isaac were dead, but "being fully persuaded." Heb. 11:17-19.
 4. Paul had the strength to suffer for Christ because he was persuaded that he is able. 2 Tim. 1:12.

II. GOD IS FAITHFUL.

- A. To be faithful means to be able as well as true to what one promises. 1 Cor. 1:9
- B. In Christ Jesus all his promises are yea and amen. 2 Cor. 1:20.
- C. God is faithful and able.

III. WHAT IS GOD ABLE AND FAITHFUL TO DO?

- A. God is able to raise up children of stones. Mt. 3:9. (This shows that God does not do all he is able to do.)
- B. He is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. Mt. 10:28.
- C. He is able to perform all that he has promised. Rom. 4:21.
 1. He has promised to raise the dead. Jn. 5:28,29.
 2. He has promised to save those that believe and are baptized. Mk. 16:16.
 3. He has promised to destroy the world. 2 Pet. 3:1ff.
 4. He has promised to reward the faithful. Rev. 2:10.
- D. He is able to graft into the body all that believe. Rom. 11:23.
- E. He is able to make all grace abound toward us. 2 Cor. 9:8.
- F. He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think. Eph. 3:20.

- G. He is able to change our bodies into the likeness of his glorious body. Phil. 3:20.
- H. He is able to keep safely that which we have committed to him. 2 Tim. 1:12.
- I. He is able to save and destroy. Jas. 4:12.
- J. He is able to keep us from falling. Jude 24.

Conclusion.

1. The man that is fully persuaded that God is able to do these things is one that takes God at his word.
2. What two wonderful thoughts: God is Able! God is faithful!
3. Sinner friend, God is able to save you. Erring brother or sister God will receive you back.
4. Our God is able to deliver thee.

Discussion.

1. "Having sufficient power, ability, resources of all kind to accomplish an end."
2. God has sufficient power, ability, resources to accomplish all according to His will.

3. What is the importance of being fully persuaded that God is able to do these things? (Hebrews 11:1-3)
4. How does God's ability relate to our faith? (Hebrews 11:1-3)

5. How does God's ability relate to our hope? (Hebrews 11:1-3)
6. How does God's ability relate to our love? (Hebrews 11:1-3)

7. How does God's ability relate to our obedience? (Hebrews 11:1-3)
8. How does God's ability relate to our perseverance? (Hebrews 11:1-3)

9. How does God's ability relate to our worship? (Hebrews 11:1-3)
10. How does God's ability relate to our service? (Hebrews 11:1-3)

11. How does God's ability relate to our fellowship? (Hebrews 11:1-3)
12. How does God's ability relate to our unity? (Hebrews 11:1-3)

13. How does God's ability relate to our mission? (Hebrews 11:1-3)
14. How does God's ability relate to our vision? (Hebrews 11:1-3)

15. How does God's ability relate to our witness? (Hebrews 11:1-3)
16. How does God's ability relate to our prayer? (Hebrews 11:1-3)

Introduction.

1. Responsibility for the souls of men and women is the most serious task God ever gave because eternity is at stake.
 - a. It is for this reason that God made elders, men of experience, responsible for souls.
 - b. We must be grateful for their work and give them support.
2. Many times we are tempted to think saving souls is the job of adults and youth has no part in it.
3. Satan keeps whispering the lie in your ears that you have no responsibility till you are older. He knows that if he can prevent your service now there are two things that work to his advantage:
 - a. First, not many people serve Satan through youth and then suddenly turn and become dedicated Christians. This is the reason for God's warning.
Eccle. 12:1.
 - b. Second, if you wait until you are mature in every respect you will deprive God of some of the finest service which could be rendered.
 - (1) What if Samuel had waited until middle age to begin to serve God?
 - (2) David slew Goliath while still a boy.
 - (3) Josiah began to reign over corrupt Judah at 8 (**2 Kgs. 22:1**) and was only 16 when he determined to destroy idolatry. (**2 Chron. 34:3**).
 - (4) Through the efforts of young people much good has been accomplished in the past and can be today.
4. I want to talk to you therefore about "Teenagers For Christ."
5. Our Lord expects great things of you because you have the power to shape the lives and destinies of countless thousands to come.
 - a. The Lord expects great things of you because he loves you.
 - b. High expectation should have a tremendous impact on you.

Discussion.

- I. THE LORD EXPECTS YOU AS A TEENAGER TO BE A GENUINE CHRISTIAN.
 - A. This means more than just being baptized and going to church---it means "Christ-one."
 - B. He expects you to be a Christian at school---do your best work---be honest and upright---be of service.
 - C. He expects you to be a Christian at home like the Lord. (**1k. 2:51a.**)
Respect to your parents, kinds to your brothers and sisters.
 - D. If you have a job God expects you to be loyal to your employer and to serve him as you would the Lord.
 - E. Regardless of where you are teenagers God expects you to be concerned with the question "What would Jesus do if he were in my place?"
- II. THE LORD EXPECTS YOU TO BE AN EXAMPLE. 1 Tim. 4:12.
 - A. Everything you do can be accepted as standard for Christians.
 - B. You do not have the right to engage in anything that would not be proper for others Christians to do.
 - C. If you are disturbed because your parents, the preachers, elders, etc, insist there are certain things you cannot do, then make up a list of the 10 people you consider the most faithful Christians and you'll find these things are not a part of their lives.
 - D. Can you measure up to God's expectation that you be an example?
- III. THE LORD EXPECTS YOU IN HEAVEN.
 - A. The Lord died for you and God expects to see you in heaven.
 - B. He has gone to prepare a mansion for you if you prepare for it. **Jn. 14:1-3.**
 - C. If you were to die today would God be disappointed that you could not come home?
- IV. SATAN OFFERS SOME OBJECTIONS.
 - A. Alright you've made up your mind that you are going to be a really dedicated Christian, but Satan immediately presents two objections that are very important

to us:

1. You have to give up so much to be a Christian that you can't have a good time.
2. You can't be popular and be a Christian.

B. First, let's consider you have to give up so many things that you can't have a good time.

1. If you are a teenager for Christ is true you must give up whatever comes between you and Him.
2. The Bible positively condemns some things---adultery, drunkenness, stealing, lying.
3. There are others things----car, sports, boyfriends, girl friends---that may be right but if they come between us and the Lord they must be given up.
4. But does God require us to give these things up because he's just trying to be mean, or does he not know what is best for us and in his loving way has told us to leave these things alone in order to really have a good time.
(Do you really believe the sinner is happy?)
5. Also we have to consider what we get to determine if it is worthwhile to give up some things.
 - a. You have sacrificed and given up things because you wanted something else more.
 - b. Heaven is worth any price.

C. Second, we may fall victim to the deception that if we are devoted, consecrated Christians we can never be popular.

1. Too many teenagers and adults believe that its only as one goes along with the crowd that one can be well liked. *(That Girl do your mirror"-vonda Kay vandeDyke*
2. It is not true that you must be unpopular because you are a Christian. Cf. *vandeDyke*
A. 2:47a.

3. Now I want to tell you how to be a "popular" Christian.

a. First of all, Be a Christian.

- (1) You will disgust people if you talk Christianity, but fail to practice it.
- (2) You need not expect to be popular with anyone if they find you don't really have any convictions, but go along with anything, talk one thing and do another.

b. Second, be humble.

- (1) No one likes a showoff about how good he is especially in religion.
- (2) Your convictions must be unwavering but your attitude must be one of haughtiness, but humility.

c. Third, be a servant.

- (1) The rule that Jesus gave works in every relationship of life. **Mt. 20:26-28.**
- (2) The popularity of others is not "some pull" or "the teacher just didn't like me", but rather they have proven themselves.
- (3) If you want to be elected to some position of honor, take advantage of the opportunities to serve.
- (4) Don't blame Christianity for your lack of popularity but blame a lack of Christianity for it.

d. Fourth, be considerate of others.

- (1) In our selfishness we often forget to be considerate of others. But the popular you know are considerate of others.
- (2) You'll be amazed at how much more popular you become as your interest and consideration of others increases.

e. Fifth, be appreciative.

- (1) Be appreciative of what others do for you. (Mother, Dad, friends, etc)
- (2) Ingratitude is so common that a kind "thank you" is really noticed.

Conclusion.

1. Let me plead with you to not just be teenagers, but be teenaters for Christ.
2. There will be trials and disappointment but think of the joy of living with God through eternity.

INTRODUCTION

1. One day a preacher was met on the street by a neighbor. "How many members in your congregation now?" "50" was the reply. "How many are active?" "50" was the reply. "You must have an unusual congregation if all are active." "Yes, 25 are active for me and 25 are active against me."
2. Recently the Southern Baptist Church ran a survey of her members and found that 59 out of every 100 were not active in any sense.
3. It is presently estimated that in the southern states 50% those who have obeyed the gospel "are not presently identified with any congregation and never attend a church service."
4. There are 50 adults in this church that are not even enrolled in a Bible class and on any given Sunday morning we have an average of 80 adults and children absent. On Wednesday evening we have 104 that are not even enrolled in a Bible class and we have an average of 139 absent every Wednesday night.
5. During the past several years I've made it a practice to try to read 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus, in fact I have memorized most of these three books. These books were written to a young preacher. I read them regularly:
 - a. To constantly remind myself of what God expects of me as a preacher.
 - b. To constantly remind myself that preaching includes:
 - (1) Reprov - (a) "To convict, confute, refute, usually with the suggestion of putting the convicted person to shame." (Vine)
 - (b) "To chide as blameworthy; administer a rebuke to; call attention to remissness in a kind or gentle way; seek to correct."
 - (2) Rebuke - (a) To criticize sharply; censure severely.
 - (3) Exhort - (a) To incite by argument or advice; urge strongly; to give warnings or advice, to make urgent appeal."
 - (b) "To admonish, exhort, to urge one to pursue some course of conduct."
 - (c) It includes such thoughts as comfort, beseech, interest, desire, call for
6. During the time that I have been in your midst I've tried to preach sermons that did all three.
 - a. I've tried to preach sermons that comfort and strengthen because I realize your problems.
 - b. I've tried to preach sermons that cause you to respond.
7. The sermon of the morning is rebuking in its nature, especially to those that need it.

DISCUSSIONI. GOD EXPECTS HIS PEOPLE TO BE ACTIVE.

A. God Expects Us To Be Active Because Of The Price He Paid For Us. **Jn. 3:16; 1 Cor. 6:19,20; 1 Pet. 1:15-19.**

B. God expects us to be active to overcome the devil. **1 Pet. 5:8.**

C. God never intended that his people be lukewarm and indifferent, but dynamic and wide awake. **Rev. 3:14-17.** To Be Active:

1. We must sow with the Master. **2 Cor. 9:6.**

2. We must use what we have. **Mt. 25:29.**

Example: Several years ago the Reader Digest Published an article concerning sea gulls that were starving in St. Augustine Florida. They had forgotten how to fish. For several years the shrimp fleet operating out of the harbor had tossed them scraps from the nets. When the boats left, the gulls had lost their natural ability to catch fish. Talents must be used or lost.

D. We are now riding on the highest crest of religious interest in the history of this country. Never before has there been a greater opportunity, but if allowed to pass it may never return.

E. The greatest mistake that any individual can make is the mistake of doing nothing. The sin of "do-nothingness" is real and all about us and dangerous.

II. FIVE PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE WHICH EMPHASIZE THE SIN OF INACTIVITY OR "DO-NOTHINGNESS."

A. The One Talent Man. Mt. 25:14-30.

1. He was guilty of the sin of "do-nothingness."

a. He had not wasted the talent.

b. He did not open it on intoxicating liquor.

c. He did not gamble.

d. He didn't throw it away.

2. The less in the parables is clear.

a. The sin of "do nothingness" is real.

b. The sin of "do nothingness" is wicked and slothful.

c. The sin of "do nothingness" will lead to eternal condemnation.

B. The Certain Samaritan. Luke. 10: 25-37.

1. This story is one of the world's most famous and it contains eternal truth from the Son of God.

2. The priest and Levite did not beat the man or rob him. They did nothing.

3. The Samaritan did something.

a. He had compassion and bound his wound

b. He took him to the inn and cared for him.

4. One cannot read this story without realizing the scathing denunciation Jesus placed upon the sin of "do-nothingness."

C. The Barren Fig Tree. Luke 13:6-9.

1. This story again makes clear the sin of "do-nothingness."

a. The tree did not produce wormy fruit.

b. It just did not produce fruit at all.

c. It was barren and deceitful.

2. The story teaches us that to go before the judgment bar of God barren is to go unprepared and be condemned.

a. We must do something if we plan to go to heaven when we die. Mt. 7:21.

b. Those that do have a right. Rev. 22:14.

c. Faith without works is dead. Jas. 2:26.

D. The Vine & The Branches. Jn. 15:1-6.

1. Jesus did not teach that once we are a vine there is nothing to do.

2. Jesus taught that unless we produce we will be cast into the fire.

E. The Pharisees said but did not. Mt. 23:2,3.

1. Phariseeism is not limited to the first century.

2. All today who claim to be a Christian, yet never do anything, do not have a symptom of Phariseeism, they have the disease.

CONCLUSION

1. One of the greatest opportunities is afforded us today in the Bible class. When it grows, individuals grow, attendance grows, contribution grows, mission work grows, and the community becomes a better place.

2. In our age there is much to do. Shall we be labeled as a generation that got the job done or as the "do-nothing" generation who fiddled and fussed.

3. The story of the Talents, the good Samaritan, the Vine and the Branches and the Barren Fig Tree ought to put the fear of God in our souls. Rom. 13:11.

THE CERTAIN CONFRONTATION

Amos 4:1-12----

Introduction.

1. Our world today faces a certain CONFRONTATION, AN INEVITABLE ENCOUNTER, A DREADFUL SHOWDOWN, AND THIS CALLS TO OUR MINDS THE WORDS OF AMOS "Prepare to meet they God."
2. ABOUT 100 YEARS THE PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNISM WAS CONCEIVED IN THE EVIL MIND OF K. MARX.
 - a. IT IS AN IDEOLOGY--ATHEISTIC, DEHUMANIZES MAN, REGARDS HIM AS AN ANIMAL AND TOOL OF THE STATE. BELIEVES IN AN INEVITABLE WORLDWIDE CLASH BETWEEN CAPITAL AND LABOR, A BLOODY REVOLUTION, WHICH WILL DIVEST ALL PROPERTY OWNERS OF THEIR POSSESSIONS, AND ERASE ALL CLASS, SOCIAL, AND RACIAL DISTINCTIONS.
 - b. THE INTENT OF THE COMMUNIST IS TO "BURY US", DESTROY DEMOCRACY, FREEDOM, AND CHRISTIANITY. TO THIS END THEY HAVE BEEN MAKING PREPARATION.
 - c. THEIR ABILITIES ARE THE WISE WEAPONS IN NUCLEAR ARSENAL. 100 MEGATON BOMB. *** A U.S. SENATOR HAS REMARKED THAT IT WOULD BURN 6 STATES IF FIRED AT THE RIGHT ALTITUDE ON A CLEAR DAY.

DIS.

1. THE CERTAIN CONFRONTATION MAY HAVE ALREADY BEGUN.
 - A. Our PRESIDENT HAS COMMITTED OUR NATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM, DRAWN THE LINE AND WE WILL STAND HERE AND FIGHT. THE INEVITABLE ENCOUNTER WITH COMMUNISM WE HAVE DECIDED MUST TAKE PLACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. NEARLY 250,000 TROOPS ARE THERE AT THE PRESENT TIME.
 - B. THIS INVOLVES DANGERS TO ALL OF US AS IT COULD EASILY ESCALATE INTO A WORLD-WIDE CONFRONTATION OF FREE STATES AND COMMUNIST STATES.
 - C. THE MOST SERIOUS THREAT SEEMS TO BE POSED BY RED CHINA. RUSSIA HAS ALWAYS BACKED DOWN.
 1. RED China has the atom bomb, and a more sophisticated one than generally IS REPORTED. "INTELLIGENCE REPORTS STATE THAT CHINA HAS A NUMBER OF BRILLIANT CAPABLE SCIENTISTS. IN FIVE YEARS AT THE MOST (PERHAPS SOONER) RED CHINA WILL HAVE A ROCKET SYSTEM WITH NUCLEAR WARHEADS AIMED AT EVERY POPULATION CENTER OF THE UNITED STATES.
 2. THERE IS NO KNOWN DEFENSE AGAINST MISSILE ATTACK. WE TALK OF ANTI-ROCKETS BUT AS YET THERE IS NO DEFENSE AGAINST THEM.
 3. THROUGH INTELLIGENCE AND PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS OF THE CHINESE OFFICIALS, WE KNOW THAT RED CHINA IS COMMITTED TO USE THESE IMPLEMENTS OF WAR THE MINUTE SHE HAS THEM. IT IS HER PURPOSE TO START WORLD WAR III. SHE DESIRE MILITARY CONFLICT WITH THE WEST BELIEVING THAT ONLY CHINESE COMMUNISM WILL SURVIVE THE HOLOCAUST. SHE WANTS THIS SHOWDOWN.
 4. RESULTS OF SUCH A SHOWDOWN:
 - a. EITHER OF US COULD MAKE THE FIRST ATTACK AND THE OTHER WOULD HAVE THE POWER TO RETALIATE.
 - b. IT IS ESTIMATED THEY COULD KILL 30 to 60 MILLION IN THE FIRST BLAST, AND WRECK OUR INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM.
 - c. WE COULD KILL UP TO 300 MILLION CHINESE BUT WOULD STILL LEAVE 450 MILLION AND HER INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM WOULD BE UNIMPAIRED BECAUSE DIVERSIFIED.

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEPAR" ®

"NOTEPAR" ®

d. ALTERNATIVE IS LAY DOWN AND LET COMMUNISTS TAKE US. BUT THEY HAVE ALREADY BOASTED THEY WILL KILL EVERY THIRD AMERICAN OR 60 to 70 MILLION.

5. SOME MILITARY MEN URGE WE RELEASE OUR BOMBS AND ROCKETS ON RED CHINA RIGHT NOW AND RETARD HER PROGRESS. START THE WAR, BLAST HER RESEARCH CENTERS, AND HOLD OFF THIS CERTAIN CONFRONTATION. OTHERS SAY SUCH ACTION IS MORALLY UNTHINKABLE. ALL WE CAN SIT AND WAIT, SIT AND WAIT, EVEN IN VIET NAM TODAY. SIT AND WAIT WHILE RED CHINA CONTINUES TO PREPARE.

D. THE HOUR IS LATE.

1. ILLUS. TWO SMALL BOYS TOOK THE FAMILY CLOCK APART AND PUT IT BACK TOGETHER. DURING THE NIGHT THE FATHER WAS AWAKENED WHEN THE CLOCK STRUCK 117 times WITHOUT STOPPING. "SARAH", HE SAID EXCITEDLY TO HIS WIFE, "YOU'D BETTER GET UP! IT'S LATER THAN I EVER KNEW IT TO BE." YOU MAY SMILE, BUT NEVER HAS THE WORLD BEEN SO CLOSE TO MASSIVE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY AND LIFE.
2. FROM SPEECHES OF WORLD LEADERS OF TODAY, OUR WORLD HAS NOT MORE THAN TEN YEARS TO SURVIVE. THIS IS NOT AN ALRMIST OR PREACHER, BUT WORLD LEADERS.
3. We MAY HAVE FIVE YEARS OR LESS---DEPENDING ON RED China
4. THE WORDS OF AMOS ARE TERRIFYING AND REVELANT: "PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD."

II. LET'S LOOK AT:

A. THE WORLD.

1. COULD GOD BE SAYING IN OUR NEWSPAPER HEADLINES, "WORLD, PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD."
2. WORLD SIEZED BY WORLD-WIDE REBELLION, UNREST, LAWLESSNESS AND IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR. PSYCHOLOGISTS CAN'T EXPLAIN IT. 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

B. OUR NATION.

1. IS GOD SAYING TO AMERICA AS AMOST SAID TO ISRAEL 2700 YEARS AGO, "AMERICA PREPARE TO MEET GOD."
2. LOOK AT WHAT AMOS, THE HERDSMAN, MOUNTAINEER PREACHER DECLARED. CAME OUT OF HILLS OF TEKOA, IN CRUDE CLOTHING, PRONOUNCING JUDGMENT THAT WAS UNREFINED AND UNLETTERED. THEY CHALLENGED HIS RIGHT TO SPEAK. HE ANSWERED. AMOS 7:14,15. THEY RIDICULED HIM, BEAT HIM INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS, HUNG HIM ACORSS HIS DONKEY AND SENT HIM BACK HOME.
3. PREACHERS NOT REALLY RESPECTED IN U.S. TODAY. IT IS THE SCIENTISTS. AMERICA IS TRUSTING SCIENCE MORE THAN GOD. PEOPLE WANT SELFISH SINFUL PLEASURE NOT RELIGION. YOUNG MEN WANT TO BE SCIENTISTS AND ROCKETERS NOT PREACHERS. PEOPLE DON'T REALLY PAY ANY ATTENTION TO PREACHERS.
4. AMOS INFURIATED ISRAEL BY PREACHING "JUDGMENT IS COMING ON THE NATION." Amos 5:18.
 - a. They laughed at Amos. Look at our prosperity, our wealth, our houses of ivory, our silken couches of comfort, our women beautifully attired. Amos gave a reply. Amos 2:6.
 - b. America never had it so good--higher gross national product, longest prosperity cycle on record, boasting now that we can't have a depression, have two car and two boat families.

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- c. But God SAYS, "WAIT A MINUTE AMERICA, ONE BILLION PEOPLE GO TO BED HUNGRY, MILLIONS DO NOT HAVE A THIN TIN ROOF OVER THEIR HEADS, AND MOST TRAVEL ON THEIR FEET, AND GOD CALLS US TO JUDGMENT FOR BEING INSENTIVE TO HUNGRY, STARVING NEED, SUFFERING MEN.

6. LOOK AT OUR CHURCHES.

- a. Israel said to Amos: "Look at Bethel and Gilgal, look at the crowds with their sacrifices, but Amos said in bringing sacrifices they were multiplying sin. Amos 5:4.
- b. In America better churchbuildings, larger crowds, larger membership, yet in a period of moral declind.

7. Peace

- a. Amos prophesied that God would bring judgment by war upon Israel. Young men slain ON BATTLEFIELD AND YOUR WOMEN LED AWAY INTO SLAVERY LIKE CATTEL WITH HOOKS IN THEIR NOSES. ISRAEL SAID WE HAVE PEACE. AMOS REPLY: "YOU SAY PEACE, PEACE, BUT THERE IS NO PEACE."
- b. AMERICA CRIES OUT FOR PEACE, WE ARE SINCERELY STRIVING FOR PEACE, WE WANT IT DEARLY. BUT WE ARE NOT WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE FOR PEACE.
- (1) Not doing THE THINGS NECESSARY FOR PEACE. FOR EXAMPLE 70¢ OF EVERY FEDERAL TAX DOLLAR GOES TO SUPPORT WAR, HOT, COLD, PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.
- (2) OUR SPEACE EXPLORATION IS PRIMARILY MILITARY. ARE PSENDING MORE MONEY TO LAND A MAN ON THE MOON THAN ALL THE CHURCHES OF AMERICA HAVE SPENT ON FOREIGN MISSION WORK ALL THE YEARS THIS COUNTRY HAS BEEN A NATION.
- (3) DOUGLAS MCARTHUR SAID AT THE END OF WORLD WOR II, AFTER JAPANESE PEACE TREATY WAS SIGNED, "SEND 10,000 CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES TO JAPAN." "THE DOORS ARE WIDE OPEN, WE CAN WIN JAPAN AND THE ORIENT TO JESUS CHRIST IN THIS GENERATION." THIS NUMBER OF MISSIONARIES WOULD NOT COST AS MUCH AS ONE AIRCRAFT CARRIER. BUT WE SAID AIRCRAFT ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN MISSIONARIES. WE ARE IN TROUBLE IN THE ORIENT TODAY.
- (4) PERSONALLY FEW ARE PAYING THEPRICE FOR PEACE. WE MUST LIVE THE KIND OF CHRISTIAN LIFE THAT BRINGS PEACE: PEACE TO A COMMUNITY: PEACE TO A PEOPLE, PEACE TO A NATION, :EACE TO A WORLD: CHRISTIAN TALK IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN WALK.
8. AMOST SAID GOD'S PATIENCE IS WORN OUT. GOD SAID, "I SENT YOU FAMINE AND YOU TURNED NOT: DROUTH, BLIGHT, INSECTS, DISEASE, WAR AND YOU TURNED NOT: NOT PREPARE TO MEET THEY GOD.
- 9 COULD GOD BE SAYING TO AMERICA. "I SENT YOU WORLD WAR I, DEPRESSION, WORLD WAR II, KOREA, AFFLICTION UPON AFFLICTION AND YOU TURNED NOT: NOW PREPARE TO MEET THEY GOD.

IV. LET'S GET PERSONAL.

A. WHAT CAN I DO TO AVERT THIS DISASTEROUS ENCOUNTER? ARE WE HELPLESS VICTIMS?

- B. 1. Just prior to the outbreak OF WORLD WAR II, DR. CARL, G. JUNG, PSYCHIATRIST, OF SWITZERLAND, WAS ASKED BY ONE OF HIS CLIENTS: "DR. JUNG, HOW DO YOU KEEP YOURPATIENCE WITH US AND OUR PUNY PROBLEMS, WHEN EUROPE IS FALLING APART AND YOU HAVE WORK OF WORLD IMPORTANCE?" THE CELEBRATED BSYCHIATRIST ANSWERED: "BECAUSE THE WORLD PROBLEMS START WITH THE INDIVIDUALS." (MY FRIENDS, SO DO THE SOLUTIONS.)

31'
B. BEING A CHRISTIAN PREPARES US INDIVIDUALLY FOR THE CERTAIN CONFRONTATION AND OUR
ULTIMATE APPOINTMENT WITH GOD. IF NUCLEAR BOMB DOESN'T GET US, DEATH WILL-THEN
THE JUDGMENT. HEB. 9:27; Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10

Int.

1. What do these passages of scriptures mean to you? "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." (Heb. 13:8) Jas. 1:17; Heb. 1:12.
2. a. You will observe the same truth emphasized in all these---God and His Son are always the same and are not always changing.
- b. To many people these statements mean God has not changed in the way he does things.
 - (1) The Holiness argue that since God once preformed miracles, then he still does.
 - (2) The users of instrumental music argue that since God once allowed their use then he still does.
- c. These passages do not teach that God is the same in that he still does things the same way or requires the same of men.
 - (1) God no longer makes men of the dust of the ground.
 - (2) God no longer requires men to build arks.
2. These passages teach that God is the same:
 - a. In his hatred of sin. Ex. The flood. Gen. 6. Death of his Son.
 - b. In his love for mankind.
 - c. In his longsuffering.
 - d. In his requirement that man obey him.
3. It is to God's strict requirement of obedience to which your attention is particularly directed this morning. The importance of this lesson:
 - a. First, Ben Bogard in his debate with Hardeman said "If one believes, it matters not whether he ever obeys a command or not."
 - b. Second, because a failure to understand this vital truth is the reason for so many "isms" today.
 - c. Third, the words "do" and "obey" appear some 2,000 times in the Bible which indicates their importance.
4. We purpose to observe:

Discussion.I. WHAT DOES OBEY OR OBEDIENCE MEAN?

- A. "To obey means to be obedient to; to execute the commands of."
- B. There are two passages of scripture that show "to obey" means "to do":
 1. Mt. 7:21---". . . he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."
 2. Heb. 5:9---"Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him."
- C. Some commands that illustrate obedience.
 1. Children obey your parents. Eph. 6:1; What does it mean:
 2. Servants obey your Masters. Eph. 6:5.
- D. The Idea of obedience implies:
 1. Man has the ability to obey (He can think and understand).
 2. God has given commands that man can obey (They are not impossible. 1 Jn. 3:3)
 3. The very fact that God gives a command implies its essentiality.

II. OF WHAT DOES OBEDIENCE TO GOD CONSIST? FOUR ESSENTIALS:

- A. First, one does it because God says do it. Some people do what God says do but they don't do it because God said do it.
- B. Second, one must do what God says do. A number of people "baptize" but don't do what God said do---substitute sprinkling and pouring. Cf. Rom. 6:3,4; Col. 2:12.
- C. Third, one must do it in the way the Lord said do it.
- D. Fourth, one must do it for the reason the Lord said do it. Example: Baptism.

III. ARE THERE BIBLE EXAMPLES OF THOSE THAT DIDN'T STRICTLY OBEY GOD?

- A. Adam and Eve.
 1. God's command---"But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17.
 2. The temptation and disobedience---"Ye shall not surely die." Gen. 3:4. They ate the forbidden fruit. Gen. 3:6.
 3. Results or Consequences---
 - a. Man died spiritually.
 - b. Physical death came on the race.
 - c. Serpent cursed.
 - d. Sorrow and pain to woman.
 - e. Man to earn his bread.

4. Why? Simply because they didn't do what God said do.
- B. Lot's wife.
 1. God's command—"look not behind thee . . ." Gen. 19:17.
 2. Disobedience—"But his wife looked back. . ." Gen. 19:26.
 3. Consequence—"she became a pillar of salt . . ." Gen. 19:26.
 4. Why? Simply because she didn't do what God commanded.
- C. Nadab and Abihu.
 1. God's command—"Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon . . ." Ex. 30:9.
 2. Disobedience—"They offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not." Lev. 10:1.
 3. Consequence—"And there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them . . ." Lev. 10:2.
 4. Why? Simply because they didn't do what God commanded.
- D. Uzzah—Removal of ark from Kirjathjearim to Jerusalem.
 1. God's command—"Staves to stay in ark at all times—Ex. 25:14. No one, except Aaron + his sons Levites to touch the ark. Num. 4:15.
 2. Disobedience—"Uzz, put forth his hand to hold the ark." 2 Sam. 6:6.
 3. Consequence—"God smote him there for his error." 2 Sam. 6:7.
 4. Why? Simply because he didn't do what God commanded.
- E. Thus in every case when man disobeyed God punished him. This is a vital lesson.
- IV. ARE THERE BIBLE EXAMPLES OF THOSE THAT STRICTLY OBEYED GOD?
 - A. Noah built the ark. Gen. 6:14-22.
 1. It took great faith to even build the ark as God directed under the circumstances.
 2. Noah did "according to all that God commanded him." Gen. 6:22.
 3. God blessed him for his obedience.
 - B. Abraham left his country and offered his son. Heb. 11:11-19.
 - C. Moses built the tabernacle.
 1. God's command to Moses . Ex. 25:9.
 2. Moses did everything just like God commanded. Ex. 40:16,19,21,23,25,27,29,32.
 - D. In every case where man obeyed God always blessed.
- V. WHY ARE THESE EXAMPLES A PART OF THE OLD TESTAMENT?
 - A. "WHATsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." Rom. 15:4.
We learn:
 1. That God condemns man when he does not obey.
 2. God blesses man when he obeys.
 - B. We must not do the things they did contrary to God's word. 1 Cor. 10:6-12.
- VI. GOD EXPECTS OBEDIENCE FROM US. Mt. 7:21; Heb. 5:8,9. Rev. 22:14.
 - A. He does not expect us to build an ark like Noah, or offer our son as did Abraham,
 - B. But he does expect us to obey what he says:
 1. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Mk. 16:16 .
 2. Add the Christian graces. 2 Pet. 1:5-8.
 3. Partake of the Lord's supper and give every first day of the week. 1 Cor. 16:1,2;

Conclusion.

1. The Old testament cries out that God has always expected strict obedience to his commands.
2. The New Testament states the same truth. Gal. 1:7-9; Rev. 22:18,19.

Int.

1. Definition of our terms:

a. Satan.

- (1) He is a busy fellow. 1 Pet. 5:8.
- (2) He is like a serpent---subtlety. Gen. 3:1; 2 Cor. 11:1-4.
- (3) He is like a roaring lion---stalks prey.

b. Suggestion.

- (1) "To put (as an idea, proposition, or impulse) into the mind.
- (2) To insinuate, esp, an evil or false thought into the mind of.
- (3) To mention as a possibility; to implicate."
- (4) To arouse, often by indirect means, the thought of, the desire for, the temptation to commit, or the like.
- (5) The arousing of ideas, or a thought pattern, in one's mind by another."

2. There is tremendous power in suggestion and almost everyone uses it in one form or another.

- a. Parents use it in healing the afflictions of their children.
- b. Doctors use it extensively with their patients.
- c. Faith healers use it in their campaigns.
- d. Different experiments prove the power of suggestion.

3. One of Satan's most powerful weapons is suggestion.

- a. He uses them with power toward teenagers.
 - (1) "Your parents don't really want you to have a good time."
 - (2) "Your parents don't really understand and don't try."
- b. He uses them with power toward parents.
 - (1) "Your children don't want you to try to help them."
 - (2) "Your children are not trying to do what is right."

4. We purpose in this study to notice four major suggestions that Satan has made to man:

Dis.

I. YOU CANNOT SIN SO AS TO FALL AND RECEIVE CONDEMNATION.

- A. The Garden of Eden. Gen. 3:1-6.
 1. Satan's suggestion; "You will not die." v. 4. God will not punish you.
 2. " " : "You shall be as wise as God."
- B. Israelites commit fornication with Moabites. Num. 25:1ff.
 1. Friendly relations can be established.
 2. You can gain beautiful wives and you will not sin against God.
- C. Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5.
 1. You will receive the praise of men.
 2. You will be more acceptable to God.
- D. Satan's suggestions are still followed today by men.
 1. Once a person is saved he is always saved---one cannot fall. 1 Cor. 10:12.
 2. Too many Christians have imbibed this doctrine.

II. YOU CAN USE IDOLS AND IMAGES IN WORSHIP AND STILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO GOD.

- A. Aaron and the children of Israel built the golden calf. Ex. 32:8. ("We're not really worshipping this.")
- B. Solomon's wives turned away his heart after other gods. 1 Kings 11:4. "Go ahead and marry them, you're stronger than they."
- C. Jeroboam built two calves to aid the people, but "this thing became a sin; for the people went to worship." 1 Kings. 12:28.
- D. The Gentiles began to worship idols. Rom. 1:23.
- E. Many use idols in worship today believing Satan's suggestion that they are merely aids to the real worship.

III. GREAT SACRIFICES ON YOUR PART ARE JUST AS ACCEPTABLE AS OBEDIENCE.

- A. Saul the first king of Israel thought this and accepted Satan's suggestion. 1 Sam. 15:20-23.
 1. Great sacrifice is just as acceptable.
 2. You must please the people because they made you king.

B. The Pharisee of **Luke 18** told God all the sacrifices he had made and thought he was pleasing.

C. Many people still believe that great sacrifices are just as acceptable as obedience.

IV. YOU MUST KNOW SIN IN ORDER TO OVERCOME IT.

A. The church at Thyatira probably argued the same about those in her midst with the doctrine of Balaam. **Rev. 2:24.**

B. Argument of many Christians:

1. One must associate with sinful people to know them. **1 Cor. 15:33.**

2. It is not wrong to go to sinful places as long as one has a view of doing good.

3. It is not wrong for me to do sinful things as long as I have good of someone else in mind. **Rom. 6:16-23.**

INT.

1. The seventeenth century poet-preacher John Dunn gave to the world these now widely quoted words: "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; the bell tolls for thee."
2. These words are revealing because each one of us is deeply involved in all of mankind and there is nothing that happens anywhere in the world that affects people that is not a matter of our concern.
2. From the very beginning of time man has been involved with his fellowman though he has not always realized it:
 - a. After Cain killed Abel the Lord said "Where is Abel thy brother?" Gen. 4:9.
 - b. Cain answered "Am I my brother's keeper?" Gen. 4:9,10.
 - c. He didn't realize until later that the answer was "Yes."
 - d. There are still descendants of Cain who are cursed with their own lack of concern for their fellowman.
3. Ours is an age of two great evils; regarding involvement:
 - a. The evil of refusing to get involved with the dangers and needs of others.
 - (1) The incident of Kitty Genovese in New York City.
 - (2) The Subway Crisis in New York.
 - b. The evil of becoming too involved. Jesus told about the seed among the thorns that was choked. Mt. 13:22.
4. There are many examples of real involvement in the Lord's work.
 - a. When Bro. G.C. Brewer was preaching in Sherman, Texas, he became involved. He was waking home from his office one noon for lunch. Suddenly, out of the blue came a crisis. He has just passed some little children playing in a yard when he saw a mad dog, frothing at the mouth, coming toward those children. There was no time to call the police, no time to get a gun, no time even to pick up a stick to fight with, so Brother Brewer met that dog head-on with his bare hands, and killed him. Of course, he had to take the rabies shots. There was some suffering involved and some time lost, but some children lived.
 - b. The Samaritan became involved. "This Samaritan really was a rather irrational man. He should have had the sense to see that this was a dangerous spot and if he remained he likewise might be robbed and beaten. He should have had the insight to realize that the man he was helping was a man of a race that looked upon his own race and that he would likely get no thanks for his efforts. After all, he was a Samaritan, despised by the Jews, and looked down upon as if he were a dog. But he stopped. It involved unselfishness and love."
 - c. Right here in this congregation we have some of the greatest examples of real involvement found anywhere.
5. In my judgment, the heaviest problem which faces the elders of most congregations is the responsibility to help each member of the church become totally involved.

Dis.

- I. A CONGREGATION THAT FOLLOWS THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST AND THE JERUSALEM CHURCH WILL INVOLVE MORE AND MORE MEMBERS.
 - A. Christ's activities are described in one verse in the Bible. Mt. 9:35.
 - B. The church in Jerusalem was a marching, powerful, wonderful church because it had at least three things to involve its members.
 1. A teaching program that includes public and private teaching. Acts 2:46; 5:42; 8:4.
 - a. It is through teaching that men are drawn to Christ. Jn. 6:44,45.
 - b. It is through teaching that solid growth takes place. Acts 20:32; 1 Pet. 2:2.
 - c. Those involved in teaching are involved in the most challenging and satisfying task on earth.
 2. A benevolent program.

- a. It took seven men full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom to administer the benevolent program of the model church. Acts 6:1ff.
- b. Great things happen when a congregation is involved in a dynamic program for the poor, lowly, and downtrodden.
 - (1) It softens the heart of the community.
 - (2) It builds goodwill for the church.
 - (3) It draws people to hear the gospel.
 - (4) It makes us appreciate the blessings we have.
3. c. A mission program.
 - a. The model church had a mission program that involved every member. A. 8:4. (We teach against clergy and laity in the church, but we practice it in our work.)
 - b. All of you that contribute are involved in the weekly support we send to Bro. Jack London.
 - c. All of you need to become involved in our door to door mission work each week.
 - (1) It is our job to plant and God's job to give the increase. 1 Cor. 3:6.
 - (2) Give some examples here of the length of time it sometimes takes.

II. INVOLVEMENT BRINGS HAPPINESS AND FULFILLMENT.

- A. You find the great enjoyments from everything in your life when you really become involved in them.
- B. You find the joy and fulfillment in being a Christian when you really become involved.

III. IN VIEW OF THESE GREAT TRUTHS WHAT ARE THE REASONS WHY MORE DO NOT BECOME INVOLVED?

- A. First, fear, paralyzing fear, which leads people to think "I don't know how; I can't."
 1. One overcomes this fear if there is a force greater. For example: "Imagine a man driving home at the end of the day and he is passed by a fire engine. As he comes to his street he sees that it is his house that is on fire. He stands there in front of his house shocked, weak and helpless until someone says, 'Your wife is in there.' Suddenly he is spurred to action, runs to the back door, flings it open, crawls through the smoke and drags his wife to safety. He saves her life. His fear is overcome when he realizes that his wife's life is at stake. He became involved. Would he have become just as involved had it been his neighbor's house down the street?"
 2. Love for the cause of Christ will overcome the fear of getting involved.
- B. Second; it is bigger, is selfishness.
 1. Men say, "Why should I get involved? Why should I risk my money, or my life, or my reputation, or my job, or even my time, for somebody I do not even know?"
 2. But that is not Christianity.
 - a. God became involved. Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8.
 - b. Paul became involved. Gal. 2:20.
- C. Third, there is indifference.
 1. We get so busy, so preoccupied with our own that we are indifferent to the world's needs.
 2. The answer to all this is:
 - a. The love of God. Mk. 12:30.
 - b. Love for our fellowman. Mk. 12:31.

Conclusion

Christianity is not a spectator sport. When one has come to a certain building and spent a few hours a week one has not discharged his responsibility to the Lord. There is no limit to what the church can accomplish if all will become involved.

The greatest thing that can happen in your life is to become involved in the Lord's work. It will give new tone and new meaning to your life. Happiness comes in a degree you have never known before. Others are blessed and the Lord is glorified.