

THE NATURE OF MAN

By

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INTRODUCTION

1. Terms defined; man; nature; hence, "a study of the character and constitution of the human species."
2. Importance of the theme; widespread error exists regarding it; properly understood an incentive to godly living.
3. Purpose of series: (a) refute materialism; (b) show errors of "Jehovah's witnesses", Adventists, Christadelphians, etc, on the subject, (c) reveal scriptural teaching on Nature of Man.

DISCUSSION

1. Proper study of man is the Bible. (a) a Bible question - Ps. 8:4; Heb. 2:6. (b) A Bible answer -- 1 Thess. 5:23.
2. Man a triune being: body, soul, spirit. (a) Origin of body: Gen. 2:7 (b) Origin of spirit: Eccle. 12:7; Heb. 12:9.
3. Man's constitution: (a) A body derived from the dust; (b) a spirit received directly from God. (c) Theories regarding the origin of the spirit: (1) Pre-existence -- Plato, Origen, Beecher -- wrong. (2) Traducianism -- all denominational theologians, to account for their doctrine of "total depravity" -- wrong. (3) derived immediately from God -- correct, Heb. 12:9.

Thus,

1. Man has a spirit, Job 32:8.
2. The spirit of man is in the midst of his body. Dan. 7:15;
3. God forms the spirit in man. Zech. 12:1;

Hence,

1. The doctrine of depravity is false. The spirit is the rational nature. 1 Cor. 2:9-11.
2. The rational nature is not derived hereditarily.
3. Like begets like. Hence, the spirit is as pure when received as its source.
4. Materialism affirms that the spirit is the breath, from Gen. 2:7. Their method: (a) Man was formed; (b) formed from dust; (c) breath infused; (d) breath produced life; therefore, (a) no consciousness without breath; hence, (b) unconsciousness in death. The spirit breath??? Sisters not to snore, 1 Pet. 3:3,4; Sadducees say no spirit, hence no breath in us at all! Jesus gave disciples power over unclean spirits, tobacco, liquor, halitosis, etc. Corinthians to purify spirits, i.e., use mouth-wash!

5. Important to note that Gen. 2:7 does not describe entire constitution of man. (a) "Breath of life" (Hebrew, ruach chaiyim, plural, breath of lives) occurs in Gen. 2:7; Gen. 6:17; Gen. 7:15; Gen. 7:22, in the last three with reference to beasts; (b) first two occurrences of soul (ne-phesh) applied to fish, birds, and snakes. (Gen 1:20, 30.)
6. Soul a generic term; context determines meaning. Usages: (a) whole person, Acts 2:41; 1 Pet. 3:20; (b) animal nature; Gen. 2:7; Ps. 78:50; (c) synonymous with spirit. Acts 2:27; Rev. 6:9, 10.
7. Life Defined: Union of body and spirit; death: their separation. James 2:26.
8. Mortal (body) an immortal (spirit) distinguished:
 - (a) Inner and outer man, 2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16; Rom. 7:22.
 - (b) Meek and quiet spirit, not corruptible (literally, immortal, from the same word as immortality in Rom. 2:7; hence, immortal spirit, 1 Pet. 3:1-4.)
 - (c) Tabernacle and its occupant, representative of body and spirit, (2 Cor. 5:1; 2 Pet. 1:13, 14.)
 - (d) Body can be killed; soul cannot, Matt. 10:28. (Here, soul is used as a synonym for spirit.)
9. Christ's refutation of the Sadducees: Luke 20:37, 38.
 - (a) God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;
 - (b) But God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob;
 - (c) Therefore, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are alive.
10. Absent from the body, present with the Lord. 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:21.
11. Hypothetical proposition, 1 Cor. 15:14-18. "If Christ be not risen." CHRIST IS RISEN: Therefore, (a) Our preaching is not in vain; (b) our faith is not in vain; (c) we are not in our sins; and (d) the DEAD HAVE NOT PERISHED.
12. Man in the image of God, Gen. 1:26. (a) This is not physical, many beasts stronger; (b) that which exercises dominion capable, hence the spirit. (c) flesh not in the image of God, for; (1) man can create an image of himself, but not of God, Isa. 40:25. (2) Spirit does not have flesh and bones. (Luke 24:36-40.)

SUMMARY

1. Man a composite being. Ill. two story house with basement, the basement representing the body, the first floor the soul, the second story the spirit.
2. Body formed of the dust, spirit infused directly from God.
3. Soul a GENERIC term, context denoting its meaning.
4. The spirit is the immortal part of man, and is never said to die. Spirits, in this sense are like angels which cannot die, not because they are angels -- this is merely the name by which they are known,-- BUT BECAUSE THEY ARE SPIRITS!

PART TWO

- 1. In death (a) body and spirit are separated, James 2:26, (b) body returns to the dust; (c) spirit to God who gave it. Eccle. 12:7.
- 2. Statement that spirit returns to God a general one, and does not designate sphere. It does not go, (a) into the grave; (b) into purgatory; (c) directly to heaven or hell.
- 3. Where, particularly, does the spirit go at death? Question answered by a consideration of where the Lord went at death: (Luke 23:43.)

- 1. Jesus went to paradise.
- 2. He did not go to his Father. (John 20:17.)
- 3. His Father was in heaven.
- 4. Therefore, Jesus did not ascend to heaven during the period he was in the tomb.
- 5. During this period he was in Hades. (Acts 2:27, 31.)
- 6. He was in paradise.
- 7. Therefore paradise is in Hades.
- 8. Though in paradise in Hades he was not in heaven.
- 9. Therefore, paradise in Hades is not heaven.

- 4. Consideration of the word Hades. Its etymology: "a" negative; and "eidein," to see; thus, literally, the unseen realm.

1. The Septuagint rendering of the Hebrew Sheol. Sheol occurs 65 times in the Hebrew Bible. It means, (a) a place of conscious existence, Gen. 37:35; Ps. 55:15; Ps. 139:7-10; Prov. 1:12; Jonah 2:22; (b) To indicate the place where the wicked go at death, usually qualified as "the lower sheol," "the depths of sheol," "the bottom of sheol," etc., Deut. 32:22; Isa. 14:9; Prov. 9:18; (c) a temporal and not an eternal place: Ps. 16:10; Ps. 49:15; 1 Sam. 2:6; Ps. 30:3.

2. Never used LITERALLY to indicate the grave. (a) Never translated in this fashion by the ASV; (b) King James' rendering of grave must be understood as figurative; (c) must be borne in mind that Sheol is the receptacle of the SPIRIT and never the body.

3. Passages in which the word Hades occurs in the New Testament: Matt. 11:23; Luke 10:15; Matt. 16:18; Luke 16:19-31; Acts 2:27, 31; Rev. 1:18; Rev. 6:8; Rev. 20:13, 14.

4. HADES in Greek, is the exact equivalent of SHEOL in Hebrew. (a) Greeks used the term to indicate the place where the spirit goes at death. "Achilles hurled many valiant souls of heroes down to Hades." (Homer, in the ILLIAD.) All reliable Greek lexicographers define it in this manner.

5. Destination of the spirit of man at death determined by (a) the distinction between words body and spirit, and the destination marked out for each; (b) by representation of the abode of the dead as seen in the case of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke 16:19-31. (1) Is it a parable? (2) Definition of a parable; (3) parable never founded on fiction but on fact. This ill. by various parables in N, T.

6. Consideration of the Rich Man and Lazarus:

1. Evidence it offers cannot be discounted on ground it is a parable. (a) Not certain it is a parable; (b) if a parable it teaches truth.
2. Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, an allusion to oriental custom.
3. Rich man in torment.
4. This not a picture of the final abode of man, for: (a) these were disembodied spirits; (b) events described occurred before the judgment; (c) and before the resurrection of the body.

7. Conclusions drawn from the case of the Rich Man and Lazarus:

1. There THREE STATES of human spirits: The first in union with a body; the second separated from the body, and while the body is in the tomb; the third after the resurrection when the spirit is united with a glorified body.
2. Diagram accompanying these notes illustrates these three states.

8. Definition of terms used:

HADES -- The realm of departed spirits; the abode of the spirits of men from death until the resurrection.

PARADISE -- The realm in Hades where the spirits of the righteous await the resurrection day.

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM -- A figurative reference to the realm where the spirits of just men go after death.

TARTARUS -- The realm in Hades where the spirits of wicked men remain in restraint until the resurrection of the body, and separated from paradise or Abraham's Bosom by an impassible gulf.

GEHENNA -- The "Lake of Fire" into which the finally impenitent will be forevermore cast following the judgment day.

9. Detailed consideration of the foregoing terms: Gehenna, Tartarus:

1. Gehenna -- a compound term, "ge" (earth or vale) and "hinnon," originally a man's name, signifying the vale of Hinnon just outside the city of Jerusalem. Setting for the abominable sacrifices of children to the heathen fire-god Molech. (2 Chron. 28:3; 33:6.) Josiah's efforts at reform; the change in the valley to the "dump heap" of Jerusalem; and the figurative sense which the term came to have indicative of a place where fire forever burns. (2 Kings 23:1-25.)
2. Tartarus -- the realm in Hades where the wicked spirits go at death, occurring in the Greek text of 2 Pet. 2:4, rendered hell in the English Versions.
3. Termination of Hades: "And death (the ruler) and HADES (the realm) were cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:14.) This after the judgment. (Verse 13.)

10. Reasons for the King James' rendering of "hell" in Luke 16:23:

1. English word "hell" in 1611, when the King James' translation was made had TWO distinct meanings: (a) a place of punishment, (b) an UNSEEN PLACE. For example, a man "hellied" his potatoes, put them out of sight.
2. Through modification "hell" lost the latter meaning, and in 1901, when the American Standard Version was published, aware that the English word "hell" no longer conveyed the meaning of the Greek HADES, the ASV translators transliterated it, gave it English form and spelling and inserted it in the text.
3. Through the influence of Luther and contemporaries there is no word in the English or German languages conveying the exact meaning of Hades, hence the necessity of anglicizing it.
4. Were the word translated "hell" in the KJV "gehenna" we would know that he was already in the lake of fire. The word however, is HADES, hence reference is made to the realm of disembodied spirits.
5. A. Campbell: "In Hades then, the receptacle of all the dead, there are rewards and punishments. There is a paradise or an Abraham's Bosom, and there is a tartarus, in which the evil spirits are chained, and the spirits of wicked men engulfed. Hence, Dives in tartarus, and Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, were both in Hades. Jesus and the converted thief were together in Hades, while they were together in paradise." (Living Oracles, Appendix, p. 59.)

OBJECTIONS TO THIS POSITION

1. Contention that the foregoing was true only prior to the resurrection of Christ; since which time it is alleged that the righteous pass to their final reward in heaven. (a) Advocated by F. G. Allen, in OLD PATH PULPIT; (b) Held by a few brethren today.
 1. Allen's position rejected by ablest men of the Restoration movement: (a) Alexander Campbell, (Lectures & Addresses, p. 441.) (b) J. W. McGarvey, (Commentary on Acts, first Ed. p. 34.) (c) Moses E. Lard, (Lard's Quarterly, December, 1863), and by many others.
 2. Position that Hades is the abode of BOTH righteous and wicked until resurrection of all men, universally held until 3rd century (Knapp, Theology), and not seriously questioned until seventh century. (Shedd, Christian Doctrine.)
 3. Theory that paradise was moved to heaven at resurrection an intergal part of the PRE-MILLENNIAL theory. All who hold it are not pre-millennialists; but all premillennialists hold it. (See W. E. Blackstones, JESUS IS COMING, p. 29.)

2. Arguments Allen and others offer:

- 1. Stephen asked the Saviour to receive his spirit.
- 2. Absent from body present with Lord.
- 3. Paul caught up to "third" heaven which is paradise.
- 4. No absolute forgiveness under former dispensations, this disability removed at death of Christ.
- 5. Christ opened up way into holiest.
- 6. Christ destroyed devil, and delivered those who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage. (Heb. 2:14, 15.)
- 7. Christ, in his resurrection, "led captivity captive." (Eph. 4:8.)

3. These arguments answered:

- 1 & 2 fall short of the claim made for them, because (a) they ignore the OMNIPRESENCE of the Lord; (b) the same difficulty faces those who offer them on Eccle. 12:7. When it is explained how the spirit can go to God who gave it, yet be in paradise in Hades, the answer will then be apparent how one can go to be with Christ yet be in paradise.
- 3. The "third heaven" is paradise because the word paradise indicates a place of great blessing. It does not follow that every time paradise is mentioned it refers to heaven. Heaven is a "city;" Memphis is a city; shall we thence infer that Memphis is heaven?
- 4 & 5, as to premises are granted, but this is an ignoratio elenchi, a misapprehension of the question. The conclusion does not follow.
- 6. The devil's power is destroyed by providing a way by which to overcome his dominion. The gospel is the means.. The bondage to which the passage alludes was fear of death and its consequences. THE BONDAGE WHICH THEY EXPERIENCED WAS DURING THEIR LIFE-TIME and not while in the spirit world.
- 7. Christ "led captivity captive" by invading the realm of death, and conquering its domain. Allusion here is to ancient conquerers who parade through the land they have conquered. There is no support for theory here.

POSITIVE PROOF THAT THE RIGHTEOUS
DO NOT GO TO THEIR FINAL REWARD AT DEATH:

- 1. 1 John 4:12; "No man hath seen God at anytime." It is the hope of children of God to "see him as he is." (1 John 2:1-4.) One of the blessings mentioned is that we "shall see his face." (Rev. 22:4.)
- 2. John 3:13; "And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven." (a) These words are to be attributed to John, the historian, written many years after the ascension. (b) At the time the words were penned, long after the resurrection of Christ, he alone had ascended.

3. Acts 2:34: "David is not ascended into the heavens." Four statements antithetical: (1) David is not ascended; (2) Christ's soul not in HADES; (3) David's sepulchre with them; (4) Christ's body did not see corruption. Thus Peter's argument: David did not refer to himself in the great prophecy for Christ a soul was not left in Hades; David's was, for he has not yet ascended; Christ's body did not see corruption, David's did, because his tomb was known to them at that day. Thus Peter's argument turns on whether David's soul was yet in Hades, and whether his body did see corruption. Hence, 10 days following the ascension, David was still in Hades!
4. 1 Cor. 15:55. This is a quotation from Hosea 13:14. Paul substitutes the word "death" for SHEOL in the original passage. Hence, the risen saint (which the passage contemplates) experiences deliverance from SHEOL - HADES after the resurrection of the body!

WORDS

JAMES MEADOWS

I. Grave (geber) - Bury (gabor)

A. Grave (geber)

1. Grave (geber) mentioned 34 times in Old Testament:

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|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| a. Gen. 50:5 | l. 2 Chron. 34:28 | w. Jer. 8:1 |
| b. Ex. 14:11 | m. Job 3:22 | x. Jer. 20:17 |
| c. Num. 19:16 | n. Job 5:26 | y. Jer. 26:23 |
| d. Num. 19:18 | o. Job 10:19 | z. Ezek. 32:22 |
| e. 2 Sam. 2:32 | p. Job 17:1 | aa. Ezek. 32:23 |
| f. 2 Sam. 19:37 | q. Job 21:32 | bb. Ezek. 32:25 |
| g. 1 Kgs. 22:20 | r. Psa. 88:5 | cc. Ezek. 37:12 |
| h. 1 Kgs. 14:13 | s. Psa. 88:11 | dd. Ezek. 37:12 |
| i. 2 Kgs. 22:20 | t. Isa. 14:19 | ee. Ezek. 37:13 |
| j. 2 Kgs. 23:6 | u. Isa. 53:9 | ff. Ezek. 37:13 |
| k. 2 Chron. 34:4 | v. Isa. 65:4 | gg. Ezek. 39:11 |
| | | hh. Nah. 1:14 |

2. Grave (mnema or mnemcion) mentioned 8 times in New Testament:

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|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| a. Matt. 27:52 | d. Jn. 5:28 | g. Jn. 11:38 |
| b. Matt. 27:53 | e. Jn. 11:17 | h. Jn. 12:17 |
| c. Lk. 11:44 | f. Jn. 11:31 | |

B. Bury (gabor - From same root word as geber) - Mentioned 86 times in Old Testament:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Gen. 23:4, 6, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, 19 | 19. 2 Sam. 4:12 |
| 2. Gen. 25:9 | 20. 2 Sam. 21:14 |
| 3. Gen. 35:29 | 21. 1 Kgs. 2:31; 11:15 |
| 4. Gen. 47:29, 30 | 22. 1 Kgs. 13:29, 31, 31 |
| 5. Gen. 48:7 | 23. 1 Kgs. 14:13, 18, 31 |
| 6. Gen. 49:29, 31, 31 | 24. 1 Kgs. 15:8 |
| 7. Gen. 50:5, 5, 6, 7, 13, 14 | 25. 1 Kgs. 22:37 |
| 8. Num. 11:34; 33:4 | 26. 2 Kgs. 9:10, 28, 34, 35 |
| 9. Deut. 21:23 | 27. 2 Kgs. 10:35 |
| 10. Deut. 34:6 | 28. 2 Kgs. 12:21 |
| 11. Josh. 24:30, 32, 33 | 29. 2 Kgs. 13:9, 20, 21 |
| 12. Jud. 2:9 | 30. 2 Kgs. 15:7 |
| 13. Jud. 16:31 | 31. 2 Kgs. 21:26 |
| 14. 1 Sam. 25:1 | 32. 2 Kgs. 23:30 |
| 15. 1 Sam. 28:3 | 33. 1 Chron. 10:12 |
| 16. 1 Sam. 31:13 | 34. 2 Chron. 9:31 |
| 17. 2 Sam. 2:4, 5, 32 | 35. 2 Chron. 14:1 |
| 18. 2 Sam. 3:32 | 36. 2 Chron. 16:14 |
| | 37. 2 Chron. 21:20 |
| | 38. 2 Chron. 22:9 |
| | 39. 2 Chron. 24:16, 25 |
| | 40. 2 Chron. 25:28 |

41. 2 Chron. 26:23
 42. 2 Chron. 27:9
 43. 2 Chron. 28:27
 44. 2 Chron. 32:33
 45. 2 Chron. 33:20

46. Psa. 79:3
 47. Jer. 7:32; 14:16
 48. Jer. 19:11, 11
 49. Ezek. 39:11, 12, 13, 14, 15
 50. Hos. 9:6

II. SHEOL

A. In the K.J.V. it is translated grave in the following place (Sheol) in ASV and most others):

1. Gen. 37:35	10. Job 17:13	19. Prov. 1:12
2. Gen. 42:38	11. Job 21:13	20. Prov. 30:16
3. Gen. 44:29	12. Job 24:19	21. Eccle. 9:10
4. Gen. 44:31	13. Psa. 6:5	22. Song of Sol. 8:6
5. 1 Sam. 2:6	14. Psa. 30:3	23. Isa. 14:11
6. 1 Kgs. 2:6	15. Psa. 31:17	24. Isa. 38:10
7. 1 Kgs. 2:9	16. Psa. 49:14	25. Isa. 38:18
8. Job 7:9	17. Psa. 88:3	26. Ezek. 31:14
9. Job 14:13	18. Psa. 89:48	27. Hos. 13:14

B. The Septuagint translators met with the word Sheol 65 times. (Overhead)

1. They never translated it Gehenna, the lake of fire.
2. They never translated it the grave (geber, Hebrew) and (mnema, Greek)
3. 61 times they translated it Hades.
4. The word "sheol" is always singular. There is only one "sheol," one "hades," although there are many graves.

C. The Bible speaks of "lowest Sheol" (Deut. 32:22) which implies "higher" or "upper" Sheol - Tartarus and Paradise.

III. HADES (Overhead)

A. Sheol in the Old Testament and Hades in the New Testament refer to the same place

1. Psa. 16:10 - "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (sheol)."
2. Acts 2:27 - "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (hades)."
3. "Here is positive proof that the word 'sheol' in the Hebrew has the same meaning as the Greek word 'hades' in the New Testament." (V. E. Howard)

B. The word Hades appears in the following New Testament verses:

(Overhead)

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Matt. 11:23 | 7. Rev. 1:18 |
| 2. Matt. 16:18 | 8. Rev. 6: 18 8 |
| 3. Lk. 10:15 | 9. Rev. 20:13 |
| 4. Lk. 16:23 | 10. Rev. 20:14 |
| 5. Acts 2:27 | 11. 1 Cor. 15:55 |
| 6. Acts 2:31 | |

C. Hades - What does it mean? (Overhead)

1. "It has reference to the abode of the departed, the unseen world into which men pass at death. The better translation today is 'hades,' not 'hell,' as it is in the K.J. translation. When the K.J. translators translated it hell they meant it not in the sense of the place of punishment of the wicked but 'in its primary and natural sense' of the unseen and 'covered place.' It is translated Sheol in the Old Testament, which does not mean the grave, the place of burial." (James Hastings, Editor, Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. II, p. 274) Cf. Psa. 16:10 Acts 2:27
2. "Hades, a compound Greek word that simply means the unseen, but when applied to the state of the dead, the unseen realm of the dead." (Woods, Sermons on Salvation, p. 18).
3. "The term Hades designates the place of disembodied spirits. It is as its etymology indicates the unseen." (McGarvey, Acts, p. 34)
4. "Hades, literally the unseen or the invisible world, is, according to Thayer, the realm of the dead, or the common receptacle of disembodied spirits."
5. "The unseen." (Liddell and Scott)
6. "The invisible abode or mansion of the dead." (T. S. Green)
7. "The place of departed spirits." (W. J. Hickie)
8. "The abode of the dead" (Robinson)
9. "The underworld - the world of departed spirits" (Sophodes)
10. "The common receptacle of disembodied spirits" (Thayer)
11. The Sheol of the Old Testament and Hades of the New Testament refers to the same place.

IV. HELL - GEHENNA (Overhead)

A. It appears in 12 New Testament verses.

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|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Matt. 5:22 | 5. Matt. 18:9 | 9. Mk. 9:45 |
| 2. Matt. 5:29 | 6. Matt. 23:15 | 10. Mk. 9:47 |
| 3. Matt. 5:30 | 7. Matt. 23:33 | 11. Lk. 12:5 |
| 4. Matt. 10:28 | 8. Mk. 9:43 | 12. Jas. 3:6 |

B. Gehenna is made up of Ge which in Greek means earth, and henna, part referring to the place of Henna, literally the place of "Hinnom or valley of Hinnom." (Cf. 2 Kgs. 23:10) Give background!!!

V. TARTARUS (Greek verb tartaroo translated Tartarus and means to "cast into.")

A. 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6 - "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell. . ." (Tartarus)

B. Tartarus is the place where angels and the spirits of the wicked are kept until the judgment and final sentencing.

1. In Greek mythology the place of restraint and punishment for the souls of wicked men often death.
2. Peter, writing in Greek, used here a word they would understand to convey the idea of the abode of the wicked.

VI. PARADISE - Transliteration of the Greek word paradeisos.

A. The word Paradise appears 3 times in the New Testament:

Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:3, 4; Rev. 2:7

B. From Xenophon's descriptions of the parks and gardens of ancient Persian kings.

C. The Septuagint translators (Greek Old Testament) used it in Gen. 2:8 to describe the garden of Eden.

D. Paradise (Overhead)

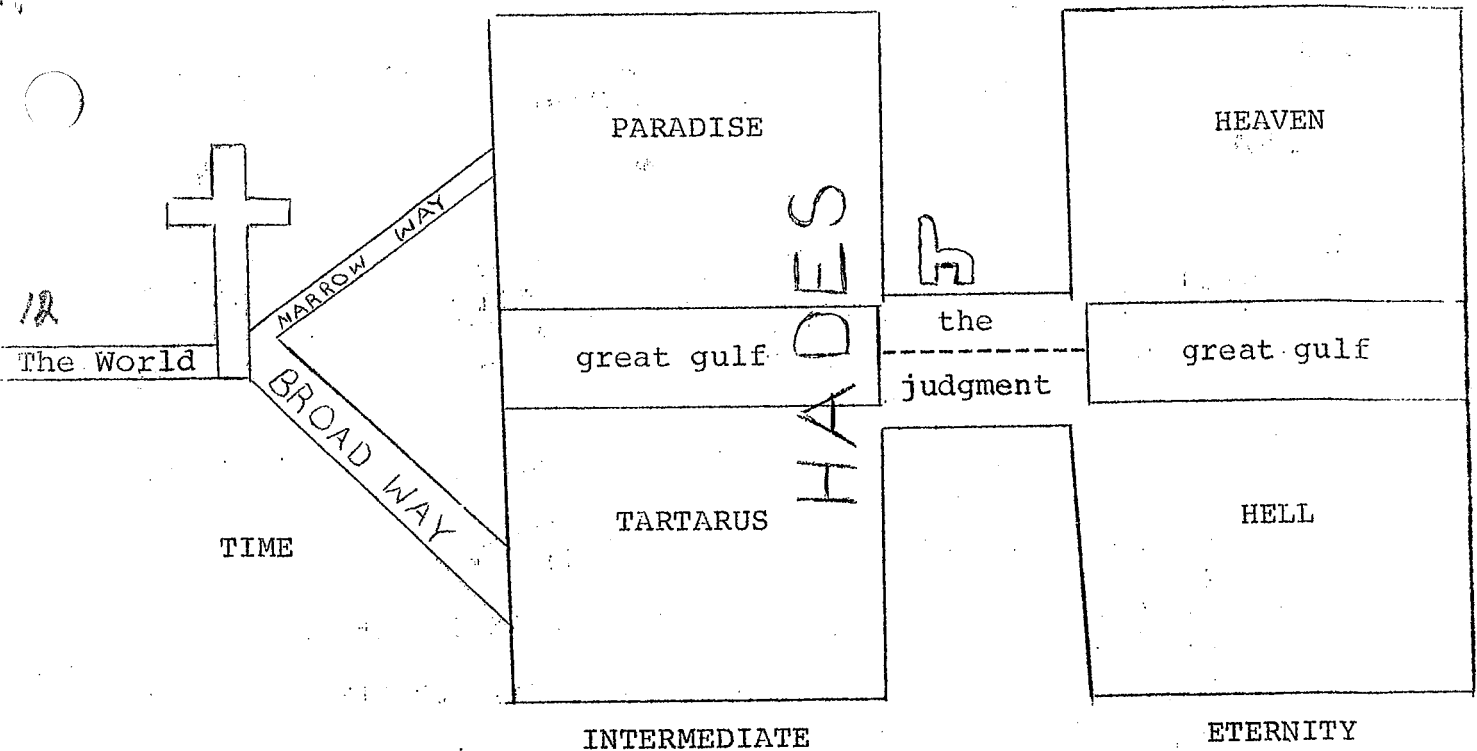
1. "To the penitent thief on the cross the Savior said: 'Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.'

(Luke 23:43) The word 'paradise' originally meant a Persian

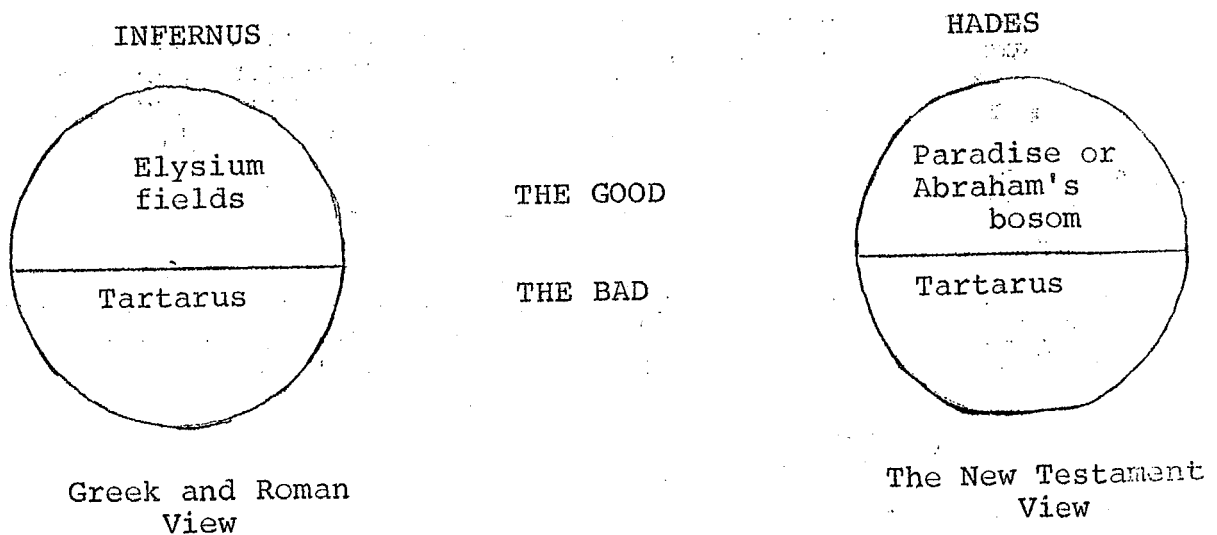
garden, but came figuratively to denote a place of great blessing. Such is its significance here.'

- a. Jesus, on the day of his death, journeyed with the penitent thief to Paradise.
- b. But, notwithstanding the fact that he went to Paradise that day, he did not ascend to his Father. (Jn. 20:17: "I am not yet ascended to my Father.")
- c. His Father was in Heaven.
- d. Jesus, therefore, did not go to heaven during the interval of his death.
- e. Paradise, as it contemplates the state of the blessed dead, is thus not heaven. (That it will eventually be, we strongly believe; that Paradise in this passage does not designate heaven, we stoutly affirm.)
- f. During the period of his death, the Lord was in Hades. (Acts 2:27, 31)
- g. But he was in Paradise during this time.
- h. Therefore Paradise is in Hades.
- i. But though in Paradise, in Hades, he was not in Heaven.
- j. Therefore, Paradise, in Hades, is not heaven.

- a. 65 times the Septuagint translators met with the word Sheol.
- (1) They never translated it Gehenna, the lake of fire.
 - (2) They never translated it mnema (Greek) - the grave-queber (Hebrew).
 - (3) 61 times they translated it Hades, a term that appears 11 times in the New Testament.
 - (4) The word "sheol" is always singular. There is only one "sheol," one "hades," although there may be many graves.
- b. Sheol in the Old Testament referred to the place of disembodied spirits. Such is the significance of Hades in the New Testament.
- (1) "It is the rendering of the Hebrew Sheol which designates such a place in the Old Testament scriptures." (Woods)
 - (2) "Such is the meaning assigned to the word by the classical Greek dictionaries which reflect its usage by the Greeks." (Woods)
- c. Positive Proof:
- (1) Psa. 16:10 - "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (sheol)."
 - (2) Acts 2:27 - "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (Hades)."
 - (3) "Here is positive proof that the word 'sheol' in the Hebrew has the same meaning as the Greek word 'hades' in the New Testament." (V. E. Howard)
- B. Hades is found in the following verses in the New Testament:
- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Matt. 11:23 | 7. Rev. 1:18 |
| 2. Matt. 16:18 | 8. Rev. 6:18 |
| 3. Lk. 10:15 | 9. Rev. 20:13 |
| 4. Lk. 16:23 | 10. Rev. 20:14 |
| 5. Acts 2:27 | 11. 1 Cor. 15:55 |
| 6. Acts 2:31 | |
- C. Hades contains two parts - Paradise and Tartarus. These points make this obvious:
1. "To the penitent thief on the cross the Savior said: 'Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.' (Luke 23:43) The word 'paradise' originally meant a Persian garden, but came figuratively to denote a place of great blessing. Such is its significance here."
 - (1) Jesus, on the day of his death, journeyed with the penitent thief to Paradise.
 - (2) But, notwithstanding the fact that he went to Paradise that day, he did not ascend to his Father. (Jn. 20:17: "I am not yet ascended to my Father.")
 - (3) His Father was in Heaven.
 - (4) Jesus, therefore, did not go to heaven during the interval of his death.
 - (5) Paradise, as it contemplates the state of the blessed dead, is thus not heaven. (That it will eventually be, we strongly believe; that Paradise in this passage does not designate heaven, we stoutly affirm.)



5. "Dependent on the Greek vocabulary to convey the ideas which they taught, it is remarkable how often, on the state of the dead, the ideas of inspiration as expressed by the sacred writers coincided with the prevailing Roman and Greek views. The following comparison will indicate the similarity which obtained between them:" (Woods)



III. HELL - GEHENNA

A. Scriptures where Gehenna is translated hell:

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Matt. 5:22 | 5. Matt. 18:9 | 9. Mk. 9:45 |
| 2. Matt. 5:29 | 6. Matt. 23:15 | 10. Mk. 9:47 |
| 3. Matt. 5:30 | 7. Matt. 23:33 | 11. Lk. 12:5 |
| 4. Matt. 10:28 | 8. Mk. 9:43 | 12. Jas. 3:6 |

B. It's made up of Ge which in Greek means earth, and henna part referring to the place of Henna, literally the place of 'Hinnom or valley of Hinnom.'

HEAVEN, HELL, HADES

JAMES MEADOWS

INTRODUCTION:

1. "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Pet. 1:4)
"It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" (Matt. 10:28)
"And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." (Luke 16:23, American Standard)
2. Heaven and hell are real places despite the disbelief about them of so many today. It behooves each of us to study about heaven, hell and hades.

DISCUSSION:

I. HEAVEN AND HELL CONTRASTED.

A.

HEAVEN

HELL

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Eternal life - Matt. 25:40 | 1. Everlasting punishment - Matt. 25:46 |
| 2. No more sorrows - Rev. 21:4 | 2. Sorrows - 2 Sam. 22:6; Psa. 18:5 |
| 3. No more pain - Rev. 21:4 | 3. Pains - Psa. 116:3 |
| 4. No more crying and tears - Rev. 21:4 | 4. Wailing, weeping, gnashing of teeth - Matt. 13:49,50; 25:30 |
| 5. No more death - Rev. 21:4 | 5. The second death - Rev. 20:14 |
| 6. No more sunlight or heat - Rev. 7:16 | 6. Torment - Rev. 14:11; 20:10 |
| 7. Place of great light - Rev. 21:22,23; 22:5 | 7. Outer darkness - Matt. 25:30 |
| 8. In God's presence - Rev. 7:15; 22:4 | 8. From the presence of the Lord - 2 thess. 1:9 |
| 9. Glory, honor, immortality, peace - Rom. 2:7,10 | 9. Tribulation and Anguish - Rom. 2:7,10 |
| 10. Access to tree of life - Rev. 22:1-3 | 10. Forever barred from tree of life - Rev. 21:27 |
| 11. A mansion - John 14:1,2 | 11. Fire and brimstone - Rev. 20:15 |
| 12. City with streets of gold - Rev 21:18, 21 | 12. Furnace of fire - Matt. 13:40-42 |
| 13. Incorruptible, undefiled, fadeth not away, secure - 1 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 3:12 | 13. Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched - Mk. 9:42-48. |

II. HEAVEN.

FIGURES DESCRIBING HEAVEN

- A. God uses many figures to try to describe heaven to us so we can understand.
1. Heaven is a place of rest to the tired. Heb. 4:1,9-11; Rev. 14:13.
 2. Heaven is a new body to the afflicted. 2 Cor. 4:17.
 3. Heaven is an eternal home to the homeless. 2 Cor. 5:1.
 4. Heaven is fulfillment of hope to the discouraged. Col. 1:5.

5. Heaven is a "better and enduring substance" to those who suffer the loss of good. Heb. 10:34.
6. Heaven is a country to the pilgrim. Heb. 11:14; 13:14; 1 Pet. 1:4.
7. Heaven is supper to the hungry. Rev. 19:9.
8. Heaven is a walled city to the unprotected. Rev. 21:12.
9. Heaven is a place of happiness and joy to the sorrowful and grieved. Rev. 7:13-17; 21:4.
10. Heaven is a home with means:
 - a. A place to dwell. 2 Cor. 5:1,6; Phil. 3:20,21.
 - b. Companionship. 1 Thess. 4:13-18.
 - c. A rule of righteousness. 2 Pet. 3:13.
 - d. A place of beauty, joy, and song. Rev. 22:1ff.

B. Heaven is a place where the faithful obedient Christian will dwell eternally (2 Pet. 1:5-11; Rev. 2:10) and the sinner will miss. (Rev. 20:15; 21:27; 22:14)

III. HELL.

- A. The Greek word "Gehenna" from which the English word "hell" is translated appears 12 times in the New Testament. Matt. 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mk. 9:43,45,47; Luke 12:4; James 3:5.
- B. Hell is a place of eternal separation from God without hope. Matt. 25:31,32,41; 2 Thess. 1:9.
- C. Hell is a place of everlasting punishment, everlasting fire, and everlasting torment. Matt. 13:40-42; 25:41,46; Mk. 9:43-48; Jude 7; Rev. 20:10,15; 14:11.
- D. Hell is a place of darkness. 2 Pet. 2:17; Jude 13; Matt. 25:30.
- E. Hell is a place where the most repulsive inhabitants will be. Rom. 1:29-32; Gal. 5:19-21; Matt. 23:15; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Matt. 25:41-43.
- F. Hell is a place of remembrance. Luke 16:23,24.

IV. HADES, PARADISE, AND TARTARUS.

- A. "Hades" Where is it and what does it mean?
 1. "It has reference to the abode of the departed, the unseen world into which men pass at death. The better translation today is 'hades', not 'hell', as it is in the K. J. translation. When the K. J. translators translated it hell they meant it not in the sense of the place of punishment of the wicked but 'in its primary and natural sense' of the unseen and 'covered place'. It is translated Sheol in the O.T., which does not mean the grave, the place of burial." (James Hastings, Editor, Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. II, P. 274; cf. Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:27).
 2. "Hades, a compound Greek word that simply means the undeen, but when applied to the state of the dead, the unseen realm of the dead." (Woods, Sermons on Salvation, p. 18).

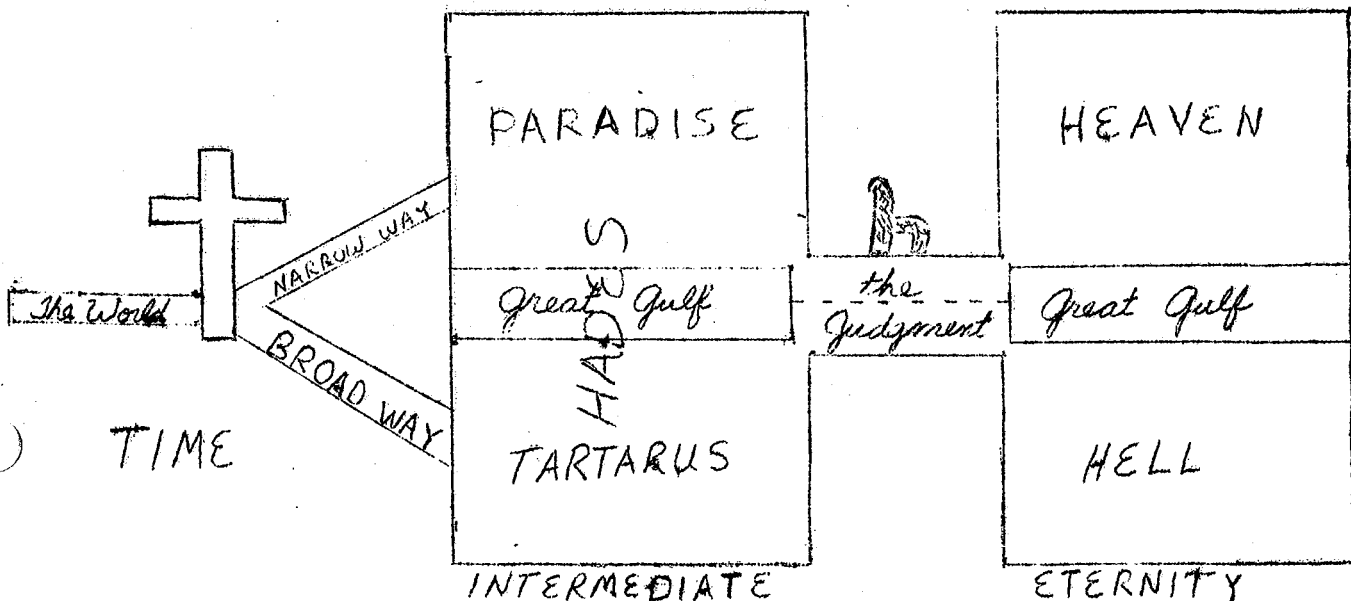
3. "The term Hades designates the place of disembodied spirits. It is as its etymology indicates the unseen." (McGarvey, Acts, p. 34).
4. "Hades, literally the unseen or the invisible world, is, according to Thayer, the realm of the dead, or the common receptacle of disembodied spirits."
5. The Sheol of the Old Testament and Hades of the New Testament refers to the same place.
 - a. 65 times the Septuagint translators met with the word Sheol.
 - (1) They never translated it Gehenna, the lake of fire.
 - (2) They never translated it mnema (Greek) - the grave; "queber" - Hebrew.
 - (3) 61 times they translated it Hades, a term that appears 11 times in the New Testament.
 - (4) The word "Sheol" is always singular. There is only one "sheol", one "hades", although there may be many graves.
 - b. Sheol in the Old Testament referred to the place of disembodied spirits. Such is the significance of Hades in the New Testament.
 - (1) "It is the rendering of the Hebrew Sheol which designates such a place in the Old Testament scriptures." (Woods).
 - (2) "Such is the meaning assigned to the word by the classical Greek dictionaries which reflect its usage by the Greeks." (Woods).
6. In the New Testament, there are three different Greek words that need considering.
 - a. Gehenna - Hell-fire. Matt. 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15; 23:33; Mark 9:43,45,47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6.
 - b. Tartarus - 2 Pet. 2:4.
 - c. Hades - Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27,31; Rev. 1:18; 6:18; 20:13,14; 1 Cor. 15:55.
7. Hades contains two parts - Paradise and Tartarus. These points make this obvious.
 - a. "To the penitent thief on the cross the Savior said: 'Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.' (Luke 23:43). The word 'paradise' originally meant a Persian garden, but came figuratively to denote a place of great blessing. Such is its significance here."
 - (1) Jesus, on the day of his death, journeyed with the penitent thief to Paradise.
 - (2) But, notwithstanding the fact that he went to Paradise that day, he did not ascend to his Father. (John 20:17: 'I am not yet ascended to my Father.')
 - (3) His Father was in Heaven.
 - (4) Jesus, therefore, did not go to heaven during the interval of his death.
 - (5) Paradise, as it contemplates the state of the blessed dead, is thus not heaven. (That it will eventually be, we strongly believe; that Paradise in this passage does not designate heaven, we stoutly affirm.)
 - (6) During the period of his death, the Lord was in Hades. (Acts 2:27,31)
 - (7) But he was in Paradise during this time.
 - (8) Therefore Paradise is in Hades.

- (9) But though in Paradise, in Hades, he was not in Heaven.
- (10) Therefore, Paradise, in Hades, is not heaven.

This Paradise - the realm in Hades where righteous spirits remain until the resurrection of the body - is to be identified with the Abraham's bosom - of the case of the rich man and Lazarus: (Luke 16) (Woods, Gospel Advocate, May 7, 1953, p. 279-280)

b. Alexander Campbell once wrote: "After the Hebrews mingled with the Greeks and Romans, they insensibly slid into their use of terms, and adopted some of their ideas on such subjects as those on which their oracles were silent. Hence the abodes of Elysium and Tartarus became familiar amongst the Jews; and as the Greeks and Romans had their gardens and fields of delight in hades, and their Tartarus in the same region... all within the boundaries of hades. So Abraham's bosom, or Paradise, was the abode of the happy separated spirits, and Tartarus was the abode of the wicked. Even Peter, a Jew, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, adopts their word Tartarus, and says (2 Peter 2:4), that God cast the angels that sinned down to Tartarus... Now, the truth is, that these terms being thus introduced, must have had some of the ideas of the people that first used them attached to them. And that there is, in the Christian Revelation, a degree of happiness and a degree of misery allotted to disembodied spirits, is beyond doubt or disputation; and also, that perfect happiness and misery, or happiness and misery, or happiness and misery in their highest degrees, do not commence until the reunion of spirits to their bodies in the resurrection, is a common idea, and clearly taught in the Christian books. In Hades, then, the receptacle of all the dead, there are rewards and punishments. There is a paradise, or an Abraham's bosom, and there is a Tartarus, in which the evil angels are chained, and the spirits of the wicked men engulfed. Hence, Dives in Tartarus, and Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, were both in Hades. Jesus and the converted thief were together in hades, while they were together in paradise." (Living Oracles, Appendix, p. 59)

c. The following diagram, by Bro. Leslie G. Thomas, appears in the Harding College Lectures, 1956, p. 4:



V. Destroy and Annihilate.

- A. Destroy means: "To ruin the structure, organic existence, or condition of; to pull or tear down,..." (Webster)
- B. Annihilate means "To do away with entirely so that nothing remains; reduce to nothing cause to cease to exist..." (Webster)
- C. The word destroy in the New Testament is translated from apollumi.
1. "Apollumi ... a strengthened form of ollumi, signifies to destroy utterly; in middle voice, to perish. The idea is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well being." (W. E. Vine)
 2. The same word "apollumi" is used in other places to simply mean lost.
 - a. The one sheep was "lost" (apollumi) Luke 15:4. It did't cease to exist.
 - b. The coin was "lost" (apollumi) Luke 15:9. It did't cease to exist.
 - c. The prodigal son was "lost" (apollumi) Luke 15:24. He did't cease to exist.
 - d. The word "apollumi" does not teach people will pass out of existence, but they will lose the present state of well-being. They will be lost eternally and will suffer torment.
 3. If the word "destroy" (apollumi) in Matt. 10:28 means annihilation then the saved will be annihilated too. "For whosoever would save his life shall lose (apollumi) it, but whosoever shall lose (apollumi) his life for my sake, the same shall save it." (Luke 9:24)
 4. The word apollumi does not "denote the cessation of existence but the loss of well-being. The word never means annihilation in the New Testament. There is not a single exception to this rule." (Shelly, "The Biblical Doctrine of Hell")

VI. Eternal and Everlasting.

- A. "Eternal, ... aiionios, eternal, everlasting, forever, occurs seventy-five times in the Christian Scriptures. Wherever we have the words 'eternal', and 'everlasting', in the common version, or this, it is aiionios in the original." (Living Oracles, Appendix, p. 80) It is applied in the following ways:
1. Three times to fire. Matt. 18:8,25,41; Jude 7.
 2. Three times to glory. 2 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 2:10; 1 Pet. 5:10.
 3. One time to punishment. Matt. 25:46.
 4. One time to destruction. 2 Thess. 1:9.
 5. One time to damnation. Mark 3:29.
 6. One time to habitation. Luke 16:19.
 7. One time to chains. Jude 6.
 8. One time to covenant. Heb. 13:30.
 9. One time to gospel. Rev. 14:6.
 10. One time to kingdom. 2 Pet. 1:11.
 11. One time to power. 1 Tim. 6:16.
 12. One time to judgement. Heb. 6:2.
 13. One time to redemption. Heb. 9:12.
 14. One time to salvation. Heb. 5:9.

15. One time to consolation. 2 Thess. 2:16.
16. One time to unseen things. 2 Cor. 4:18.
17. Three times to the ages.
18. One time to forever. Phil. 15.
19. Thirty one times to eternal life.
20. Fourteen times to everlasting life.
21. One time to eternal king. 1 Tim. 1:17.
22. One time to everlasting God. Rom. 16:26.

B. "The Hebrew word olam and the Greek aion, variously rendered forever, everlasting, eternal, etc., are both relative terms; and as such they may be applied to any age or to any period. Thus, for example, in Exodus 21:6, the word olam is applied to a period of service; and it simply means that the servant should serve his master as long as he lived. In Exodus 40:15, it is used to describe the duration of the Levitical priesthood; and it means here that this priesthood would act throughout the entire Jewish age; or as long as the old covenant would be of binding obligation. In Genesis 49:26, it is applied to the hills; and in this case it comprehends all future time. This is also evidently its meaning in Isaiah 9:7; Daniel 2:44, etc.

From such premises, some have hastily inferred that these words olam, aion, everlasting, etc., always refer to a limited period; and that they never mean duration without end. But be it carefully observed, that these terms, though relative, are always perfectly exhaustive of the period or cycle to which they are applied. If they refer simply to the period of a man's life, they exhaust it; if to future time, they exhaust it; and if to eternity, they in like manner also exhaust it. And hence, when Christ says, in Matt. 25:46, 'These shall go away into everlasting (aionion) punishment, but the righteous into everlasting (aionion) life', He means, beyond all doubt, life and punishment without end. Eternity has no such periods as time has; at least none such are revealed to us. And hence the word aionion in Matt. 25:46, and all other similar cases, has no limitations. It is exhaustive of eternity." (Robert Milligan, The Great Commission, p. 19, 20)

C. Uses of eternal, everlasting, forever in describing hell.

1. "to be cast into everlasting(aionios)fire,"(Matt. 18:8; Matt. 25:4).
2. "And these shall go away into everlasting (aionios) punishment."(Matt. 25:46)
3. "Who shall be punished with everlasting (aionios) destruction from the presence of the Lord..." (2Thess. 1:9)

Note: The word for destruction in this verse is olethros which means "ruin, destruction... always translated 'destruction', is used in 1 Cor. 5:5, the "destruction of the flesh". It is used in 1 Thess. 5:3 and 2 Thess. 1:9 of "the effect of the Divine judgments upon men at the ushering in of the day of the Lord and revelation of the Lord Jesus; in 1 Tim. 6:9, of the consequences of the indulgence of the flesh, referring to the physical ruin and possibly that of the whole being..." (Vine, p. 304)

4. "To whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever." (aion) 2 Pet. 2:17
5. "Suffering the vengeance of eternal (aionios) fire." (Jude 7)
6. "To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (aion) (Jude 13)
7. "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever (aion): and they have no rest day nor night..." (Rev. 14:11)

D. Uses of eternal, everlasting, and forever in describing heaven.

1. "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." (Rom. 2:7)
2. "But the righteous into life eternal. (aionios) (Matt. 25:46)
3. "And they shall reign for ever (aion) and ever." (Rev. 22:5)

DENIAL OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

Matthew 10:28; 13:40-42; 25:46

JAMES MEADOWS

INTRODUCTION:

1. Read or quote the text.
2. One of the most controversial subjects of our time (and in the past) is that of "eternal" or "everlasting" punishment of the wicked.
 - a. Does it mean there will be conscious, unending punishment?
 - b. Does it mean annihilation?
 - c. Does it mean "eternal in its results" but not in its "duration"?
3. In this lesson I propose to observe:
 - a. What is the meaning of the words "forever," "everlasting," and "eternal" as used in the Bible?
 - b. Who are those who deny eternal punishment?
 - c. What does the Bible teach about eternal punishment?

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE WORDS "FOREVER," "EVERLASTING," AND "ETERNAL" AS USED IN THE BIBLE?

A. The word "forever" is sometimes used in the Bible to refer to things that have an end.

1. The sabbath was a sign between God and the children of Israel "forever" (Exod. 31:13-17)--The qualifying phrase is "throughout your generations" (vv. 13,16).
2. God gave the earth to Israel "For ever" (Deut. 4:40) and the priests of the tribe of Levi were to minister "for ever" (Deut. 18:5). That is, as long as the nation of Israel existed.
3. Rehoboam was told that if he would treat the children of Israel right, "then they will be thy servants for ever" (1 Kgs. 12:7)--that is, as long as he lived and was king.

B. The word "everlasting" is sometimes used in the sense of limited duration.

1. God promised Abraham that he would establish his covenant with him and "his seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant" (Gen. 17:7-8)--that covenant was later broken by their sins.
2. God promised Jacob that I "will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession" (Gen. 48:4)--yet that land was later taken away due to their sins.

- C. It is true that the Bible sometimes uses the word "forever," "everlasting" and "eternal" to refer to things that have an end, but is that its use when connected with the punishment of the wicked? We shall see.

II. WHO ARE SOME THAT DENY ETERNAL PUNISHMENT?

- A. Max King (a brother in Christ), the proponent of the A.D. 70 Theory, denies eternal punishment.

1. He believes that everything came to an end in A.D. 70.
2. He stated the following about 2 Peter 3:7:
Thus, the world reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Pet. 3:7) was the Jewish world. Fire is a symbol denoting the severity of God's judgment and destruction.... The fire of 2 Pet. 3:10 is no more literal than the fire of Luke 12:49. Other passages involving the symbolic fire in the destruction of Judaism are Matt. 3:12; 13:40,42; and 2 Thess. 1:8.¹

- B. Steven Clark Goad, a brother in Christ, makes the following comment about Matthew 10:28:

1. "Jesus teaches that God will destroy both soul and body in hell, but we parrot Satan and say, 'Oh, no!' We have been teaching that God will keep us alive forever and ever and heat up the flames and darken the darkness, and keep open the pit so that we will be tormented and tortured forever. There is not one Scripture that teaches such in all of the Bible! It is a doctrine that found its origin in Catholicism and Phariseism, but not one taught by our Saviour."²
2. Steven states that in a conversation with brother Jimmy Allen, Jimmy informed him--"I am 'rethinking' my traditional position on hell."³
3. He states that Moses E. Lard, printed an article in 1879 by the title, "Do The Holy Scriptures Teach the Endlessness of Future Punishment?" and drew many of the same conclusions that he has drawn.⁴

- C. Brother Curtis Dickinson denies eternal punishment.

1. He does not deny that the Bible teaches "eternal punishment" but he says it refers to the effect or the result, not the length of time.

"The Scriptures speak of eternal punishment and eternal life, or everlasting punishment and everlasting life. Therefore, many conclude that those being punished must live and endure punishment as long as the saints live and enjoy eternal life. But this is as illogical as it is unscriptural. The word 'eternal' is an adjective used to describe the word it modifies. In

one case it describes life, and means that life is fixed, age-abiding or final. In the other case it describes the effect of the punishment. For the penalty is not punishing but punishment, and the punishment is death. Therefore eternal has to do with death, and not the means of bringing about that death."⁵

2. Jude 7 says the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah suffered "the vengeance of eternal fire."--"We readily understand that it means eternal in its effect and result. We are to understand the same thing with regard to the fire that destroys the wicked. It will be eternal in its ultimate and final result. Thus, everlasting death, everlasting destruction, everlasting punishment, all indicate that the unbelieving sinner is not to continue in some miserable existence, but that his life is to come to an end in the final death...."⁶
- D. Brother Edward Fudge, in his book The Fire that Consumes, denies everlasting punishment because he believes the wicked will be annihilated.
1. The word annihilate means to "reduce to utter ruin or non-existence; destroy utterly."
 2. The word annihilation means "the act or an instance of annihilating; extinction; destruction."
 3. Annihilationism is "the belief that the souls of the wicked are annihilated after death."
 4. Fudge believes that humans are only potentially immortal. "Conditional immortality" is the view that all humans are created mortal "but those who later respond to the gospel are given immortality. "Humans gain immortality by grace, not by creation."⁷
 5. Since the wicked do not gain immortality then there could not be eternal punishment.
 6. He believes that the wicked are resurrected, judged, and then extinguished (annihilated). He prefers the word "extinction" to "annihilation."
 7. He does not deny the conscious suffering of the wicked in the next life, nor degrees of punishment, nor the eternality of this torment. The result of the punishment is eternal, not the punishment itself--eternal punishment, not eternal punishing.
 - a. Since he questions God's justice in allowing the wicked to experience conscious suffering for eternity, one may also question his affirmation of the wicked receiving temporary suffering.
 - b. "If everlasting suffering is sadistic, what about forcing those who will eventually be annihilated to suffer even temporarily?"

G. The Jehovah's Witnesses deny eternal punishment.

1. They state: "Consistent with this basic truth, not once in any of its verses does the Bible say that either human or animal souls are immortal, deathless, cannot be destroyed or cannot perish."¹¹
2. Again, "Is hell a hot place? Do sheol and hades refer to some place where the wicked suffer after death? It is plain they do not, for we have already seen that the dead are not conscious and therefore cannot suffer."¹²
 - a. To prove this point they quote Ecclesiastes 9:5: "...for the dead know not anything...."
 - b. But where the dead know not anything is ignored by Jehovah's Witnesses--"under the sun" which appears in the following verses in Ecclesiastes: (1:3,9,14; 2:11,17,18,19,20,22; 3:16; 4:1,3,7,15; 5:13,18; 6:1,12; 8:9,15,17; 9:3,6,9,11,13; 10:5). The dead know not anything under the sun because they are no longer under the sun, but that says absolutely nothing about their conscious or unconscious state.
3. "The Bible 'hell' is actually mankind's grave."¹³
4. "The doctrine of a burning hell where the wicked are tortured eternally after death cannot be true, mainly for four reasons: (1) Because it is wholly unscriptural; (2) because it is unreasonable; (3) because it is contrary to God's love; and (4) because it is repugnant to justice."¹⁴
5. Jehovah's Witnesses teach (as some brethren are doing) that eternal or everlasting, when used in connection with punishment of the wicked means it is "eternal in the sense that it is done and over with, will never be repeated, and the results are forever."¹⁵ They say:
 - a. "Everlasting shows no recovery is possible."¹⁶
 - b. "Gehenna means a condition of death from which there is no resurrection."¹⁷

III. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT ETERNAL PUNISHMENT?

- A. James Freeman Clarke in his book, Orthodoxy: Its Truths and Errors, gives this definition of everlasting punishment (even though he denies everlasting, conscious punishment): "It is, that the moment of death decides and forever decides, the destiny of man; that those who die impenitent, unbelieving, and unconverted are forever lost, without the possibility of return; that those thus lost are to suffer forever and ever, without end, the most grievous torments in

--Torment from the Greek word basanizo, that means "to vex with grievous pains (of body and mind) to torment" (Thayer).

4. The fire is unquenchable (Matt. 3:12).

- a. "The Greek word for 'unquenchable' is abestos, a term which denotes that which cannot be extinguished" (Wayne Jackson).
- b. The worm (gnawing anguish) "dies not"--which means: "...their punishment after death will never cease..." (Thayer, 580).
- c. The punishment of the wicked is "eternal."

5. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).

- a. Our Saviour used the Greek word aiionios to show both the duration of the life of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked.
- b. Christ used the word aiionios 26 times--22 times to describe the blessed, holy and eternal life held out as a reward for his faithful disciples--and four times to show the duration of condemnation and punishment of the wicked.

(1) In every one of these instances our Lord used aiionios in the strict sense of absolute, endless duration.

(2) Aiionios means "without end, never to cease, everlasting" (Thayer).

c. Examples of the use of aiionios:

(1) To the future life of the righteous (John 3:16; 12:25).

(2) To the future state of the wicked (Matt. 18:8; Mark 3:29; Matt. 25:41,46).

- d. "If one holds that the punishment is not eternal, he would have to contend, if consistent, that the life for the righteous is not eternal. If one ends the other ends. If one is everlasting so is the other."²⁴

D. It is obvious that the Bible teaches future punishment.

1. There is punishment for sin after death (Matt. 10:28).

- a. There is something to fear.

- a. Fire--Matt. 25:41; 2 Thess. 1:7-9.
 - b. This punishment in fire will begin to take place at the revelation of Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 21:5-8).
 - c. Darkness (Matt. 25:30).
 - d. Weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 13:40-42).
 - e. Destruction of body and soul in hell (Mt. 10:28; Mk. 19:43-48).
6. The punishment after the judgment will be endless. Two states:
- a. Hades and hell--they differ.
 - (1) Hades--disembodied spirit.
 - (2) Hell--Body and spirit.
 - b. They differ in duration.
 - (1) Hades--Terminated at resurrection.
 - (2) Hell--Never ends.

CONCLUSION:

1. Hell is a real place.
2. Hell is a place of endless, conscious suffering.
3. Hell is a place where you don't want to go.
4. Become a Christian today (2 Cor. 6:2).

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THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL HELL

JAMES MEADOWS

Introduction

In 1991 Newsweek reported that 70 percent of Americans believe there is a heaven and think they have a good chance of getting there. Only about half of the people surveyed believe there is a hell and only six percent think "they have a good or excellent chance of getting there."¹ The same Newsweek report quoted the American church historian Martin Marty, who observes, "Hell disappeared. And no one noticed."² The article continues, "Today, hell is theology's H-word, a subject too trite for serious scholarship."³ Most statistics indicate that the experts have done away with hell, while half the United States' population still believes in it, "but few anticipate a destiny there."⁴

Religions have varying views about hell.⁵ Some Southern Baptists think of hell as a physical place where the flames are hot, while others see it as a symbolic separation from God. Presbyterians generally think of hell as the absence of God "...as beyond human ability to understand what happens after death." The Roman Catholic Church takes the stand that hell is eternal separation from God, but it is also a physical place. Mormons take the view that all souls enter the spirit world to face varying degrees of reward and punishment. Universalists believe that a loving God would not send anyone to eternal damnation. Jim Cohn, of Reform Judaism, said, "I've never met a non-Orthodox Jew who believed in hell."

But what is the Bible Doctrine of eternal hell? In answering this question I propose to use the following methodology: (1) Definition of Words; (2) What Did The Old Testament Prophets, The Lord and The Apostles Teach About Hell?; (3) When Will Hell Begin And What Will Be The Nature of It?; (4) Who Will Be In Hell?; (5) Are There Those Who Deny Eternal Punishment In Hell?; and (6) Conclusion.

Definition of Words

There are four words found in the Greek and Hebrew texts that are often translated hell. They are Sheol, Hades, Tartarus, and Gehenna. The King James Version (in most instances) translates all of these words with the word "hell."⁶

First, let's consider the word Sheol. The Hebrew word Sheol appears sixty-five times in the Old

Testament (the only one of the four words that does appear in the O.T.). It refers to the unseen, the places of the dead. The Septuagint translators (70 Greek scholars who translated the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek about 250 B.C. at the request of Plotemy II) never translated it Gehenna, the lake of fire. They never translated it grave (geber, Hebrew) and (mnema, Greek). Sixty-one times they translated it Hades. The word "Sheol" is always singular. There is only one "Sheol," one "hades," although there are many graves.

Sheol is sometimes used to mean a state of conscious existence. "I will go down to Sheol to my son mourning (Gen. 37:35). It is sometimes used in a bad sense to designate where the wicked are. "...and burneth unto the lowest Sheol" (Deut. 32:22). Sheol is used in a sense indicative of a temporal, and not an eternal place. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol" (Psa. 16:10). The conclusion is irresistible, from all these, that Sheol designates the realm into which the spirit of man passes at death.

Second, the word "Hades" in the New Testament and "Sheol" in the Old Testament refer to the same place. "Thou will not leave my soul in hell" (sheol) (Psa. 16:10). Because thou will not leave my soul in hell (hades) (Acts 2:27). Here is positive proof that the word "sheol" in the Hebrew has the same meaning as the Greek word "hades" in the New Testament.

The word hades appears in eleven New Testament verses (Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27,31; I Cor. 15:55; Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14). What does it mean? Consider the following definitions: (1) "It has reference to the abode of the departed, the unseen world into which men pass at death...";⁷ "Hades, a compound Greek word that simply means the unseen, but when applied to the state of the dead, the unseen realm of the dead";⁸ "The term Hades designates the place of disembodied spirits";⁹ "the unseen" (Liddell and Scott); "the underworld—the world of departed spirits (Sophodes).

Hades contains two parts—Paradise and Tartarus. During the period of our Lord's death he was in Hades (Acts 2:27,31), but he was also in Paradise (Luke 23:43. "This Paradise — the realm in Hades where the righteous spirits remain until the resurrection of the body — is to be identified with Abraham's bosom — of the case of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16)."¹⁰

In Hades, then, the receptacle of all the dead, there are rewards and punishments. There is a paradise, or an Abraham's bosom, and there is a Tartarus, in which the wicked angels are chained, and the spirits of wicked men engulfed. Hence, Dives in Tartarus, and Lazarus in

Abraham's Bosom, were both in Hades. Jesus and the converted thief were together in hades, while they were together in paradise.¹¹

Third, there is the word Tartarus (Greek verb tartarao translated Tartarus and means "to cast into"). "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (Tartarus) (II Pet. 2:4; cf. Jude 6). Tartarus is the place where the angels and the spirits of the wicked are kept unto the judgment and final sentencing. In Greek mythology the place of restraint and punishment for the souls of wicked men after death. Peter, writing in Greek, used a word which they would understand to convey the idea of "the abode of the wicked."

Fourth, the word hell (Gehenna) appears in twelve New Testament verses (Matt. 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mark 9:43,45,47; Luke 12:5; Jas. 3:6). Gehenna is made up of Ge which in Greek means earth, literally the place of "Hinnom or valley of Hinnom" (cf. II Kings 23:10).

This valley acquired an evil reputation because of the idolatrous practice of child sacrifices offered to Moloch there during the days of Ahaz and Manasseh, two of the most notorious kings to ever lead Judah. The southern part of the divided monarchy (II Kgs. 16:3; 21:6). Later, during the reign of Josiah, this faithful king had the valley desecrated in order to prevent a recurrence of the abominable practice (II Kings 23:10). Still later the Prophet Jeremiah announced that this valley would become a place of God's future judgment, where the Lord would recompense the kings of Judah and the people of Jerusalem for their abominable deeds. Hence the valley would no longer be called the "Valley of Ben Hinnom," but the "Valley of Slaughter" (Jer. 7:30-34; 19:1-11). This historical sketch and the negative characteristics associated with this valley as well as its designation as a site for a future judgment for the enemies of God, lent themselves as an ideal literal basis for the metaphorical expression of an eschatological place of judgment and final abode of the wicked.¹²

In the second century B.C., the name Gehenna began to appear in Jewish literature as a place for the punishment of the wicked.

It is natural, therefore, when the New Testament opens, Gehenna would be the primary term for hell.... It was not to the literal valley outside of Jerusalem that they referred, nor anything similar to it, but rather to "the Gehenna of fire" in a realm beyond the grave.¹³

Fifth, what is the meaning of the terms eternal and everlasting? It is essential to learn the meaning of these words in order to understand how long hell will be. Campbell said, "Eternal...aiionios, eternal, everlasting, forever, occurs 75 times in the Christian Scriptures. Wherever we have the word 'eternal,' and 'everlasting,' in the common version, or this, it is aiionios in the original."¹⁴

Robert Milligan gives a very forceful and clear declaration regarding the words eternal and everlasting.

The Hebrew word olam and the Greek aion, variously rendered forever, everlasting, eternal, etc., are both relative terms; and as such they may be applied to any age or to any period. Thus, for example, in Exodus 21:6, the word olam is applied to a period of service; and it simply means that the servant should serve his master as long as he lived. In Exodus 40:15, it is used to describe the duration of the Levitical priesthood; and it means here that this priesthood would act throughout the entire Jewish age; or as long as the old covenant would be of binding obligation. In Genesis 49:26, it is applied to the hills; and in this case it comprehends all future time. This is also evidently its meaning in Isaiah 9:7; Daniel 2:44, etc.

From such premises, some have hastily inferred that these words olam, aion, everlasting, etc., always refer to a limited period; and that they never mean duration without end. But be it carefully observed, that these terms, though relative, are always perfectly exhaustive of the period or cycle to which they are applied. If they refer simply to the period of a man's life, they exhaust it; if to future time, they exhaust it; and if to eternity, they in like manner also exhaust it. And hence, when Christ says, in Matt. 25:46, "These shall go away into everlasting (aionion) punishment, but the righteous into everlasting (aionion) life," He means, beyond all doubt, life and punishment without end. Eternity has no such periods as time has; at least none such are revealed to us. And hence the word aionion in Matt. 25:46, and all other similar cases, has no limitations. It is exhaustive of eternity.¹⁵

The Bible's use of the words eternal and everlasting, in describing hell, show that it is unending. Those who cause offenses will be "cast into everlasting (aionios) fire (Matt. 18:8). The ones on the left hand in the judgment "shall go away into everlasting (aionios) punishment" (Matt. 25:46). Those who know not God and obey not the gospel "shall be punished with everlasting (aionios) destruction from the presence of the Lord" (II Thess. 1:9). The "mist of darkness is reserved for ever (aiona)" for those who teach false doctrine (II Pet. 2:17). The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are "suffering the vengeance of eternal (aionios) fire" (Jude 7). There is reserved for ungodly men (Jude 4), "the blackness of darkness for ever (aiona)" (Jude 13). In Revelation 14:10-11 the wicked are pictured as "tormented with fire and brimstone" "and the smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever (aiona), and they have no rest day nor night..."

Some try to get around this confirmed meaning of eternal and everlasting by alleging that the wicked will be annihilated. This means (according to this view) that the wicked will cease to exist. God will "destroy" both body and soul in hell (Matt. 10:28). Jesus uses the word apollumi (used 92 times in the N.T.). It is translated by such words as "destroy," "perish," "loss," and "lost." The idea of annihilation is not found in the

word. The prodigal son, while in a far country, was "lost" (*apollumi*) (Luke 15:32). He did not cease to exist. Jesus came to seek and save the "lost" (*apollumi*) (Luke 19:10). He did not come to seek those who did not exist. "In every instance where the word *apollumi* is found in the New Testament, something other than annihilation is being described."¹⁶

One should have no trouble believing that hell is unending if one believes heaven is unending. The same word (*aiwnios*) is used both in reference to eternal life and eternal punishment. The same word expresses the eternity of both. "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21). "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (I John 2:25). "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).

WHAT DID THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS, THE LORD AND THE APOSTLES TEACH ABOUT HELL?

David clearly affirmed the punishment of the wicked subsequent to death. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God" (Psa. 9:17). Daniel spoke of the resurrection of the wicked to "shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). God experiences no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek. 18:23,31,32), but he counts as precious the death of his saints" (Psa. 116:15).

Unless there is punishment for the wicked beyond death and rest for the righteous, there is no plausible way of understanding these two attitudes on the part of God relative to the demise of the wicked and the redeemed. Accepting both eternal destinies as real provides a clear answer in this regard.¹⁷

Jesus Christ taught the reality of hell. Gehenna, in the Greek text, refers to hell and it is translated this way in our English versions. Gehenna, as we have already shown, occurs twelve times in the New Testament and Jesus uses it eleven of these times (Matt. 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mark 9:43,45,47; Luke 12:5). James, the Lord's brother, used it the other time (Jas. 3:6). Jesus referred to hell as a furnace of fire (Matt. 13:41-42), as outer darkness (Matt. 25:30), as everlasting fire (Matt. 25:41), as everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:48). Jesus spoke of wicked as being raised "unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29).

Hell was very much a part of the preaching of New Testament preachers. John the Baptist preached that the wicked would be baptized "in fire" (Matt. 3:11) and that "he (the Lord, JM) will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3:12). Paul preached that those "who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ...shall be punished with everlasting destruction..." (II Thess. 1:8-9). Peter preached the punishment of the wicked as a reality, not the figment of one's imagination (II Pet. 2:4-9). Jude preached that some would "suffer" the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 6-7). John the apostle clearly taught that the wicked will be cast into "the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14-15; 21:8; 22:15).

If hell is not a reality, then what? David and Daniel lived in the Old Testament. John, Jesus and the Apostles lived in the New Testament. So did the Spirit who inspired each of their declarations. So did the Father and Son who conveyed to the Spirit what he in turn guided the Biblical penmen to write.¹⁸

WHEN WILL HELL BEGIN AND WHAT WILL BE THE NATURE OF IT?

Many think that hell begins here on earth and that is all there is to it. Some think hell begins immediately at death. No so!

The word of God teaches that hell will begin after the judgment day is over. Jesus speaks of "that day" (Matt. 7:22) which refers to the judgment day. The sentence begins at the "day of judgment" (Matt. 11:22). The reapers will gather the tares at harvest-time (Matt. 13:30). In John 12:48 Jesus speaks of "the last day." God has appointed the "day" in which he will judge the world (Acts 17:30-31). We must all appear before the "judgment seat" of Christ to receive according to the deeds done in the body (II Cor. 5:10). Sentence will be passed when the Lord appears from heaven (II Thess. 1:7-8). All is kept in store and reserved until the day of judgment (II Pet. 3:7).

There is punishment for sin in Hades. The rich man died and was buried (Luke 16:22). He was in torments as a consequence of his sins (Luke 16:23). The punishment in Hades will end, but the punishment after the judgment is endless. In Hades there is the disembodied spirit (Luke 16:22-23), but in hell there will be both body and spirit (Matt. 10:28). Hades will be terminated at the resurrection (Rev. 20:11-15), but hell never ends.

At the judgment the wicked will be condemned to punishment which lies beyond it in eternity. At the judgment death and hades will be no more (I Cor. 15:54-58; Rev. 20:13-14). At the judgment there will be

condemnation (John 5:28,29). Condemnation implies punishment. The ungodly will be condemned to punishment which lies beyond the judgment (II Pet. 2:9; 3:7). The punishment after the judgment is represented by words and phrases expressive of the utmost pain and desolation. There will be fire (Matt. 5:22; II Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:10,14). The punishment in the fire will begin to take place at the revelation of Jesus Christ (II Thess. 1:7-9). There will be darkness (Matt. 25:30), weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 13:40-42).

Seven times it is recorded that Jesus said those in hell would there (*akei*—in that place) experience "the weeping and gnashing of teeth." Since Jesus said those who have this agony will "see" themselves on the "outside" (Luke 13:28; cf. Matt. 8:12) in the "furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:42,50), bound "hand and foot" in the "outer darkness" (Matt. 22:13; 25:30), "with the hypocrites" (Matt. 24:51), and with no indication of any termination, our Lord could not have indicated an eternity of torment any clearer. The isolation and the fire did not stop their agony, but caused it. Since they are weeping in the fire, these souls are conscious, not annihilated!¹⁹

There are a number of expressions in the Bible that "can only imply the concept of conscious agony." Mark 9:44 describes hell as a place of "unquenchable fire"—fire being a metaphor for "the extreme penal torments which the wicked are to undergo after this life is over."²⁰ Jesus describes hell as a place "where their worm dieth not" (Mark 9:48). "The never dying worm is a symbol of the unending torment of the damned."²¹ "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night..." (Rev. 14:11; 20:10). Torment certainly implies awareness (cf. Rev. 9:5; 11:10). Punishment implies consciousness. "It would be absurd to describe those who no longer exist as being punished."²²

WHO WILL BE IN HELL?

Jesus is the authority for the truth that Satan will be in hell. "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone..." (Rev. 20:10).

Second, those who satisfy the lusts of the flesh will be there. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8).

Romans 1:20-32 clearly reveals that the wicked ("those who commit such things") are worthy of death. Those

who practice the works of the flesh "shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:19-21).

Third, hypocrites will be cast into hell. Jesus said the Lord would take the evil servant and "appoint him his portion with the hypocrites" (Matt. 24:48-51). Hypocrites are pictured as children of hell (Matt. 23:15).

Fourth, the ignorant and disobedient will be in hell.

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power (II Thess. 1:7-9).

Fifth, many religious people will be there. Jesus and his apostles warned against false teachers and false doctrines.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matt. 7:21-23).

Jesus said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15). Satan has his "false apostles," "deceitful workers," ministers who transform themselves as "ministers of righteousness" (II Cor. 11:13-15).

ARE THERE SOME WHO DENY ETERNAL PUNISHMENT IN HELL?

Max King (a brother in Christ), the proponent of the A.D. 70 Theory, denies eternal punishment. He believes that everything came to an end in A.D. 70. II Peter 3:7 says: "But the heaven and earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Max King states the following:

Thus, the world reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Pet. 3:7) was the Jewish world. Fire is a symbol denoting the severity of God in judgment and destruction.... The fire of 2 Pet. 3:10 is no more literal than the fire of Luke 12:49. Other passages involving the symbolic fire in the destruction of Judaism are Matt. 3:12; 13:40,42; and II Thess. 1:8.²³

Steven Clark Goad (another brother in Christ) made these comments regarding Matthew 10:28. Jesus teaches that God will destroy both body and soul in hell, but we parrot Satan and say "Oh, no!" We have been teaching that God will keep us alive forever and ever and heat up

the flames and darken the darkness, and keep open the pit so that we will be tormented and tortured forever. There is not one Scripture that teaches such in all the Bible! It is a doctrine that found its origin in Catholicism and Phariseeism, but not one taught by our Saviour.²⁴

Curtis Dickinson (a brother in Christ) denies eternal punishment. He does not deny that the Bible teaches "eternal punishment," but he says it refers to the effect or the result, not the duration or length of time. The Scriptures speak of eternal punishment and eternal life, or everlasting punishment and everlasting life. Therefore, many conclude that those being punished must live and endure punishment as long as the saints live and enjoy eternal life. But this is as illogical as it is unscriptural. The word "eternal" is an adjective used to describe the word it modifies. In one case it describes life, and means that life is fixed, age-abiding or final. In the other case it describes the effect of the punishment. For the penalty is not punishing but punishment, and the punishment is death. Therefore eternal has to do with death, and not the means of bringing about that death.²⁵

Jude 7 says the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah suffered "the vengeance of eternal fire. "--" We readily understand that it means eternal in its effect and result. We are to understand the same thing with regard to the fire that destroys the wicked. It will be eternal in its ultimate and final result. Thus, everlasting death, everlasting destruction, everlasting punishment, all indicate that the unbelieving sinner is not to continue in some miserable existence, but that his life is to come to an end in the final death...."²⁶

Brother Edward Fudge, in his book The Fire That Consumes,²⁷ denies everlasting punishment because he believes the wicked will be annihilated. He believes in "conditional immortality," the view that all humans are created "mortal," but "those who later respond to the gospel are given immortality." Since the wicked never gain immortality then there can be no eternal punishment. He does not deny the conscious suffering of the wicked in the next life, nor degrees of punishment, nor the eternity of this torment. The result of the punishment is eternal, not the punishment itself—eternal punishment, not eternal punishing. Some questions are in order:

1. If "everlasting suffering" is sadistic, what about forcing those who will eventually be annihilated to suffer even temporarily?
2. If death is annihilation, then would not God have to recreate a replica to bless or punish?
3. If death is annihilation, then would not some annihilations be worse than others? "If one died (was annihilated) for violating Moses' law, how much worse punishment (annihilation) will be deserved by one who has spurned the Son of God (Heb. 10:28ff)."

Brother F. LaGard Smith, in his book Who Is My Brother, denies hell in the sense of it meaning

unending, conscious punishment. "Finally, there is an equally yawning gap between believing that the nature of eternal punishment in hell may be something other than continuing, conscious burning and not believing in the reality of hell itself."²⁸

The Seventh-Day Adventist deny eternal punishment. They admit that "...eternal punishment for the ungodly, is plainly taught in the Scriptures."²⁹ They admit that the words "everlasting" and "eternal" describe the fate of the wicked and list such passages as Matthew 25:41,46; Mark 3:29, etc. But they then state the following:

In view of this, it might be inferred that if the "eternal life" referred to is forever and ever, will not the "everlasting punishment" be for the same duration, inasmuch as the same Greek word is used in both instances? Decidedly not! The eternal life will continue throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity; and the punishment will also be eternal—not eternal duration of conscious suffering, however, but punishment that is complete and final. The end of those who thus suffer is the second death. This death will be eternal, from which there will not, and cannot, be any resurrection.... Let us repeat: In the expression "eternal punishment," just as in "eternal redemption" and "eternal judgment," the Bible is referring to all eternity—not as of process, but as of result. It is not an endless process of punishment, but an effectual punishment, which will be final and forever (alouios).³⁰

Jehovah's Witnesses also deny eternal punishment, in fact they deny there is a hell. The doctrine of a burning hell where the wicked are tortured eternally after death cannot be true, mainly for four reasons: (1) Because it is wholly unscriptural; (2) because it is unreasonable; (3) because it is contrary to God's love; and (4) because it is repugnant to justice.³¹

They teach (as some brethren do) that eternal or everlasting, when used in connection with the punishment of the wicked, means it is "eternal in the sense that it is done and over with, will never be repeated, and the results are forever."³²

CONCLUSION

Surveys clearly indicate that more people believe in heaven than in hell. This seems to be highly inconsistent since our knowledge of both places is derived from the same source—the Bible. It is impossible to accept what the Bible teaches and at the same time reject the notion of hell. Our study clearly shows that hell is a real place, that it is eternal in its duration, that some people will endure an eternity in hell and, despite the claim of some to the contrary, the Biblical doctrine of an eternal hell remains.

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CAN A CHRISTIAN DEFEND HIMSELF?

Romans 12:19-13:7
JAMES MEADOWS

Introduction

1. Read, or quote the text.
2. Two views are usually set forth as to what the Christian can or cannot do in this matter.
 - a. Resistance - means the use of physical force to accomplish an end.
 - b. Nonresistance - forbids the use of physical force to accomplish an end.
3. In this study, we propose the following method in answering the questions:
 - a. Questions that need to be asked.
 - b. Does God have two sets of laws?
 - c. Some objections to resistance on the part of a Christian.
 - d. Conclusion.

Discussion

I. QUESTIONS THAT NEED TO BE ASKED:

- POWER POINT →
- A. Can a Christian "bear arms" in the armed forces?
 - B. Can he be a member of Congress?
 - C. Can a Christian serve as a policeman and uphold his duty to protect the law-abiding citizens and bring evil-doers to justice, even if it requires the taking of human life?
 - D. Can he support legislation that would require the taking of human life?
 - E. Can a Christian serve on a jury in a capital murder case and upon finding the defendant guilty cast his ballot for the death penalty?
 - F. In answering these questions on our way to answering our main question we need to ask.

Y. Can a Christian vote?

II. DOES GOD HAVE TWO SETS OF LAWS?

- POWER POINT →
- A. Many who hold the view of non-resistance insist that the scriptures (dealing with non-resistance) are laid upon the believers only and were not in any way directed to non-believers.
 1. Many who reason correctly regarding the marriage law as binding on all, do not use the same reasoning regarding the "minister of God" who "beareth not the sword in vain."
 2. If it is sinful for a Christian to take the life of a criminal, then it is sinful for a non-Christian.
 3. God does not have two sets of laws.
 - B. Some insist it is wrong for a Christian to serve as a policeman.
 1. If all resistance is wrong, then does the Christian have a right to ask a policeman to do something that is morally wrong?
 2. Some (who hold the absolute pacifist position) insist that even the non-Christian will not be blameless in bearing the sword.
- ON A SLIDE

(2)

3. It seems a rather strange position that insists the sinner has the right to defend the lives of Christians, but the Christian does not have the same right.

POWER POINT →

Christians can use appropriate restraint - acts of self-defense.

1. If someone is trying to burn down my home, may I call the police?
2. If someone is trying to kill me, may I call the police?
3. If it becomes necessary to use deadly force in protecting myself and my family, may I use it (I Timothy 5:8)?
 - a. Protection against evil-doers is a part of providing for one's family.
 - b. It has nothing to do with personal vengeance or retaliation.

POWER POINT →

D. Jesus' disciples armed themselves upon his instruction.

1. When Jesus sent them forth among their own people, he ordered them to take no extra provisions (Matt. 10:7-13)
2. But later when he sent them into uncivilized and hostile territory, he told them to buy swords (Luke 22:36) *Lk. 22:35-38*
3. If Jesus' disciples had the right to use means of protection, why don't we?

POWER POINT →

III. SOME OBJECTIONS TO RESISTANCE ON THE PART OF THE CHRISTIAN

A. Jesus taught us to love our enemies (Matt. 5:44) and to "resist not evil" (Matt. 5:39). Does this mean there are no limitations?

1. One is resisting when he appeals to the civil government for protection.
2. "Give to him that asketh...turn not those away" is not unlimited. We are expressly told not to support the lazy (II Thess. 3:10).
3. Where does the Bible teach that I am to love my enemy more than myself, my family, my brethren, my neighbor?
 - a. Peter did not love the lives of the soldiers more than his own life (Acts 12:6-12, 19).
 - b. Are we to love our enemy who is hurting our neighbor?
 - c. Sometimes mercy and love can be shown to the innocent only when dispensing justice to the enemy.
4. But how can one love his enemies, yet under certain circumstances kill him?
 - a. How can one will good toward his family and stand by and let the enemy kill him?
 - b. How do you harmonize the fact that we scripturally appeal to Caesar, in his capacity as dispenser of justice, and still love the enemy?
 - c. How can we harmonize love with setting in operation, in an appeal to the police, something that may involve the death of the enemy?

3

- d. Can we report the crime of an enemy even though we know that arrest and conviction may lead to his imprisonment or to the death sentence?
- e. If we can harmonize that fact that we love our enemies, with the calling of the police - which can result in the enemy being as dead as if we ourselves shot him - then why cannot we harmonize it with our own use of force if necessary?
- f. Love of enemy is not the supreme love.

POWER POINT

B. Second, the Bible teaches that vengeance belongs to God (Rom. 12:19)

- 1. Vengeance means:
 - a. "recompensing for injury" (Deaver)
 - b. "personal desire to get even" (Reese)
 - c. "satisfaction for injuries" (Whiteside)
- 2. The vengeance talked about here is God's vengeance through His appropriate agent, the civil government.
- 3. Paul sets forth a limitation in this verse, but it is not contradictory to teachings elsewhere.
 - a. First, the civil government is "a revenger to execute wrath upon them that doeth evil" (Rom. 13:4)
 - b. Second, the church at Corinth exercised discipline on the incestuous brother at Corinth. (I Cor. 5:1-13)
 - (1) What the church at Corinth did, under God's authority, does not contradict Paul's teachings here.
 - (2) Paul in referring to this incident later, refers to what the Corinthians had done as "revenge" (KJV) or vengeance (ASV). (2 COR. 7:11).
 - c. Third, does a Christian providing for his own (I Tim. 5:8), which may include the use of force, contradict what Paul states here?
- 4. The Christian may appeal to the civil government to do its work - oppose evil and praise good.
 - a. Paul appealed to Caesar and demanded that he be treated justly (Acts 25:11).
 - b. Paul was not silent when unlawfully scourged (Acts 22:25).
 - c. Paul appealed to the civil government for protection of the sword when his life was in danger (Acts 23:12-25).
 - d. It is obviously not wrong for the Christian to call on the civil government for protection.
 - e. Since we are to do unto others as we would have others do unto us (Matt. 7:12), can we call on the policeman if we are unwilling, when necessary and possible, to help protect the policeman, our neighbor, our ourselves?
 - f. It cannot be wrong for the Christian to submit to the civil government and help it do the very thing God ordained it to do - carry the sword against evildoers.

POWER POINT



(4)

POWER POINT

Third, Jesus taught "~~...but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also~~" (Matt. 5:39). Is this without limitation?

1. If so, Jesus violated his own command when He protested when smitten by ^{AN OFFICER OF} the high priest (John 18:22-23).
2. There is a vast difference in insults and abuses, which the Christian must suffer, and the right of an individual (or nation) to defend against murderers and aggressors.
3. Jesus never told Christians not to stay the hand of a murderer, rapist, or thief.

Conclusion

1. Christians are to live at peace with all men as far as possible (Rom. 12:18).
2. But there are occasions when a Christian can and must defend himself.

WHAT IS DEATH?

I. WHEN IS A MAN DEAD?

A. "When is a man dead is so important that a burial cannot take place until an authorized person certifies that death has occurred."

(J.J. Turner)

B. In an article entitled "The Enemy" (Psychology Today, August 1970, p. 37) Edwin S. Schneidman has some pertinent remarks concerning the so-called "after life" experiences reported by persons who supposedly have "lived again" (in this life and sphere) to tell of their interim "death experience."

*Death
Experiences
Read*

"Where either consciousness or loss of consciousness (including death) is involved, we must distinguish between your private experiences and my private experiences. You (privately) can experience my (public) death; we can both (privately) experience some one else's (public) death: but neither of us can experience his own (inexperienceable) death. You can never actually see yourself unconscious, hear your self snore, or experience your own being dead, for if you were in a position to have these experiences you would not, in fact, be unconscious, asleep or dead.

"If you can never experience your own death: it follows logically you can never experience your own dying. 'Now, wait a minute,' you might say. 'Granted that I cannot experience my being dead but obviously I am still alive while I am dying and, unless I am unconscious, I can experience that.' No, the fact is that you can never be certain you are dying. 'Dying' takes its only legitimate meaning from the fact that it immediately precedes death."

1. One may think he is dying, and survive. In that case he wasn't actually dying, He was only in a state, or amid circumstances

which, if not reversed, would lead to death. One can very keenly experience the belief that he or she is dying; the experience can be interpreted as an actuality, but unless one actually dies the experience was but the working of the fears which can grip the human mind. "Such fears can be remembered when the crisis is past only because the brain in which such thoughts were at work was actually alive, and the thoughts thereof were recorded therein."

2. This is not suggesting there is no consciousness after death and apart from the brain.
- C. Physicians have noted that a sense of euphoria ("a feeling of well-being or elation; esp. one that is groundless, disproportionate to its cause, or inappropriate to one's life situation") sometimes comes over persons whose bodies are wracked by such torments as diseases, burns, injuries, etc.
1. Person in a terrible wreck.
 2. The mind tends to retreat from unpleasant reality - "The subject generally drops off into a deep sleep, in marked contrast to the state (both mental and physical) from which relief has been gained. In such a case the patient sometimes undergoes what is interpreted afterwards as a death experience in which sensations of peace, pleasure, beauty and light are recalled when the subject later awakens to reality." (Boatman)
- D. It is of no small interest that when certain psychic phenomena is in vogue, suddenly it become epidemic. Many begin to share exactly the experience. When attention is later focused on some other psychic expression, that becomes the experience most often imagined, manifested or reported.
- D. The Bible reports a number of resurrections, but none ever discussed anything that was "experienced" in the time between their death and

their resurrection.

1. Lazarus, brother of Mary and Martha said nothing about his experience. John 11.
2. The Lord said nothing about his experience.
3. Paul was carried to the third heaven, but he was not allowed to tell about it. 2 Cor. 12:1ff
 - a. Has that law been changed since Paul's day or did it only apply to words one hears?
 - b. Have the sights, particularly "the light at the end of the tunnel" now become, "non-classified information" to be spoken freely?
4. Thus we have no authenticated and interpreted "after death experiences.

F. In death there is the total cessation of the life processes including brain activity. When the body dies, when brain waves cease, when the processes which animate the body are no longer operable, the soul or spirit departs.

G. "...that separation (whether natural or violent) of the soul from the body by which the life on earth is ended" (Gr.-Eng. Lexicon, p. 282) Thayer

H. Should dying people be told?

1. Most people who are dying know it, and an attempt to conceal the fact from them is as subterfuge.
2. A person who is told he is dying usually passes through five stages of mind.
 - a. Denial, which can last a few seconds or a few months.
 - b. Denial gives way to a "why Me?" anger at people and God.
 - c. After anger there may be a brief period of bargaining, an attempt to win through good behavior the reprieve that did not result from the anger.

*Use Printed
Material here*

d. Depression comes next.

(1) It may be a reaction to actual losses such as from surgery or through the separation that hospital confinement brings.

(2) It may be an anticipation of the losses that the coming death will impose.

~~B.~~ Acceptance is the fifth stage.

(1) A kind of quiet time.

(2) Almost devoid of feeling.

(3) Time of withdrawal.

(4) It is probably the hardest time for the patient's family.

II. WHAT IS THE BIBLICAL TEACHING ABOUT DEATH?

A. Thanatos is the Greek word translated death in the N.T. (Hebrew word is maveth.)

1. Strong defines it thus:

a. "...thanatos, than-at-os; from 2348; (prop. an adj. used as a noun) death (lit. or fig.): - X deadly, (be...) death."

b. Thanatos basically means separation - whether literal or figuratively, death always means separation, never annihilation.

B. There are three kinds of death pictured in the Bible.

1. There is physical death, the separating of the soul and body.
(Rom. 5:12; Jas. 2:26; Gen. 35:18; Eccle. 12:7)

2. There is spiritual death, the separation of the soul from God.
(Eph. 2:1; John 5:25; Gen. 2:17; Isa. 59:1,2; Matt. 8:22;
1 Tim. 5:16; 1 John 3:14; Eph. 5:14)

3. There is eternal death, the separation from God forever in hell.
(Rev. 20:14,15; 21:8; Matt. 25:46; Rom. 6:13,23; Jas. 5:19,20;
2 Thess. 1:7-9)

C. There are three kinds of life pictured in the Bible.

1. There is physical life. (Gen. 2:7; 1 Kings 17:21,22; Lk. 8:55)
2. There is spiritual life. (John 11:25,26; 8:51; 1 Jn. 5:12)
3. There is eternal life. (Matt. 25:46; Titus 1:2; 3:7; 1 Jn. 2:25 Rev. 22:14; Jn. 5:28,29)

- a. There is a difference between eternal life and eternal existence.
- b. Life and death have reference to two states or conditions of existence: union and separation.
- c. All men have eternal existence - some in happiness, because of a holy life; others in torment, because of a sinful life.

D. Death is an appointment. Heb. 9:27

1. It is a pleasure for a Christian to keep his appointments.
2. He keeps them because he makes the necessary plans
3. Death is not something that just happens.
 - a. It is not an unforeseen calamity.
 - b. It is a well-ordered incident in the plan of God.
 - c. It is the part of wisdom to make the necessary preparation for an incident that is so certain.

E. Death is a departure. 2 Tim. 4:6-8; Phil. 1:21-23

1. Translated from analysis, an-al¹oo-sis; from 361; departure: - departure.
 - a. 360 - "analuo, an-al-oo-o; from 303 and 389; to break up, i.e. depart (lit. or fig.): - depart, return.
 - b. 3089 - "luo, loo¹o; a prim. verb; to 'loosen' (lit. or fig.) break (up) destroy, dissolve, (un) loose, melt, put off.
2. "The simple meaning of the word is 'to unloose, undo again, break up,' It meant 'to depart'. It was a common expression for death. It was used in military circles of the taking down of a tent and the departure of an army, and in nautical language, of the hoisting of an anchor and the sailing of the ship. Paul use

the same word in Phil. 1:23. During his first imprisonment, he was kept a prisoner at the Praetorium, the military camp of the Emperor's bodyguard, but now in his second, it is thought he writes from a cold damp Roman dungeon. In his first use of the word, it would seem he used the figure of striking one's tent. He was in a military camp, he was a tent-maker by trade, and he spoke of the human body as a tent. If so, is probably he had the same figure of speech in mind here." (Untranslatable Riches from the Greek New Testament, Kenneth S. Wuest)

3. Other Bible verses that mention death as a departure or departing.
 - a. Gen. 35:18 - "And it came to pass as her soul was in departing (for she died)..."
 - (1) Yatsa yaw-tsaw, is the Hebrew word used here.
 - (2) Same word used in Ex. 16:1; Gen. 12:4; Ex. 21:22; 35:20; Lev. 25:41; Dt. 9:7; 24:2; 1 Sam. 23:13; Ezek. 10:18
 - (3) Adam Clarke: "Is not this a proof that there is an immortal spirit in man, which can exist separate from and independent of the body? Of Rachel's death it is said, ...betseth naphshah, in the going away of her soul; her body did not go away, therefore her soul and body must have been distinct. If her breath only had been intended ...neshamah or ...ruach would have rather been used as the first means breath, the latter breath or spirit indifferently."
4. "when her soul was going out, namely, of the body: an argument this of the soul's immortality, especially if compared with Eccle. 12:7..." (Benson)
5. "This phrase expresses not annihilation, but merely change of

of place. It presupposes the perpetual existence of the soul."
(Murphy) If the body and the mind make the soul, then from
what and to what did Rachel's soul depart?

F. Death is a putting off of the tabernacle. 2 Pet. 1:13,14; 2 Cor.
5:1-8

1. The word tabernacle is from the Greek word "Maarath, mah-ar-awth;
a form of 4630; waste; Maarath, a place in Pal.: Maarath.

a. 4630 - "maarah, mah-ar-eh; from 4629; an open spot: = army

b. 4629 - "ma'areh, mah-ar-eh; from 6168; a nude place; i.e. a
common: - meadows.

c. 6168 - "Arah, aw-raw; a prim. root; to be (caus. make) bare;
hence to empty, pour out, demolish: - leave destitute, dis-
cover, empty, make naked, pour (out), rose, spread self,
uncover." (Strong)

2. 2 Pet. 1:13,14

a. The "tabernacle" is used figuratively here of the fleshly
body. (Woods)

b. "He calls his body...a tabernacle, to intimate that the soul
is a distinct substance from the body, that its continuance
in the body is of short duration, and that its departure is
easy." (Macknight)

c. "Our bodies are the tabernacles or tents housing our spirits
('Tabernacle,' skenoma, is translated 'habitation' in Acts
7:46) By calling it a tent, the apostle emphasized the tem-
porary and perishable nature of our outward beings." (Oberst

2 Cor. 5:1 -

A. "We know"

1. Strong and unwavering assurance.

2. "They had no doubt on the subject." (Barnes)

B. "The Greek for 'tabernacle' is the genitive singular of skaynos, mean

ing 'tent', 'tabernacle', 'temporary dwelling.' (Proclaim the N.T., Vol. VI, p. 102)

- C. "It would be better to translate here by tent. The word tabernacle is diminutive of the Latin taberna, a hut or shed, which appears in tavern. Its root is ta, tan, to stretch or spread out." (Vincent, p. 316)
- D. The word "earthly" - opposed to heavenly or house eternal. "The word properly means 'upon earth, terrestrial, belonging to the earth, or on the earth...' (Barnes, p. 103) The first man is of the earth or earthly. (1 Cor. 15:47)
- E. "of this tabernacle"
1. A booth, tent - a movable dwelling.
 2. It refers to the body as the frail and temporary dwelling of the soul.
 3. Tindal renders it "if our earthly mansion wherein we now dwell."
 4. The Syraic renders it "for we know-that if our house on earth, which is our body, were dissolved."
 5. The body is likened to a tent liable to be taken down at any time.
- F. "were dissolved" - Lit. loosened down. Appropriate to taking down a tent. Peter knew he must put off this tabernacle. 2 Pet. 1:13,14
- G. "we have a building of God"
1. Our spiritual body.
 2. The one like unto Christ which we'll receive at the resurrection. (Phil. 3:21; 1 Jn. 3:1-2)
 3. It is not made with hands. cf. Heb. 9:11; 8:2
 4. It is "eternal in the heavens"
 5. Cf. Heb. 9:10 - "a city which hath the foundations."
- v. 2 - "For in this we groan"
- A. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." (v. 4a

- B. "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Rom. 8:23)
- C. "The house in which we now live, because of the ills that ever possess it, is a constant burden..." (Annual L., 1946, p. 186)
- D. When John Quincy Adams was 80 years old a friend met him on the streets of Boston. "Good morning, Mr. Adams, how are you today?" "John Adams is quite all right thank you," answered the old man. "Of course, the house in which he lives is a bit dilapidated; its walls are tottering on their foundation; its roof is greatly in need of repair. I think he is soon going to have to move out of the old house into another not made with hands."
- V. 3 - *"Since when we are clothed, we will not be found naked" (NIV)*
- A. "The whole expression, being clothed - naked is equivalent to we shall not be found naked because we shall be clothed." (Vincent, p. 318) "Inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked." (New American Standard Bible)
- B. Macknight renders the word "naked as destitute" because it was used by the Greeks to denote one who was destitute of something which he ought to have had."
- C. "Naked" is sometimes used to mean those unprepared. Rev. 16:15
- D. "Death considered merely as a separation of soul and body is not to be desired, but, considered as a passage to glory, the believer is willing rather to die than live, to be absent from the body, that he may be present with the Lord." (Henry, p. 619, Vol. 6)
- E. "The apostle here expressed two wishes...If he survived till the Lord coming, he longed to be clothed with the spiritual body which the redeemed shall then receive; and expressed the hope that if he survived to that day he would be found clothed in that body and not be left naked as an outcast (Rev. 3:18). If, on the other hand,

it was his lot to die before the Lord came, he wished for the full consummation of God's purpose. He had no desire to be a disembodied spirit, but he wished to pass through that state to his final spiritual body; just a seed might say that it did not wish for the germinal death, but was ready to pass through that state in *order* to reach its future as a new plant." (Mc Garvey, p. 193)

V. 4 - "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

A. "For we that are in this tabernacle"

B. "being burdened." This is the reason for our groaning in this tabernacle.

C. "not that we would be unclothed"

1. Evidently not referring to the earthly tabernacle. Paul was desiring to die "be unclothed", of this earthly tabernacle.

"He does not, therefore, desire to get rid of his body, but to clothe it over 'with the garment of immortality.' Incidentally this implies the wish that he may be alive and not dead when the Lord returns." (Farrer)

D. "but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

1. "That he might be immediately changed into that new body. In this way the mortal body would 'be swallowed up of life' that is the 'house from heaven.' That this mortal 'must put on immortality' and this Paul was desiring that he might put on the immortal without having to be unclothed, taste, death." As in the case of Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11) who entered into life otherwise than through the grave and gate of death," St. Paul wishes to enter the building of God without having being first buried in the collapse of the 'soul's dark cottage batter-

ered and decayed. 'He desires to put on the robe of immortality without stripping of the rent garb of the body.' (Farrar)

5:6-8 -

- A. Does the spirit survive apart from the body as a conscious entity?
2 Cor. 5:6-8
1. "Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (For we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord." (ASV)
 2. The original on these verses is very striking: Those who dwell in the body are at a distance from the Lord; those who have traveled out of the body reside with the Lord." (Woods)
- B. "Adam Clarke calls attention to the fact that the words 'absent' and 'present' as used in this passage (v. 6) are not emphatic, the former suggesting one who is a sojourner, the latter, one who dwells among his own people. Heaven is the real home of every true Christian (Phil. 1:23) and he'll not be content until he reaches it.
- C. In verse 4 Paul speaks of the state between death and the resurrection and these verses show the spirit is with Christ. Even though he is with us now in the flesh we still walk by faith and do not actually see Him.
- D. "After death we have a spiritual perception of his presence, as Paul's language indicates; but it is only at the resurrection, when we are fully incorporated in our spiritual body, that we shall see him as he is (1 Jn. 3:2)...The disembodied state, though inferior in happiness to the resurrection glory, is yet preferable to our present state..." (McGarvey, p. 193,194)

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

1. The soul does not go out of existence at death.
2. Knowing the truth about this question "will instill an everlasting hope within the heart of man as he contemplates his own death, and the death of others.
3. In this study let's notice:

DISCUSSION:

I. THE SOUL DOES NOT DIE.

- A. One cannot apply a single definition to "soul" or "spirit" in every Bible text,
 1. Your soul is you (Gen. 2:7)
Man can destroy you.
Therefore, man can destroy your soul.
 2. Man can destroy you.
Man cannot destroy your soul (Matt. 10:28)
Therefore your soul cannot be you.
 3. Does the Bible contradict itself? The obvious answer is "yes" if the term soul has only one meaning; but since it has more than one, there is no contradiction.
- B. Several Old Testament References Show That the soul can exist apart from the body. (Gen. 35:18; 1 Kgs. 17:21,22; Prov. 23:14; Psa. 16:10; Isa. 38:17)
- C. Several New Testament references show that the soul can live after death and does not require a body. (Matt. 10:28; Lk. 12:20; Acts. 2:27,31; 1 Pet. 4:19; Rev. 6:9; 20:4)
- D. Matt. 22:31,32; Lk. 20:38 (overhead)
 1. At the time Moses wrote these words, to which Jesus referred, Abraham had been dead hundreds of years.
 - a. His body had long since gone ~~back~~ to the dust from whence it came.

b. Yet it is affirmed that Abraham is alive.

2. Here's his argument:

a. God is not the God of the dead. (v. 32b)

b. He is the God of Abraham (v. 32a)

c. Therefore, Abraham is not dead.

3. Irresistible conclusions:

a. To deny this conclusion is simply to deny what the Lord said

b. If the statements of Moses and our Lord are true then Abraham is alive.

c. If one denies this, he must affirm that God is God of the dead, or deny that he is the God of Abraham.

(1) If he affirms that God is God of the dead he affirms a falsehood.

(2) If he denies the latter (God of Abraham) he denies the truth.

4. Abraham is now alive!

a. Though he is alive he does not live in the flesh.

b. It follows then that he is alive in spirit, continuing to live on as all in the spirit world do.

E. Luke 9:29-31 (overhead)

1. At the transfiguration Moses was in the grave. (Deut. 34:5)

2. Elijah had already left the earth. (2 Kgs. 2:1)

3. Yet both were alive:

a. "there talked with him two men"

b. "who appeared in glory"

c. "and spake of his decease"

4. Explain this without a spirit that lives on after the body is dead.

F. Acts 23:8,9 (overhead)

1. Paul endorsed the basic beliefs of the Pharisees and denounced the Sadducees.
2. Just what did he endorse and denounce?
 - a. The Sadducees did not believe in "spirit."
 - b. The Pharisees did believe in "spirit." Just what was this?
 - (1) Josephus (Antiquities of the Jews, Book 18, sections 3-4): "Now, for the Pharisees...they also believe that souls have an immortal vigor in them...But the doctrine of the Sadducees is this, that souls die with the bodies."
 - (2) Paul endorsed the doctrine that the soul or spirit lives on after the body dies.

G. Luke 16:19-31

1. The case of the rich man and Lazarus disapprove the soul-sleeping doctrine. (Overhead) *Lazarus*
2. The Jehovah's Witnesses deny the literal occurrence of Lazarus and the rich by making it an abstract parable:
 - a. Lazarus symbolizes the common people.
 - b. The rich man symbolizes the Jewish religious leaders.
 - c. The death of both as the coming of Jesus.
 - d. Abraham's bosom equals blessings in Christ.
 - e. The fires of hell equal Christ's rejection.
3. Also read from the Russell-White Debate if necessary. (pp. 49,93,111,125)

H. 1 Thess. 5:23 - Body, soul, and spirit. (overhead)

I. Luke 21:19 (overhead)

1. One who serves God with patience possesses his soul, pseuche.
2. If he does not serve God with patience he does not possess his soul, thus conditional.

3. This would be impossible if all people possessed soul merely because they are alive.

II. SOME FALSE TEACHINGS ABOUT THE STATE OF THE DEAD

A. Herbert Armstrong writes: "The rich man, then, at the time of his resurrection, after the millennium, will come to consciousness, open, or lift up his eyes, knowing absolutely nothing of the hours, days, and years since he died. To him it will be the next fraction of a second from the time he dies. It will seem to him as he had gone immediately to his state or condition in which he finds himself rising up from the grave." (Lazarus and the Rich Man, p. 11, Herbert Armstrong)

1. "You have already read - as quoted from your Bible - the proof that a soul as an animal, a body can die." (Do You Have An Immortal Soul? 1971, p. 2)
2. "When a human dies, mind and soul are all dead. He simply stops being." (Ibid. p. 41)
3. He moves on to "Soul Sleep" and affirms "There indeed is a life after death -- eventually."
4. Abraham, Moses and all the others are dead physically and spiritually and have actually ceased to be.

B. The teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses are false about the dead:

1. "...man is a combination of two things, namely, the 'dust of the ground' and the 'breath of life'. The combining of these two things produced a living creature called man." (Let God Be True, p. 59)
2. "...no man has or possesses a soul." (Riches, p. 180, Rutherford)
3. "A man dies like other animals, and all go into the same place (Where Are the Dead?, p. 36)
4. "Christ Jesus the divine was born three days after his cruci-

fixion." (Deliverance, p. 245)

5. "It is clearly seen that even the man Christ Jesus was mortal. He did not have an immortal soul: Jesus, the human soul died." (Let God Be True, p. 66, Rutherford)
6. Jehovah's Witnesses teach the doctrine of the Sadducees. (Acts 23:6-8) Paul was a Pharisee, at this time an apostle, and he believed in both angels and spirits. Only difference between the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Sadducees is that they (Sadducees) very logically believed that there could be no resurrection in the absence of the spirit; while the Witnesses contend the spirit will cease to exist, but there will be a resurrection of what does not ~~no~~ exist." (William Woodson)
7. The Jehovah's Witnesses teach the soul ceases to exist or is annihilated and they use Matt. 10:28, as one verse, to prove it.
 - a. The word "destroy" is from the Greek term apollumi. The question thus becomes: Does the term apollumi teach inherently or necessarily imply that the object involved is caused to cease to exist? This is the point that JW's, and other soul-sleepers, make and try to support. Some uses will indicate this is not true:
 - (1) Six verses in Luke 15 (4,6,9,24,32) use the term apollumi, in various forms, but from the same root word.
 - (a) The sheep, the coin, and the boy did not cease to exist because they were "lost," apollumi.
 - (b) Thus the term does not mean to cease to exist, just because one is lost, apollumi-ed or destroyed.
 - (2) Luke 19:10 - Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost, apollumi.

Overhead

(a) Did Jesus come to seek that which did not exist?

(b) If not, the term cannot mean that which is apollumi-
ed, is no longer in existence.

(3) Matt. 10:6; 15:24 - Jesus sent his disciples to the
lost, apollumi, sheep of the house of Israel. Did he
send them to people who did not exist?

C. The Catholic Teaching agout the dead in Purgatory is false.

1. The doctrine of purgatory originated about the year 593 A.C.
Although Origen (230 A.D.) "seems to have been the first to
pave the way for the evolution of purgatory" it was Gregory
the Great who "developed and popularized" the doctrine of
purgatory. (Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church,
Vol. 4, p. 398)

2. The actual teaching on the subject:

a. "There exists in the next life a middle state of temporary
punishment allotted for those who died in venial sin, or who
have not satisfied the justice of God for sins already
forgiven...The souls consigned to this intermediate state,
commonly called purgatory, cannot help themselves, they
may be aided by the sufferages of the faithful on earth."
(James C. Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers, p. 210)

b. "Catholics believe that the generality of mankind are
neither so obstinately wicked as do deserve everlasting
punishment, nor so good as to be admitted into the society
of God and His blessed spirits, and therefore that God is
gracious to allow a middle state where they may be pur-
ified by certain degrees of punishment." (Truth About
Catholics, p. 12)

c. Catholics admit: "The notion of purgatory cannot be found
explicitly in Scripture, but tradition, the living exper-

of the Church with the word of God, discovered that it must be presumed from other truths clearly contained in the Bible." (National Catholic Register, August 27, 1980 - In answer to a question asked Roman Catholic theologian, Raymong Bosler: "Does the Catholic Church still teach there is a purgatory?")

3. The doctrine of purgatory is anti-biblical for several reasons:
 - a. The Catholic Church admits that it has been invented. It cannot be found in the scriptures, but tradition and the living experience of the church presumes it to be true.
 - b. It denies the all-sufficiency of the blood of Christ to completely purify man of his sins so as to be prepared to enter God's presence. (Col. 1:13, 14; Heb. 9:12-14; 10:14)
 - c. It contradicts the principle of personal preparation. (Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10)
 - d. It ignores the scriptural teaching that all preparation must be made before a person dies. (Matt. 25:1-13)
 - e. It is contrary to the truth that neither righteousness nor wickedness can be transferred from one person to another. (Ezek. 18:20b)
 - f. Christ made it very clear that the state of the dead is irrevocable. (Luke 16:26)

THE PATIENCE OF GOD

JAMES MEADOWS

INTRODUCTION

The world in which we live is very wicked and has been since sin entered into it but, it is also the world in which God's people live. Shortsighted people have often asked, "Why doesn't God kill the devil and destroy all wickedness"? Such thinking clearly shows a lack of understanding about God's patience and longsuffering. In this study then we want to note the following: First, what does God's patience or longsuffering mean? Second, what does the Bible say about God's longsuffering? Third, what are some examples of God's longsuffering? Fourth, what are some mistaken views about God's longsuffering? Fifth, the conclusion.

WHAT DOES PATIENCE OR LONGSUFFERING MEAN?

Longsuffering is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation that does not hastily or promptly punish. Therefore, it is the opposite of unrestrained anger and is associated with mercy. Longsuffering is a characteristic of God. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4). [All quotes are from the KJV unless otherwise noted.]

Longsuffering – or slowness of anger signifies deferring for a long time to punish; and here it seems chiefly to intend his patiently bearing long the ill use which the Jews make of the privileges they enjoyed as his church and people, and the various blessing he had conferred upon them (Benson 26).

Patience is the quality that does not surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial; it is the opposite of despondency and therein associated with hope.

"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father" (I Thess. 1:3).

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT GOD'S LONGSUFFERING?

And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (Ex. 34:6).

This is a branch of God's goodness which our wickedness gives occasion for. He is long-suffering, that is, he is slow to anger, and delays the execution of his justice; he waits to be gracious, and lengthens out the offer of his mercy (Benson 274).

"But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth" (Ps. 86:15). "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy" (Ps. 145:8), "The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked..." (Nah. 1:3). "However the reference in Nahum 1:3 also indicates that Yahweh's slowness to anger does not mean he will overlook sin and fail to ultimately judge the guilty" (Renn 607).

"The Lord is longsuffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgressions, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation" (Num. 14:18).

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF GOD'S LONGSUFFERING?

First, God's longsuffering is clearly seen at the time of the flood. "And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (Gen. 6:3). "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water" (I Pet. 3:20).

Demonstrated in the events associated with the ark was the "longsuffering" of God. One hundred and twenty years were especially designated as the probationary period afforded men (Gen. 6:3). During this period of time there must have been many opportunities afforded the antediluvian world to turn in penitence to the Lord. These were, for the most part, rejected (Woods 102).

Second, the longsuffering of God is clearly seen when one realizes why Christ had to die. Christ had to die because God's law had been violated.

And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die (Gen. 2:15-17).

God clearly stated that eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would lead to a sure death. Satan, however, convinced Eve that "ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil...she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Gen. 3:4-6).

God's law was violated. Now what would God do about it? Before answering that question we need to understand two important principles about any violated law. First, a violated law always demands punishment if the one who gave that law is to maintain his authority, keep the respect of his subjects, and not injure those he governs. Second, a ruler may sometimes pardon the offender and do it in such a way as to still maintain his authority.

Zaleucus flourished about 500 years B.C. His government over the Locrians was severe but just. In one of his decrees, he forbade the use of wine unless it were prescribed as a medicine; and in another, he ordered that all adulterers should be punished with the loss of both their eyes. When his own son had subjected himself to this penalty, the father, in order to maintain the authority of the laws, and to show at the same time a becoming parental lenity, shared the penalty with his son, by causing to be

thrust out one of his own eyes and one of the eyes of his offending son. In this way, the majesty of his government was maintained, and his own character as a just and righteous sovereign was magnified in the eyes of his subjects (Milligan 227).

God's violated law demanded punishment but, immediately after man sinned, God drove him from the garden and seemingly passed over man's sin. Robert Milligan said, "If ever there was a time when any of God's creatures might be supposed to charge him with partiality and injustice, it seems to me that that was the time" 229). But God knew his plan!

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:23-26).

God accepted the offering of Christ as being fully adequate to meet and satisfy the demands of his government. He was then seen to be a just God and "...the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." God's "forbearance" extended all the way from man's sin to Christ's death on the cross.

Third, God's longsuffering is clearly seen in his dealing with the Amalekites. When Israel came out of Egypt Amalek met Israel and "...smote the hindmost of them, along with the feeble when they were weary and faint (Deut. 25:17-18). "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven" (Ex. 17:14). It was four hundred and twelve years later before God carried out this promise. God, through Samuel, told King Saul:

Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass (1 Sam. 15:2-3).

Fourth, the longsuffering of God toward his own people is multiplied. Nehemiah lists all the blessings that God had bestowed upon his people (Neh. 9:1-15). He delivered them from the land of Egypt. He came down on Mount Sinai and gave them the law (Neh. 9:13-14). He provided them bread for their hunger and water for their thirst. He gave them the land he promised them.

But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, hearkened not to thy commandments, And refused to obey, neither were mindful of the wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not (Neh. 9:16-17).

God, in his slowness to anger, did not forsake them. He gave them guidance (Neh. 9:19b), instruction (Neh. 9:20), provisions (Neh. 9:21), victory over their enemies (Neh. 9:22), and finally possession of the land of Canaan (Neh. 9:24). "Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations (Neh. 9:26). God delivered them into the hand of their enemies, but when they cried unto God he delivered them again and again (Neh. 9:27-29). Finally, God's longsuffering ran out. "Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testified against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet they would not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands" (Neh. 9:30).

WHAT ARE SOME MISTAKEN VIEWS ABOUT GOD'S LONGSUFFERING?

First, some think, as earlier stated, that God should have destroyed the devil and all wickedness. If this had happened, and God was not longsuffering, then many potentially good people would never have had the opportunity to come to repentance. The apostle Peter stated this truth, "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation" (II Pet. 3:15). Paul faced many difficulties in Corinth. The Lord appeared to him in a vision and said, "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:9-10). They were potentially his people because, at a later date, they would obey the gospel.

Second, Some think God's longsuffering means forgetfulness. Peter wrote about some who would scoff at the idea that the Lord would come again. They claimed that all things have continued just as they were since the world began. Peter points out that they were "willingly ignorant" of the fact that God once destroyed the world with a flood (II Pet. 3:5-7). Further, God does not count time as man counts time. "But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (II Pet. 3:8). Peter also points out that it was not forgetfulness on God's part, but longsuffering.

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (II Pet. 3:9-12).

A third answer to the scoffers earlier alluded to begins here, and admonition to them to make good use of what they allege is delay by making their own calling and election sure. God does not loiter or delay in the discharge of his purposes; that which unbelief may regard as such is simply the normal development of the will of God which conceived the operation and now works it leisurely out. The words 'is not slack concerning his promise' reveal not only that there is no indifference involved, but also that there will be no tardiness in the ultimate accomplishment thereof. The purpose in the apparent delay is to exhibit God's longsuffering, a characteristic they were ironically perverting into an argument against the truth of his word (Woods 185).

Think Some have the mistaken view that God's longsuffering will never end. We know that God is longsuffering and quick to forgive, but we must know that he will eventually draw the line if repentance for sin is not forthcoming. "And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (Gen. 6:3). God announced that in one hundred and twenty years a terrible punishment would come upon the earth because of their terrible sins. "Then in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete" (Gen. 16:16). God was essentially saying "I am going to allow them another four hundred years, then I will punish them." Later, after the conquest of Canaan and after the nation of Israel had slipped into terrible sin, God had an inspired writer record these words. God had given up on his own people.

And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers; rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy (II Chron. 36:15-16).

God gave the church at Thyatira and Jezebel time to repent.

Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed

unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not (Rev. 2:20-21).

From Some think God is unjust in finally punishing the wicked. God wants people to be saved. He did his part in providing a Savior (Jn. 3:6; Rom. 5:6-8). Man has the responsibility to respond in faith and obedience to the commands of God to receive salvation (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6; Lk. 13:3; Acts 2:38). Those who spurn the invitation and reject the gospel are destined for eternal punishment and separation from God.

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with the mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power (II Thess. 1:7-9).

But is God just in executing punishment on those who have never obeyed the gospel?

Wayne Jackson gives some interesting thoughts along these lines.

1. No one will be in hell who does not deserve to be there. God is loving (I Jn. 4:8), good (Ps. 145:9), and merciful (Eph. 2:4). He will only do that which is right (Gen. 18:25). The Lord does not desire that a single soul should perish (II Pet. 3:9), but when men choose to live alienated from him, and cast their eternal welfare toward hell, he will honor their decision. Paul wrote concerning those who are "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction" (Rom. 9:22). Arndt and Gingrich, viewing the verb as a middle voice form, suggest that these "prepared themselves for destruction" (p. 149). When folks thrust from them the Word of God, they judge themselves unworthy of eternal life (Acts 13:46). Atheists somehow feel the Lord is obligated to force rebels into his eternal, holy presence, even when they have despised him their entire lives.
2. Because Jehovah is holy, he cannot simply overlook sin as if it does not exist (Hab. 1:13); and so, because the Lord is just (Ps. 89:14), evil must be punished (cf. Rev. 16:5). That is why the Father gave his Son as a sacrifice...that he might remain just, and yet be a justifier of those who obey Christ (cf. Rom. 3:24-26; Heb. 5:8-9). No man can complain about the injustice of hell in the face of the cross!
3. Even in hell the judgment will be fair. The Scriptures teach that punishment will be proportionate to the degree of one's guilt (cf. Matt. 10:15; 11:20-24; Lk. 12:47-48; Heb. 10:29; Rev. 20:12-13). One will

be judged according to his knowledge, ability and opportunity. God will be equitable (Hixson 772, 73).

CONCLUSION

God's longsuffering shows God's great love for lost people. He wants all people to be saved.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved (Jn. 3:16-17).

We can be thankful that God's longsuffering gives people time to repent.

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FORGIVENESS

JAMES MEADOWS

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important and desirable characteristics of the heart is forgiveness. Three kindred spirits of the heart are giving, thanksgiving, and forgiving. The three really go together. Forgiveness is a greatly misunderstood subject in the brotherhood.

Some hold to the view of conditional forgiveness; that one forgiving one another is dependent upon the person who committed the wrong repenting and/or apologizing. Others hold to the view of unconditional forgiveness; that we should automatically forgive when we are wronged and not wait for repentance and/or an apology!¹

Matthew 18:15-35 gives great details about forgiveness and some of the attitudes of God and man.

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred

pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.²

The king, in this parable, represents God, his servants are Christians, the reckoning is typical of God's judgment of us, the ten thousand talents (\$16,000,000) represents our sins against God, the helplessness of the servant to pay the debt pictures our inability to forgive our sins, the king's compassion and mercy represents God's willingness to forgive our sins.

The fellow-servant is a brother in Christ, the one hundred pence (\$17.00) represents our sins against one another, the servant taking the debtor by the throat represents our attitude many times toward our brethren, the sorrow of the servants represents the sorrow of saints when they see children of God unwilling to forgive, and God's wrath and punishment pictures God's attitude toward an unforgiving spirit.

In this study, the methodology planned is as follows: (1) What is the meaning of forgiveness? (2) Why must Christians forgive one another? (3) How often should we forgive? (4) How must we forgive one another? (5) What are the responsibilities of the offender? (6) What are the responsibilities of the offended? (7) Some examples of forgiveness. (8) Conclusion.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF FORGIVENESS?

Forgiveness in its different forms appears one hundred and six times in the Bible. Some of these times refer to God's forgiveness of sins and at other times forgiveness refers to our forgiveness of our fellowman.

Webster says to forgive means "1. To cease to feel resentment against on account of wrong committed; stop being angry with, pardon. 2. To give up all claim to exact for (an offense). 3. To cancel or remit (a debt)...to show forgiveness; be inclined to forgive." ³

Of two Greek words involving forgiveness, Thayer has this to say, "Apoluo: to let go, dismiss...to release a debtor, i.e., not to press one's claim against him, to remit his debt: Mt. 18:27, Lk. 6:37. Afiemi, to let go, give up a debt by not demanding it, i.e., to remit, forgive...to give up, keep no longer."

Forgiveness then involves a wrong committed, a debt incurred by that wrong, and the cancellation of that debt. God is the one who can help us deal with all of these.

WHY MUST CHRISTIANS FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER?

First, God commands us to forgive one another. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mark 11:25). "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. 3:13).

Second, Christ has set the example for us. Christ has never asked us to do anything he has never done before us. The lone exception being repentance. While hanging on the cross Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Some people think that God forgave them at this point, but, if so, then he forgave them while they were engaged in the very act for which the Lord was asking God to forgive them. Fifty-three days later many of these same heard Peter accuse them of crucifying and slaying the Son of God.

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:37-38).

Three thousand souls who “gladly received his word were baptized” (Acts 2:41). It was at this point that God answered the Lord’s prayer on the cross.

Third, we must forgive because we ourselves have been forgiven. “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:32).

When God’s forgiveness of our personal sin against Him is really understood, then such creates in us the godly desire to forgive others. No matter how many facts of Scripture we know or verses we may have memorized, a harsh, vindictive spirit is a sure sign that we do not truly know what it means to be forgiven by our God through Christ.⁴

Fourth, we must forgive in order that we may receive forgiveness from the Father. “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matt. 6:14-15).

This verse does not belong to the prayer; it is added by Jesus to show why the petition for forgiveness of sins must be conditional. The one who cannot forgive others or will not forgive others puts himself where he cannot ask God to forgive him. ...It does not mean that our forgiving others merits God’s forgiving us. It does make a forgiving spirit the condition of our receiving forgiveness from God.⁵

The man that refuses to forgive must pray that he never sins. A few years ago brother Jean Thornton preached in a meeting at Greenwood, Mississippi. The elders had asked him to preach on forgiveness, because one woman had sinned, made a public confession, and the congregation as a whole had forgiven her. But one woman said to brother Thornton, “I will never forgive her.” Brother Thornton said to the woman, “Then you had better pray that you never need forgiveness.” “It is exceedingly wicked now to ask God to forgive us all our many and great sins while we refuse to forgive others, or even refuse to go to them in an effort to bring them to repentance that they may be saved.”⁶

HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE FORGIVE?

On one occasion Peter asked the Lord, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times. Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee seven times, but until seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:21-22). The Jews taught that if one forgave a man three times that was enough. ^(Talmud) Peter said seven times which to Jews symbolized the complete or perfect number. Christ replied in a not-to-be-taken-literally hyperbole by answering "490 times" – meaning to the "nth" degree or "without limit" – God forgives.

On another occasion Jesus used the expression "seven times in a day."
Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him (Luke 17:3-4).

Some will say, "I will forgive them whether they want to be forgiven or not." But beloved God cannot even do that and still be consistent with his nature and his will. When the alien hears the word of God (Rom. 10:17), believes in Jesus Christ (John 8:24), repents of his sin (Luke 13:3,5), confesses Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Acts 8:37) and is baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), then God forgives him. I must do the same. When the erring child of God repents and prays (Acts 8:22) and confesses his sin then God forgives him (1 John 1:7-10). I must do the same. We cannot extend personal forgiveness past the terms and conditions God has clearly set forth in his word.

Certainly those of us who are Christians should have hearts large enough to love even those who have done us wrong, and to desire that they be forgiven. However, when one congratulates himself for forgiving even those whom God has not forgiven, he shows his contempt for the righteousness of God as well as his failure to comprehend the terribleness of sin. Let us bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that spitefully use us and persecute us (Matt. 5:44), but let us not presume to forgive those whom the Almighty holds guilty of sin.⁷

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The world's worst prison is the prison of an unforgiving heart. If we refuse to forgive others, then we are only imprisoning ourselves and causing our own torment. Some of the most miserable people I have met in my ministry have been people who would not forgive others. They lived only to imagine ways to punish these people who had wronged them. But they were really only punishing themselves.¹⁰

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFENDER IN FORGIVENESS?

First, the offender must repent. "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive" (Luke 17:3). Repentance is a change of mind brought about by godly sorrow that results in a change of life (Matt. 21:28-31; 2 Cor. 7:8-11). The fact that one needs to repent clearly shows that one has done wrong and needs to make it right.

Second, the offender must seek his brother's forgiveness.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift (Matt. 5:21-24).

In this reading, Jesus corrects some of the corrupt interpretation the scribes had put on the sixth commandment of the Decalogue. Murder was prohibited by this commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" (Exod. 20:13), but the teachers had, on certain occasions, interpreted it to let some escape the penalty – death. "Murder is the overt act of a murderous spirit, which accompanies anger; Jesus goes back to the very roots of murder and shows that the true teaching of the law as set forth by the principles of his kingdom forbids even the thoughts of murder."¹¹

Jesus then pictures an individual coming to the altar (worship) with anger or wrong feelings in his heart toward a brother. The worship must stop right there! "First, be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." One cannot worship acceptable before God until he makes things right with his brother. Pride can easily become a barrier to meeting this responsibility.

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But it is hard for an injured person to rebuild the offender in the right spirit; it is hard to eliminate personal feelings. Unless a person can do so, he is likely to make things worse. Be careful, lest in rebuking an offender you sin against him. Make your rebuke in a spirit that is calculated to reclaim him from his error; it is not a time to seek to vindicate yourself, nor to avenge yourself. A brother's salvation is endangered; do your best to save him.¹²

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While the obvious purpose of other witnesses is their testimony to what transpires during the encounter, the spirit and approach of these brethren must be the same as when the first went it alone: to gain the brother by showing him his fault in order to bring him to repentance, but done in the same brotherly companionship shown by the first. From the following verse we learn that the offender must “hear them.” Thus, they, too, may add their voice to appeal to him to abandon his sin. The collective warmth of their love is intended to melt his heart in contrite tears and thanksgiving that people cared enough about him to come looking for him, even when he did not know or care that he was lost.¹³

Third, if the first two efforts fail to bring the brother to repentance then it is to be told to the church. “And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican” (Matt. 18:17). The matter now becomes public since the whole church is to be told. If he “neglect to hear the church” clearly indicates that the church as a whole puts forth an effort to restore him. In too many cases only three or four may say something to the brother and then wonder why he is not restored. The reason is that God’s way has not been followed.

Fourth, “but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican” (Matt. 18:17b). If he willfully and deliberately persists in his sin, then the church is to withdraw fellowship from him.

How can he be embraced further, when his whole demeanor is that of a heathen (Gentile) and an excommunicate (the publican)? From this standpoint, any action taken by the Church is but the formal recognition of the stand that he has taken by his blatantly willful refusals. This separation of the sinner from the congregation is the last resort of hearts broken over their failure to restore him.¹⁴

Corrective discipline (withdrawal of fellowship) takes place only when all other efforts have failed. The saving of the soul must ever be kept in mind. "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:4-5).

SOME EXAMPLES OF FORGIVENESS

Joseph's brothers, moved with envy, sold him into bondage in Egypt (Gen. 37). Twenty-two years later Joseph makes himself known to his brethren and assures them that they need not be afraid that all is forgiven (Gen. 45:3-18). Genesis 42:21 clearly showed the grief that they suffered for what they had done. After Jacob's death, Joseph's brothers feared that he would put them to death, but Joseph again assures them, after they have come to a point of repentance, they are forgiven (Gen. 50:15-20).

Stephen, the first Christian martyr, cried to God, as they were stoning him to death, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). This shows Stephen's compassionate attitude, holding no grudges, and praying that their sins be forgiven. But Stephen knew that before God could do that they must obey the gospel.

CONCLUSION

Most of the trouble in the church and between brethren is over little things, things that could easily be forgiven. An example of this, used so often by the late T.Q. Martin: In Estill County, Kentucky, at the little village of Irvine, the county seat, this incident occurred. A doctor remarked concerning two young men—roommates home from college who had just left his office—"The Taylor boy is a brighter boy than the Williams boy." A lady in the office heard it and went and told Mrs. Williams before going home. She also told other people that the doctor

had said the Taylor boy was a brighter boy than the Williams boy. These two families had been friends in years gone by. Their sons were roommates at college but this little remark on the part of the doctor was magnified until the two families had a falling out. The boys returned to college, but they would not room together anymore. They graduated from college. One became a lawyer, the other a doctor. They settled in the village of Irvine. One August when the election had grown quite hot, these two young men met on the street and engaged in an argument. One drew his pistol and shot the other. That one, as he fell, drew his pistol and shot the other. Both boys were killed. One of them, just before he died said, "How foolish, how foolish, how foolish."

These two mothers, broken hearted, continued to live in the little village of Irvine. A short time later one of the mothers said, "I am going over to see the other lady." Her husband said, "She'll spit in your face if you go over there." She prepared some rose cuttings, went over to see the lady and said, "I am going to plant some rose cuttings; I am going to plant one on your boy's grave. I want you to plant one on my boy's grave." Both mothers forgave each, and planted rose cuttings on each grave. But think how much damage had been done by wagging tongues and unforgiving spirits.

How can I know that I am a forgiving person? Take this "Have I Really Forgiven My Offender" test to see if you are practicing forgiveness. "Do I secretly rejoice when I hear of their misfortune? Do I avoid their presence? Do I remember in detail the wrong suffered? Do I speak to them hesitantly, or only when cornered? Do I brood over the wrong suffered? Would I be unable to go happily and eagerly before God in prayer on their behalf?"¹⁵

ENDNOTES

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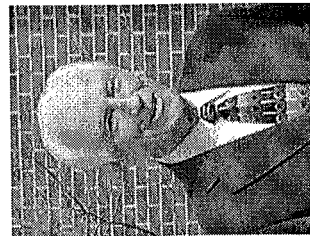
Matthew 18:15-35 gives great details about forgiveness and some of the attitudes of God and man.

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his

FORGIVENESS

MATTHEW 18:15-35

JAMES MEADOWS



James Meadows is a native of KY. He attended FHU (A.A.), Union University, and Harding Graduate School, and in 1997 was awarded a D.M. from Theological University of America. He has done local work in TN, KY, and SC; has preached in over 600 meetings and lectures; 20 years of radio preaching. He has written 42 books for classroom and private study, articles for numerous brotherhood papers, chapters in approximately 40 books, and wrote Senior Quarterly for GA in 1980-81. He has been honored in *Personalities of the South*, *Two Thousand Men of Achievement*, and *Notable Americans*. He is married to Beverly, and together they have three children and two grandchildren.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important and desirable characteristics of the heart is forgiveness. Three kindred spirits of the heart are giving, thanksgiving, and forgiving. The three really go together. Forgiveness is a greatly misunderstood subject in the brotherhood.

Some hold to the view of conditional forgiveness; that one forgiving one another is dependent upon the person who committed the wrong repenting and/or apologizing. Others hold to the view of unconditional forgiveness; that we should automatically forgive when we are wronged and not wait for repentance and/or an apology!¹

forgiveness of sins, and at other times forgiveness refers to our forgiveness of our fellowman.

Webster says to forgive means "1. To cease to feel resentment against an account of wrong committed; stop being angry with, pardon. 2. To give up all claim to exact for (an offense). 3. To cancel or remit (a debt)...to show forgiveness; be inclined to forgive."³

Of two Greek words involving forgiveness, Thayer has this to say, "Apoluo: to let go, dismiss...to release a debtor, i.e., not to press one's claim against him, to remit his debt (Matt. 18:27, Lk. 6:37). Afemi: to let go, give up a debt by not demanding it, i.e., to remit, forgive...to give up, keep no longer."

Forgiveness then involves a wrong committed, a debt incurred by that wrong, and the cancellation of that debt. God is the one who can help us deal with all of these.

WHY MUST CHRISTIANS FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER?

First, God commands us to forgive one another. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mark 11:25). "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. 3:13).

Second, Christ has set the example for us. Christ has never asked us to do anything He has never done before us – the lone exception being repentance. While hanging on the cross Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Some people think that God forgave them at this point, but, if so, then he forgave them while they were engaged in the very act for which the Lord was asking God to forgive them. Fifty-three days later, many of these same heard Peter accuse them of crucifying and slaying the Son of God.

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the

fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.²

The king, in this parable, represents God, and his servants are Christians. The reckoning is typical of God's judgment of us. The ten thousand talents (\$16,000,000) represents our sins against God. The helplessness of the servant to pay the debt pictures our inability to forgive our sins; the king's compassion and mercy represents God's willingness to forgive our sins. The fellow servant is a brother in Christ. The one hundred pence (\$17.00) represents our sins against one another. The servant taking the debtor by the throat represents our attitude many times toward our brethren. The sorrow of the servants represents the sorrow of saints when they see children of God unwilling to forgive, and God's wrath and punishment pictures God's attitude toward an unforgiving spirit.

In this study, the methodology planned is as follows: (1) What is the meaning of forgiveness? (2) Why must Christians forgive one another? (3) How often should we forgive? (4) How must we forgive one another? (5) What are the responsibilities of the offender? (6) What are the responsibilities of the offended? (7) Some examples of forgiveness. (8) Conclusion.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF FORGIVENESS?

Forgiveness in its different forms appears one hundred and six times in the Bible. Some of these times refer to God's

apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:37-38).

Three thousand souls who "gladly received his word were baptized" (Acts 2:41). It was at this point that God answered the Lord's prayer on the cross.

Third, we must forgive because we ourselves have been forgiven. "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32).

When God's forgiveness of our personal sin against Him is really understood, then such creates in us the godly desire to forgive others. No matter how many facts of Scripture we know or verses we may have memorized, a harsh, vindictive spirit is a sure sign that we do not truly know what it means to be forgiven by our God through Christ.⁴

Fourth, we must forgive in order that we may receive forgiveness from the Father. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6:14-15).

This verse does not belong to the prayer; it is added by Jesus to show why the petition for forgiveness of sins must be conditional. The one who cannot forgive others or will not forgive others puts himself where he cannot ask God to forgive him. ...It does not mean that our forgiving others merits God's forgiving us. It does make a forgiving spirit the condition of our receiving forgiveness from God.⁵

The man that refuses to forgive must pray that he never sins. A few years ago, brother Jean Thornton preached in a meeting at Greenwood, Mississippi. The elders had asked him to preach on forgiveness because one woman had sinned, made a public confession, and the congregation as a whole had forgiven her. But one woman said to brother Thornton, "I will never forgive her." Brother Thornton said to the woman, "Then you had better pray that you never need forgiveness." "It is exceedingly wicked now to ask God to forgive us all our many and great sins while we refuse to forgive others, or even refuse to go to them in an effort to bring them to repentance that they may be saved."⁶

HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE FORGIVE?

On one occasion Peter asked the Lord, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times. Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee seven times, but until seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:21-22). The Jews taught that if one forgave a man three times that was enough. Peter said seven times, which to Jews symbolized the complete or perfect number. Christ replied in a not-to-be-taken-literally hyperbole by answering "490 times" – meaning to the "nth" degree or "without limit" – God forgives.

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Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift (Matt. 5:21-24).

In this reading, Jesus corrects some of the corrupt interpretation the scribes had put on the sixth commandment of the Decalogue. Murder was prohibited by this commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13), but the teachers had, on certain occasions, interpreted it to let some escape the penalty - death. "Murder is the overt act of a murderous spirit, which accompanies anger; Jesus goes back to the very roots of murder and shows that the true teaching of the law as set forth by the principles of his kingdom forbids even the thoughts of murder."¹¹

Jesus then pictures an individual coming to the altar (worship) with anger or wrong feelings in his heart toward a brother. The worship must stop right there! "First, be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." One cannot worship

alone: to gain the brother by showing him his fault in order to bring him to repentance, but done in the same brotherly companionship shown by the first. From the following verse we learn that the offender must "hear them." Thus, they, too, may add their voice to appeal to him to abandon his sin. The collective warmth of their love is intended to melt his heart in contrite tears and thanksgiving that people cared enough about him to come looking for him, even when he did not know or care that he was lost.¹³

Third, if the first two efforts fail to bring the brother to repentance, then it is to be told to the church. "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18:17). The matter now becomes public, since the whole church is to be told. If he "neglect to hear the church" clearly indicates that the church as a whole puts forth an effort to restore him. In too many cases, only three or four may say something to the brother and then wonder why he is not restored. The reason is that God's way has not been followed.

Fourth, "but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18:17b). If he willfully and deliberately persists in his sin, then the church is to withdraw fellowship from him.

How can he be embraced further, when his whole demeanor is that of a heathen (Gentile) and an excommunicate (the publican)? From this standpoint, any action taken by the Church is but the formal recognition of the stand that he has taken by his blatantly willful refusals. This separation of the sinner from the congregation is the last resort of hearts broken over their failure to restore him.¹⁴

Corrective discipline (withdrawal of fellowship) takes place only when all other efforts have failed. The saving of the soul must

ever be kept in mind. "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:4-5).

SOME EXAMPLES OF FORGIVENESS

Joseph's brothers, moved with envy, sold him into bondage in Egypt (Gen. 37). Twenty-two years later Joseph makes himself known to his brethren and assures them that they need not be afraid, that all is forgiven (Gen. 45:3-18). Genesis 42:21 clearly showed the grief that they suffered for what they had done. After Jacob's death, Joseph's brothers feared that he would put them to death, but Joseph again assures them, after they have come to a point of repentance, they are forgiven (Gen. 50:15-20).

Stephen, the first Christian martyr, cried to God, as they were stoning him to death, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). This shows Stephen's compassionate attitude, holding no grudges, and praying that their sins be forgiven. But Stephen knew that before God could do that they must obey the gospel.

CONCLUSION

Most of the trouble in the church and between brethren is over little things, things that could easily be forgiven. An example of this, used so often by the late T.Q. Martin: In Estill County, Kentucky, at the little village of Irvine, the county seat, this incident occurred. A doctor remarked concerning two young men - room mates home from college who had just left his office - "The Taylor boy is a brighter boy than the Williams boy." A lady in the office heard it and went and told Mrs. Williams before going home. She also told other people that the doctor had said the Taylor boy was a brighter boy than the Williams boy. These two families had been friends in years gone by. Their sons were roommates at college but this little remark on the part of the doctor was magnified until the two families had a falling out. The boys returned to college, but they would not room together anymore. They graduated from

college. One became a lawyer, the other a doctor. They settled in the village of Irvine. One August when the election had grown quite hot, these two young men met on the street and engaged in an argument. One drew his pistol and shot the other. That one, as he fell, drew his pistol and shot the other. Both boys were killed. One of them, just before he died said, "How foolish, how foolish, how foolish."

These two mothers, broken hearted, continued to live in the little village of Irvine. A short time later one of the mothers said, "I am going over to see the other lady." Her husband said, "She'll spit in your face if you go over there." She prepared some rose cuttings, went over to see the lady and said, "I am going to plant some rose cuttings; I am going to plant one on your boy's grave. I want you to plant one on my boy's grave." Both mothers forgave each other and planted rose cuttings on each grave. But think how much damage had been done by wagging tongues and unforgiving spirits.

How can I know that I am a forgiving person? Take this "Have I Really Forgiven My Offender" test to see if you are practicing forgiveness. "Do I secretly rejoice when I hear of their misfortune? Do I avoid their presence? Do I remember in detail the wrong suffered? Do I speak to them hesitantly, or only when cornered? Do I brood over the wrong suffered? Would I be unable to go happily and eagerly before God in prayer on their behalf?"¹⁵

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DO NOT JUDGE BY APPEARANCE

James Meadows

INTRODUCTION

James 2 begins with a warning against the sin of partiality or respect of persons. It is related to the previous discussion by furnishing a further example of inconsistency on the part of those whose practice of pure and undefiled religion was defective.

Respect of persons must have been a sin in the early church which James had come to know about. These same people were hearers and not doers (Jam. 1:22), did not exhibit the love that led to visiting the fatherless and widows (Jam. 1:27), lacked self-control of their tongues (Jam. 3:1-3), and did not possess the right attitude toward the poor.

James 2:1-13 deals with the general subject of respect of persons. Verse one gives clearly the precept. Verses two through four give an illustration from life. Verses five through eleven give the reasons why respect of persons is sinful. Verses twelve and thirteen give the conclusion.

It is my responsibility in this lesson to talk about "Judge Not According to Appearance." The methodology planned is as follows: (1) The Exegesis of James 2:1-4; (2) What Does Judging Mean?; (3) Judging the Bible Does Not Forbid; (4) Judging the Bible Does Forbid; (5) Reasons Why Some Judging Forbidden; (6) Some Examples of Judging According to Appearance; (7) Conclusion.

THE EXEGESIS OF JAMES 2:1-5

"My brethren have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory with respect of persons" (2:1). (All quotes are from the KJV unless otherwise noted).

“My brethren”--James uses the term fifteen times in this short epistle. “Brethren” is used four times (4:11; 5:7, 9, 19). “My brethren” appears eight times (1:2; 2:1, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 5:10, 12). Then James calls them “beloved brethren” three times (1:16, 19; 2:5).

“Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus”--“The faith” (the article is in the original) is the whole of the Christian religion, represented by the phrase “the faith.” “And the word of God increased. . .and a great company of the priest were obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7). Paul “... preacheth the faith which once he destroyed” (Gal. 1:23). Paul preached the gospel (I Cor. 15:1-4). Thus the faith and the gospel are the same. Jude pleads with us to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3).

“With respect of persons” - - “As used here, it signifies to show regard for the external circumstances of another, and to exhibit favoritism on the ground of rank, wealth, social position, worldly attainment and fame” (Woods, 106). The root idea of respect of persons is partiality or favoritism (Psa. 82:2). The main reason for showing respect of persons is “. . .because of advantage” (Jude 16). In this context showing “respect of persons” is called “evil thoughts” (1:4), “sin” (1:19), and “transgressors” (1:9).

God does not show “respect of persons” and neither must we. “... Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34). “. . . Master, we know that thou sayest and teacheth rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly” (Luke 20:21).

“For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment” (2:2).

“For if there come into your assembly” (synagogue, ASV). “Synagogue” was the technical term for a Jewish congregation or group meeting for worship (Mat. 4:23; Acts 17:1). It

means literally 'a bringing together' or 'assembling' (from sun, 'together' and ago, 'I lead or bring')" (Roberts 88). The fact that favoritism occurs in the very meeting place shows that no place is safe from temptation, and it was a practice condoned by Christians in the assembly.

"A man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel"-- Greek testament, literally, a gold ringed man." "Martial (XI. 60) speaks of one who wore six rings on every finger, day and night, and even when he bathes" (Plumptre 64). When someone had gold rings he was considered rich. "In goodly apparel" literally "gorgeous, or bright apparel." "The word is the same as that used of the robe placed upon our Lord in mockery (Luke 23:11), and of that in which the angel appeared to Cornelius" (Plumptre 64). James is concerned of how Christians act when some great person steps into the assembly where they are worshipping. "The presence of such a person ought not to draw away our attention in the least. Before God, in his house, he is no greater than the humblest and poorest of his subjects. The moment God realizes that human beings get more attention and glory than He himself, He will take His leave" (Zodhiates 151).

"and there comes in also a poor man in vile raiments"--"Squalid" is perhaps the nearest equivalent to the Greek word. Vile is used in the Septuagint in Zechariah 3:4 of the "filthy garments" of Joshua the high priest. His dress is literally "dirty" or "filthy." At this time a special problem could arise. The poor man could be a slave and the rich man his owner. Also the poor man could be one of the leaders of the congregation. The gap between the slave (which was nothing more than a "living tool"), and his master was so great it could cause a problem in the feeling of either the rich or the poor.

"And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts" (2:3-4).

The “respect of persons” described in James 2 is a corrosive and deadly variety of discrimination which rests on standards of “judgment” with no basis of reality. If indeed Jesus died for all (and he did, II Cor. 5:15-15), because our heavenly Father loves all (and he does, Rom. 5:8; cf. Rom. 3:9-10, 23), then the act of entertaining persons not only debases something He treasures (John 3:16), but is also effectively dethrones Him in our lives, as James 2:4 implies. (Rogers 104).

“Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts.” “Do you not make distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts” (ASV). “Are you not discriminating among your own, and becoming critics and judges with wrong motives” (Amplified N.T.). There are footnotes in the American Standard Version for both expressions: “do you not make distinctions” (are ye not divided) and “among yourselves” (in your own mind).

“These people had, by their exhibition of favoritism toward the rich, resulting from the wavering of their faith, become “judges with evil thoughts.” The word “judges” is from *dislogismon*, from *dialogismos*, reasoning. The word is a legal term; and, as used here, describes the litigation which resulted from the conflicting visions which they felt. . .” (Woods, p. 110).

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO JUDGE?

The Greek word “krino” primarily denotes to separate, select, choose; hence, to determine, and so to judge, pronounces judgment”. There are several uses of the word in the New Testament. First, it means to assume the office of a judge. “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matt. 7:1). Second, it means to give sentence. “Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God” (Acts 15:19). Third, it means to condemn. “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same word shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48).

First, it does not forbid our recognizing, testing and exposing false teachers. “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets

are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pet. 2:1).

Second, recognizing and rebuking sin, in an effort to correct and restore an erring brother, is commanded. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1). "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him" (James 5:19).

Third, the Lord does not forbid the disciplinary judgment necessary in the withdrawal of fellowship.

It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed (I Cor. 5:1-3).

Fourth, judging between brethren over matters in this life is allowed. "If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? No, not one that shall be able to judge between brethren?" (I Cor. 6:4-5).

Fifth, the judgment of civil authorities is not forbidden (Rom. 13:1-4).

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God

to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Sixth, the Bible does not forbid "fruit inspecting" on our part.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but **inwardly** they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them (Matt. 7:15-20)

SOME JUDGING THE BIBLE DOES FORBID

First, the Lord forbids a rash, censorious, judgment. We are not to have a critical, condemning attitude toward others. We are not to sit as judges, and determine within ourselves the guilt of others. We are not to decide on the basis of hearsay or partial evidence that a person is guilty. A judge is seated on a bench and a man is brought before him. As the man walks in, the judge looks at him and decides he is guilty, and he is going to give him thirty days in jail. In this case the judge condemns the man; judges according to appearance. But if he listens to the evidence and the evidence shows him to be guilty, then the judge sentences him. It is not the judge that condemns him but the deeds of the man. This is righteous judgment.

Second, the Lord warns against a certain type of spirit. That spirit shows itself in readiness to give judgment when the matter is of no concern to us at all. We express our opinion about people that are not even connected with us. It is a self-righteous spirit. It is a hypocritical spirit in that it puts prejudice in the place of principle; in its tendency to put personalities in the place of principalities; in expressing an opinion with a knowledge short of the facts; in that it never takes the trouble to understand the circumstances, and is never ready to excuse; in its tendency to pronounce judgment upon people.

REASONS WHY SOME JUDGING FORBIDDEN

First, Jesus said that when we judge we expose ourselves both to judgment from God and man. "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Mat. 7:1).

Second, by judging we set the standard for our own judgment. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Mat. 7:2; cf. Rom 2:1).

Third, he will not let us judge because we are incapable of judging (Mat. 7:3-5). Jesus shows, in these verses, that we are not concerned about righteousness and true judgment at all. If we were, then we would deal with it in ourselves. A great artist is his severest critic.

Fourth, we cannot always know the motive behind a deed. Human conduct cannot be properly evaluated unless the motive of one's heart is known. No court can assess the proper penalty for a crime unless the motive that led to the crime is known. For example: Two men are tried for taking a human life. One is sentenced to die but the other is set free. The motive made the difference. One man killed out of malice, while the other killed to protect his family. Only God can know the motive behind a deed unless we are told the motive.

Fifth, we are controlled too much by custom, tradition, etc. We criticize what we dislike and defend what we like.

Sixth, we cannot always know all the facts in each situation.

SOME EXAMPLES OF JUDGING ACCORDING TO APPEARANCE

First, Eli judged according to appearance in the case of Hannah. Elkanah and Hannah were faithful servants of God (I Sam. 1:1-8), but Hannah was unable to bear children. On one of their yearly trips to Jerusalem, Hannah went into the temple ". . .and prayed unto the Lord, and

wept sore" (I Sam. 1:10b). "And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken" (I Sam. 1:12-13). Eli made a judgment on the basis of appearance. Hannah was not drunk.

Second, Samuel made a judgment on the basis of outward appearance. After God rejected Saul as king. He sent Samuel to Bethlehem to select a king from among the sons of Jesse. Samuel offered a sacrifice and invited Jesse and his sons to the sacrifice.

And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab and said, Surely the lord's anointed is before him. But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or the height of his stature; for I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth: for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart (I Sam. 16:6-7).

Third, Jesus healed an impotent man on the Sabbath day (John 5:8). The Jews ought to kill him because he had broken the Sabbath (5:18). Jesus pointed out to them that the law required a male child to be circumcised on the eighth day. "And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised" (Lev. 12:3). Sometimes the eighth day fell on the Sabbath day. Though the eighth day happened on the Sabbath, the ceremony was not deferred; and the law of circumcision vacated the law of the Sabbath. "In appearance to circumcise a child on the Sabbath might be a violation of the law; yet you do it, and it is right. So, to appearance, it might be a violation of the Sabbath to heal a man, yet it is right to do works of necessity and mercy" (Barnes 258). "Granted that the healing of the infirm man and his consequent carrying of his pallet to be in violation of the Sabbath law, it was not really so because a higher law of God takes precedence in such cases as is recognized by you in circumcising a male child on the Sabbath though on the surface such would appear to be wrong" (Woods 149).

Fourth, Paul was accused, on one occasion, of taking Greeks into the temple. This judgment (accusation) was made on the basis of what they assumed or what they thought they saw.

And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him. Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple) (Acts 21:27-29).

Fifth, some judge according to appearance to cover up their own sins or as an excuse for them. "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." (Rom. 2:1). "The Jews were right in their assessment of the Gentiles but wrong in thinking God had a double standard for judging, one for the Jew and another for the Gentile" (Allen 81). We can make the same mistake by judging people the same way the Jews judged the Gentiles.

Sixth, sometimes a preacher is judged by appearance. The preacher has worked hard, prepared well, and is widely recognized throughout the brotherhood. Everything he does is motivated by the desire to please God and spread his kingdom throughout the world.

CONCLUSION

Judging according to appearance is definitely forbidden in the word of God. God wants us to "... judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). Righteous judgment is always in harmony with the principles of right, not just one what the eye may see on the surface of things.

Consider the request of Recubent God - Num. 32:1-42

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JUDAH UNDER ABIJAH, ASA, AND JEHOSEPHAT

II Chronicles 13:1 - 20:37

By James Meadows

INTRODUCTION

The book of Second Chronicles is concerned with the reign, works and career of Solomon (II Chron. 1-9, I Kings 1-11). It also places emphasis on the separate kingdom of Judah (II Chron. 10-36).

The three kings of Judah, which will occupy most of our time, are Abijah, Asa, and Jehoshaphat. Abijah reigned three years (2 Chron. 13:1-2); Asa reigned forty one years (I Kings 15:8-10); and Jehoshaphat reigned twenty five years (I Kings 22:41-42). Abijah began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jereboam's reign (II Chron. 13:2) and Asa began to reign in the twentieth year of Jereboam's reign (I Kings 15:9). There were at least seven kings reigning over Israel (at least part or all their reign) during the time of Asa's reign over Judah. They were Jereboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, and Ahab. Jehoshaphat began to reign over Judah during the fourth year of Ahab's reign over Israel (I Kings 22:41).

EXEGESIS AND EXPOSITION OF 2 CHRONICLES 13:1 - 20:37

2 Chronicles 13:1-12: Abijah's Sermon Against Jereboam.

Abijah's career begins and ends with this chapter along with the eight verses of I Kings 15:1-8. There was war between Abijah and Jereboam. But before the battle began Abijah made a dramatic plea to Jereboam and Israel to not enter the battle. He bases his plea on the following facts:

1. God gave the kingdom to David and his descendants by "a covenant of salt" - a covenant that could not be broken (v.5).
2. You are a servant of Solomon, yet you are trying to take Solomon's throne. (v.6).
3. You, in your folly, have gathered about you wicked and empty headed men (v.7).
4. You fail to recognize the sanctity of the Davidic line and "think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hands of the sons of David" (v.8a).
5. You have your "golden calves" which "Jereboam made you for gods" (v.8b).
6. You have disregarded God's appointed priests, the Levites, ^{AND} have set up your own priests (v.9).
7. He reminded Jereboam that Judah had not forsaken the Lord because the priests were ministering according to God's commandments (v.10-11). "We keep the charge of our God."
8. "But ye have forsaken him" (v.11).
9. God is our captain. Now if you dare to go to war under these circumstances, then you are fighting "against the Lord God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper" (v.12).

2 Chronicles 13:13-22: God Smote Jereboam and All Israel.

Jereboam refused to listen to the warning and prepared an ambush against Judah. The outcome of the battle is described in these words. First, God "smote Jereboam and all Israel" (v.15). Second, "the children of Israel fled before Judah" (v.16). Third, there was a great slaughter (v.17). Fourth, Judah prevailed "because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers" (v.18). Fifth, Jereboam never recovered strength again in the days of Abijah: and the Lord struck him, and he died" (v.20).

Many today, like Jereboam of old, are trying to change God's pattern. As a result many are walking "by sight" and not "by faith". Such are fighting against God and "they shall not prosper" (v.12).

men. Asa's military forces were ill-equipped to engage this great host out of Ethiopia.

Asa showed his total dependence upon God when he "cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou are our God: let not man prevail against thee" (v.11). God heard Asa's plea and "smote the Ethiopians" (vv. 12-15).

All of God's faithful servants recognize how little strength they have without God. Moses said, "How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up" (Deut. 32:30). Jonathan expressed the same great confidence when facing a garrison of Philistines. "...come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few" (I Samuel 14:6). Paul declared, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phillippians 4:13).

2 Chronicles 15:1-19: Azariah's Word To Asa and Asa's Reformation.

Azariah brings the word of the Lord to Asa. Azariah means "Jehovah is keeper". The prophet addresses his words specifically to Judah and Benjamin (vv. 1-2). The northern kingdom is called "Israel" in verse 3.

First, he reminds Asa that his only hope is to trust God. "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you" (v.2).

Second, he reminds Judah of Israel's condition and the terrible

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consequences that followed. They had been forsaken by God. There was no priest to plead their cause. They did not have the law (v.3). They enjoyed no peace. City after city was destroyed "for God did vex them with all adversity" (vv. 5-6). But when they did turn to the Lord "he was found of them" (v.4).

Third, Azariah told Asa: "Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded" (v.7).

Asa was so-moved by Azariah's words that he started a complete reformation.

1. He destroyed the "abominable idols" and "renewed the altar of the Lord" (v.8).
2. He gathered all Judah and Benjamin to him (and even some out of Israel came) "when they saw that the Lord his God was with him" (v.9-11).
3. They entered into a covenant that involved two important parts. (1) They resolved to seek the Lord their God" with all their heart and with all their soul" (v.12; cf. Deuteronomy 6:4-5). (2) A death penalty was placed on every person and every city that would not cooperate (v.13).
4. He removed Maachah, his mother (some think his grandmother) from being queen because of her idol (v.16).
5. He brought back into the "house of God" the silver, gold and vessels dedicated to God (v.18-19).

Verses 14 and 15 reveal what happens when God's spirit moves his people (as he did through Azariah and Asa). "And they swore unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with coronets. And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about."

Asa did what he could to work a complete reformation. He was consistently free of idolatry to the end (v.17).

SINGLE
SPACE

He was not able to remove all idolatry because so much of it remained in the hearts of the people. He did what he could to re-establish the temple and make it the true center of worship for Jehovah's people. He could not live long enough nor could he exercise sufficient authority to completely cleanse the people and the land. "His heart was perfect all his days." This does not mean that he made no mistakes or that he did not sin. He conscientiously tried to do God's will. 1

2 Chronicles 16:1-6: Asa's Conflict With Baasha.

Baasha, king of Israel, was always at war with Asa (I Kings 15:16-17), but he now decided to build Ramah.

As this word signifies a high place, what is here termed Ramah was probably a hill, (commanding a defile through which lay the principle road to Jerusalem,) which Baasha fortified in order to prevent all intercourse with the kingdom of Judah, lest his subjects should cleave to the house of David. 2

Ramah belonged to Benjamin (Joshua 18:21,25,28), and lay about five miles from both Bethel and Jerusalem.

In the past Asa had always relied on God for his help, but now he seeks an alliance with Benhadad, king of Syria (v.2). Benhadad, although he had an alliance with Baasha, did not hesitate to break the pact and attack some cities in Israel (vv. 3-4). Baasha ceased his work on Ramah. This alliance, on the part of Asa, was contrary to God's purpose.

The church likewise must be careful about making alliances that are contrary to God's purpose. George Tipps wrote:

The church of our Lord must remember today that to win the world for Christ, and to re-establish New Testament Christianity our alliance must be altogether with Jehovah. We cannot accomplish these purposes through alliances with "the nations round about us." From time to time within the framework of denominationalism, we see attempts that are made to unite forces. The church of our Lord must remain above such entangling alliance, and her preachers must remain aloof from alliances that would entangle them

with those who proclaim error. Our confidence, our trust, our complete alliance must be with Jehovah. Only in this way shall we be truly successful in the divine task set before us. 3

2 Chronicles 16:7-10: Hanani's Rebuke of Asa.

Hanani rebuked Asa for relying on "the king of Syria" instead of "the Lord thy God" (v.7). He implied that the Syrians should have been defeated in battle instead of being paid money. He reminded Asa of how he defeated the Ethiopians, which God granted "because thou didst rely on the Lord" (v.8). The prophet told Asa that nothing happens among men which is hidden from God's eyes. In turning his back upon God and going to Benhadad, Asa had acted "foolishly" (v.9). He had "not only blundered, perpetrated an error in judgment, but done what was inherently wicked; as a consequence both of his blunder and of his sin, he would have wars." 4

Instead of humbling himself Asa was in a "rage" with Hanani because he rebuked him for his fault. He had him put in a "prison house", literally "in a house of stocks", the "stock" being an instrument of torture. He also turned his wrath upon some of his own citizens, perhaps those that took the prophet's part.

God's prophets (preachers and teachers) have often been mistreated when they spoke unpopular messages. Jeremiah was put in stocks (Jeremiah 19:1-20:2). John the Baptist was beheaded (Matthew 14:1-9). Paul and Silas were cast into the inner prison (Acts 16:19-24).

2 Chronicles 16:11-14: The Disease, Death and Burial of Asa.

Three years before his death Asa had a disease that was "exceedingly great: yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians" (v.12). "Asa's error lay not in consulting the physicians, but in reposing trust in them to the exclusion of the Lord..." 5 Asa was buried in his own sepulchre and the people burned many spices in honor of him at his burial. Asa began his reign well, but he ended it in misery and shame.

2 Chronicles 17:1-19: Jehoshaphat's Early Reign and His Great Educational System.

Jehoshaphat was one of the best and greatest kings that Judah ever had. His name means "Jehovah is Judge". One of the first acts of Jehoshaphat was to "strengtheneth himself against Israel" (vv. 1-2).

Verse 3 and 4 give a great summary of Jehoshaphat's reign.

And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; But sought to the Lord god of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.

Many manuscripts omit David and the margin has "of his father, and of David". The real meaning is that Jehoshaphat walked in the ways of his father's earlier years.

Jehoshaphat had the support and the confidence of the entire realm. Judah brought gifts to him and he had "riches and honour in abundance" (v.5: 18:1). Because of the righteous attitude of the good man God "stablished the kingdom in his hand" (v.5). "His heart was lifted up" (this statement is usually used in a bad sense - Deuteronomy 8:14; Psalms 131:1) means he "boasted in Jehovah" (the margin has "was encouraged"). He "sought the Lord with all his heart" (22:9).

In the third year of Jehoshaphat's reign he set forth a great educational program. He employed three classes of men. There were the princes - Benhail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethaneal, Michaiah; the Levites - Shemiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Ashel, Shemiramath, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, Tobadonijah; and the priests - Elishama and Jehoram.

We may presume that the princes instructed the people in the nature of the civil law - and constitution of the kingdom; the Levites instructed them in every thing that pertained to the temple service, and ritual law; and the priests instructed them in the nature and design of the religion they possessed. Thus the nation became thoroughly instructed in their duty to God, to the king, and to each other. They became therefore as one man; and against a people thus united, on such principles, no enemy could be successful. 6

The text book used in all this teaching was "the book of the law of the Lord" (v.9), which was either the complete law of Moses, or the Book of Deuteronomy, which was a re-statement of the law in an abridged form (Deut. 31:24-29; 2 Chron. 34:14-15). More idolatry and all forms of crime would be destroyed by this sort of teaching than all other forces combined. Everything else has been tried to put down crime; it is time the word of God was given a fair trial.

If men and women are brought up to revere God and his word, they will make law-abiding citizens, because they know that God demands obedience to the laws of the land. But to be effective, the Bible must be taught as the word of God, and not merely as folklore or good literature; it must be taught by men and women who really believe that in it God speaks to us. 7

Isaac Errett wrote, regarding Jehoshaphat's great educational, these words:

Jehoshaphat was wise in this: he saw that the work of reformation under his father did not reach to the root of the evils that cursed the nation; it was merely or mainly an external change, while the source of iniquity still remained untouched. Asa had sought to dry up the streams, but left the fountains still flowing. Jehoshaphat therefore determined on an advance movement. He saw that the people

were profoundly ignorant of the law of Jehovah, and were consequently an easy prey to superstition. They were ignorant of the glorious history of their own nation, and consequently were destitute of the enlightened patriotism without which there could be no enthusiastic devotion to their own laws and institutions. He accordingly arranged a system of general instruction-- of national education . . . Here are the germs of a system of public schools; for, in our pride and self-sufficiency, we are banishing the Bible from our public schools, and tabooing in a large degree all moral produce and foster the intelligence and virtue which the two great pillars of the temple of liberty... moral and religious culture are essential to true patriotism. . . B

Check

The nation became stronger as the religion and morals of the nation improved. Look at some of the results: First, "the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they make no war against Jehoshaphat" (v.10). Second, even the Philistines and the Arabians brought gifts unto him (v.11). Third, he built castles and cities to store his goods (v.12). Fourth, he had much business in all the cities (v.13). Fifth, he kept a standing army of 1,160,000 fighting men "besides those whom the king put in the fenced cities through all Judah" (vv. 13b-19).

2 Chronicles 18:1-34: Jehoshaphat Joins "Affinity With Ahab".

With all of Jehoshaphat's devotion to God he did a strange thing. He "joined affinity with Ahab" (v.1). Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, married Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab (2 Kings 8:16,18,26; 2 Chron 21:5-6). "The son of the best king Judah ever had married the daughter of about the worst king Israel ever had!" This marriage was probably eight years before Jehoshaphat's visit to Samaria.

Ahab was having trouble with Syria (I Kings 22:1-16). After enjoying a sumptuous feast Ahab asked Jehoshaphat, "Wilt thou go with

me to Ramothgilead?" (v.2-3a). Then Jehoshaphat said a strange thing: "I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in war" (v.3b). What an unholy alliance! Jehoshaphat, a true servant of Jehovah, joins forces with wicked Ahab, who was committed to the worship of idols, and avowing that they were one.

Jehoshaphat did another strange thing. After committing himself to fight with Israel, he then wanted to find out what God's will was. Why didn't he ask the prophet before he made the decision?

The false prophets told Ahab what they knew he wanted to hear. "Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand" (v.5) Zedekiah made horns of iron and said to Ahab, "thus saith the Lord, with these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed" (v.10). All the prophets prophesied, "Go up to Ramothgilead, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king" (v.11).

Jehoshaphat knew they were false prophets, so he requested a prophet of God. Ahab told him of Micaiah "but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil . . ." (v.7). An officer was sent for Micaiah who told him, "Behold, the words of the prophets declare good to the king with one assent; let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and speak thou good" (v.12). Micaiah replied, "As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak" (v.13).

Micaiah's first statement to the kings was "Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand" (v.14). Ahab suspected Micaiah's sincerity and said to him: "How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of Lord" (v.15)? Micaiah then revealed the truth in two outstanding ways:

1. He told him that the shepherd (Ahab) would be killed and Israel would be like sheep that have no shepherd. Don't go to battle! (v.16)
2. Your prophets are lying. ". . .the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee" (vv. 18-23).

The scriptures repeatedly represent God as doing what, in the course of his providence, he only permits or suffers to be done? Nothing can be done in heaven, in earth, or hell, but either by his immediate energy or permission. 10

This incident shows how God sends a strong delusion.

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That, they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thess. 2:10-12).

The individual who takes pleasure in unrighteousness, and does not love the truth, is bound to be deluded if he continues in such a condition. Ahab did not love the truth and took pleasure in unrighteousness. If he had loved the truth, then when the prophet told him the truth, he would have investigated and changed instead of finding fault (I Kings 22:27). Ahab did not need to be deceived because the prophet not only told him the truth, but also told him about the lying spirit in the mouths of the prophets (I Kings 22:19-23).

Delusions is the natural outcome of his condition of heart, for his heart provides fertile soil for the reception of seeds of delusion which promise to satisfy and sanction the carnal yearnings of his heart. God does not directly and personally send these delusions to people, but since He has ordained the law of the human heart it may be said that He sends the delusion. 11

It should be noted however; that the lying spirit in the mouth of the four hundred prophets played only a subordinate part in Ahab's fall, and indeed could have played no part at all, but for the fact that the king was more than willing to be enticed. Ahab had already made up his mind; he consulted the four hundred only as an afterthought to satisfy Jehoshaphat (v.4), he excluded the plain-speaking

Micaiah until Jehoshaphat insisted on his presence (vv. 6-7), and he scorned the true prophet's warning of the false spirit of the four hundred (v.26). Delusion as a Divine punishment comes only upon the man who is willing to be deluded. 12

Micaiah is one of the most courageous men in the Old Testament. Surrounded by four hundred false prophets and two kings before him, he spoke the truth of God with courage and conviction. Such an attitude reminds us of Elijah on Mt. Carmel (I Kings 18), Hanani before Asa (2 Chron. 16:7), Daniel before Belshazzar (Dan. 5:13), John the Baptist before Herod (Matt. 14:4), and Paul before Felix and Agrippa (Acts 24:25). The Lord needs preachers with courage and conviction to speak the truth of God.

Following the warning from Micaiah Jehoshaphat should have withdrawn his army, but the two kings decided to go to battle. Jehoshaphat was saved from death by God (v.31), but Ahab was severely wounded by an arrow shot at random (even though it was shot at random God guided the arrow to Ahab). Ahab later died (v.34).

One final observation on Jehoshaphat joining forces with Ahab is in order. "We cannot suppose Jehoshaphat to have had the least sympathy with the idolatrous court of Ahab and Jezebel, so far as religion and morals were concerned." 13 After Ahab's death Jehoshaphat joined forces with Jehoram, Ahab's son, but Elisha still respected him as a good man and righteous king with these words:

As the Lord of host liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee nor see thee" (2 Kings 3:9-19).

Jehoshaphat evidently did it as a matter of policy in state affairs - it was the thing to do.

But Jehoshaphat did not pause to consider that policy is only warrantable within the limit of the truth and righteousness; and that, outside of these limits, he ought to throw policy to the winds, and put his trust in Jehovah, who had always been his refuge and strength against all odds.

14

How many honorable men, both in the church and in national affairs, have been snared "by the plausible and captivating pleadings of policy." 15

2 Chronicles 19:1-3: Jehu Rebukes Jehoshaphat.

Jehoshaphat returned to Jerusalem "in peace". The peace here probably refers to freedom from war and of present "assurance of his life".

Jehu, the son of Hanani had earlier rebuked Baasha, the king of Israel (I Kings 16:1-7). He charges Jehoshaphat with a two-fold offence: (1) He was helping the ungodly. (v.2a). Then, and now, sympathizing with the wicked

in their wicked thoughts, joining with them in their wicked ways, and assisting them in their wicked projects, is interdicted to all who profess to be followers of God and of Christ (Psa. 1:1; 24:4; 141:4; Rom. 12:12; Eph. 5:11; 2 Tim. 2:19,21,22; I Pet. 2:11-12). 16

(2) Loving them that God hates (v.2b). Israel is pictured as hating God. Even though we are not to hate the persons we must hate the words and the ways of God's enemies (2 Cor. 12:21; Phil. 3:18; cf. 2 John 9-11).

2 Chronicles 19:4-11: Jehoshaphat Policy For Administration of Justice and The Law.

Jehu had informed Jehoshaphat that God approved his effort to rid the land of Baalism. The work which had begun some time before (17:3-9) is now carried out with renewed determination (v.4).

Jehoshaphat did three things. First, he "brought them back unto the Lord God of their fathers" (v.4).

Second, he set up judges in all the cities. He reminded them that they were judging "not for man, but for the Lord" (v.6). They were to judge in fear of the Lord (7a). They were to show "no respect of persons". They were not to take gifts or bribes (v.7b). God told Israel, "Thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous" (Exod. 23:8). "A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgement" (Prov. 17:23).

Third, he also set up Levities and priests "for the judgement of the Lord, and for controversies" (v.8). This high court in Jerusalem passed judgement on very serious matters which the lesser courts could not handle (vv. 8-11; cf. Deut. 17:8-13).

2 Chronicles 20:1-37: Jehoshaphat's Prayer and God's Great Deliverance.

While Jehoshaphat was busy in reforming the kingdom, his enemies (Moab, Ammon, and others) were coming against him (v.1). Upon being informed of the action Jehoshaphat did four things. (1) He feared God; (2) He set himself to seek the Lord; (3) He proclaimed a fast; and (4) He called Judah together (vv. 1-4).

Jehoshaphat's prayer is one of the most remarkable prayers recorded in the Bible and it is worthy of careful study. The prayer contains the following thoughts:

- (1) He appeals to God as the ruler of the universe (v.6).
- (2) He appeals to God as the friend of Abraham and the covenant God made with him (v.7).

- (3) He next appealed to God because they had built him a temple (v.8).
- (4) He then appealed to God's promise to hear his people when they prayed toward this house (v.9; cf. I Kings 8).
- (5) He then reminds God that these very people which he prohibited Israel attacking in the wilderness (Deut. 2:4; Num. 20:21); are now manifesting their gratitude by turning on us (v.10-11).
- (6) He then confesses "we have no might against this great company . . . our eyes are upon thee" (v.12).

Through Jahaziel, the prophet, God gave the answer to Jehoshaphat's prayer.

Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's. . . ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to-morrow go out against them: for the Lord will be with you (vv. 15, 17).

The strategy of ambush was such that the Ammonites and Moabites, supposing that the Edomites had turned against them, fought among themselves. Verse 24-30 describes God's complete overthrow of Judah's enemies.

Jehoshaphat reigned twenty five years over Judah. His life is described in these words:

And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it; doing that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Howbeit the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers. (vv. 32-33).

CONCLUSION

There are many great lessons to be learned from a study of 2 Chronicles. Chapters 13 through 20 impress upon us vivid principles that cannot be ignored if one would please God.

Chapter 13 shows the folly of fighting against God (13:12). Only those who rely upon God will succeed (13:18).

Chapter 14 emphasizes the importance of doing that which is "good and right in the eyes of the Lord" (14:2). God's strength is with that person (14:11).

Chapter 15 challenges us to whole-hearted service to God (15:2). One is either for the Lord or against him (15:12, 15).

Chapter 16 reveals how foolish it is to depart from God and rely on other sources of strength (16:9).

Chapter 17 reminds us of the importance of people being well-educated in civil and religious matters (17:9). The source book of all right behavior is the word of God.

Chapter 18 shows that joining forces with evil and compromising principles will always result in disaster. Ignoring God's warnings will lead to failure.

Chapter 19 gives a model system for judges and courts (19:6-7). One who walks and judges "in the fear of the Lord" (19:9) will always do right.

Chapter 20 emphasizes the power of prayer on the part of righteous people (20:12). ". . . The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16b).

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INTRODUCTION:

1. One of the terms that might best describe the church of the first century is "fellowship" yet this term seems to have lost its meaning for so many today.
 - a. It would be difficult to describe the church today as a "fellowship" except as people sharing common beliefs.
 - b. It is obvious that we are not, in too many cases, sharing our life experiences, sorrows, joys and problems as the early Christians did.
2. God intended that fellowship be in fact and not just in name. Rom. 15:5-7.
3. There is nothing that is more to be desired today than Christian fellowship. "If we don't enjoy fellowship, if we don't desire fellowship, if we don't participate in Christian fellowship, then how can we rationally expect people to be motivated by our lives to become part of our fellowship." (Tom C. Brown).
 - a. Much of the apostasy seen in the lives of Christians can be seen in lack of true fellowship.
 - b. Many of the failures in congregational efforts can be traced to lack of fellowship.
4. Why then is there such a lack of fellowship? There are some fears that must be overcome if fellowship is to prevail.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE FIRST FEAR THAT KEEPS US FROM SEEKING TRUE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP IS THE FEAR OF BEING KNOWN.

- A. Many of us spend a great deal of time dressing up for a masquerade - to impress people, to be well thought of, to be accepted.
- B. The fear of unmasking or being known is not a pleasing one.
 1. Few of us like ourselves as we are and we hardly expect others to.
 2. We may hide behind such protective shields as "I don't want to show how little I know of the Bible" or "My religion is a very personal thing and I don't want to talk about it" but the real fear is that people will know us as we really are.
- C. There are antidotes to this kind of fear.
 1. First, there can be fellowship without exposing everything, because there is value in just associating with other Christians whether we say anything or not. cf. 1 Cor. 14:33.
 2. Second, there is the responsibility of other Christians toward the fearful to listen when they do speak.
 - a. Regardless of how far back he may be he must feel that he will be given a fair hearing and respected for himself.
 - b. He must come knowing that he will not be harshly judged or rejected. Rom. 14:1,13; 15:1-3.

II. THE SECOND FEAR THAT KEEPS US FROM SEEKING FELLOWSHIP IS THE FEAR OF EXPLOITATION.

- A. Who wants to speak or tell something about himself when he feels it will become the subject of gossip?
- B. Who wants to tell something where he feels it may be used against him?
- C. Who wants to join a group that does him more harm than good?
- D. Who wants the fellowship of those who cannot keep confidences.?
- E. There must be the feeling of a common need and that things revealed will result in support and encouragement - not betrayal. (1 Thes. 5:11,14) Understanding your weaknesses and shortcomings should draw me closer to you.

III. THE THIRD FEAR THAT KEEPS US FROM FELLOWSHIP IS THE FEAR OF DISAPPOINTMENT.

- A. Many people will not express themselves because they feel that the church cannot help them.
- B. James said confess your faults one to another (Jas. 5:16) because he realized the power of praying one for another.

IV. A FOURTH FEAR THAT KEEPS US FROM SEEKING FELLOWSHIP IS THE FEAR OF CHANGE.

- A. It is said, but true, that some congregations do not want to change - they reject new ideas, new methods, and new enthusiasm.
- B. Many of us are afraid of change, especially if it demands that we carry through some new plans of action.
- C. But if one young person hears about the changes another had to make, and how drastic it was, he may be far more willing and able to overcome the fear of change and become a part of the fellowship. cf. Heb. 10:24.

①

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

James Meadows

I. The Application of Fellowship: Outside of Churches of Christ.

A. The first element of concern "pertains to the element in the church that has chosen to pursue a course of illicit change."

1. They advocate open fellowship with denominationalism—anybody who acknowledges Jesus as Lord.
2. It consists of joint participation in settings that leave the observer with a clear understanding that the denominational is a saved and faithful Christian.
3. But we can know who is a Christian and who is not because the Bible clearly reveals what one must do to become a Christian. Anyone who has not done this cannot be fellowshiped as a Christian.
4. The Bible also clearly reveals that as long as one walks in the light he has fellowship with God and we can fellowship him.

B. The vast majority of those in the denominational world have never obeyed the true plan of salvation.

C. Even those few who may have obeyed the biblical plan of salvation are worshipping in error.

II. The Application of Fellowship Within Churches of Christ.

A. Does an otherwise faithful Christian violate the biblical doctrine of fellowship if he speaks at a lectureship that is considered to be a tool of the "liberal" segment of the church?

B. Does a "conservative" lectureship director sin if he invites a speaker who holds a false view on one particular doctrine—like divorce and remarriage?

C. Does he sin if he invites a speaker who has spoken on a "liberal" lectureship?

D. Does a faithful Christian sin if he/she attends a workshop or lectureship that is orchestrated by the "liberal" element?

E. Critics have pointed to Ephesians 5:11 and 2 John 9 that warn the faithful from fellowshiping error, and thus insist that all the above questions must be answered yes.

F. Some scriptures that shed some light on this facet of fellowship:

1. In Luke 15, tax collectors and sinners drew near to Jesus to hear what he had to say. His critics complained that he was guilty of receiving and

to bail out.

- 3) To continue that relationship would make him guilty of what Paul calls "fellowship," "communion," "accord," "part" and "agreement with darkness."

III. Observation and Application of the Foregoing Principles

- A. In view of these principles one should exercise extreme caution in our tendency to criticize, jump to premature conclusions, "shoot first and ask questions later."
- B. "One cannot automatically determine that fellowship is occurring simply because of where a person may speak, with whom he may be seen, or what he believes with regard to every doctrine of the Bible." (Dave Miller)

IV. Critical Features of Fellowship

- A. In the first place, fellowship is defined by intent. Does the Christian intend for his actions to be a demonstration of his agreement with and approval of error? Is his intention to show endorsement and acceptance of error?
 - 1. In a debate the participants are sharing, associating, partnering in an event. But no one would assume that this means fellowship in the sense of doctrinal agreement.
 - 2. One might attend a denominational meeting, but they would not assume endorsement of what they believe.
 - 3. On the other hand if one participated in the song service with the instrument, he would be sinning for worshipping vainly, but also for fellowshipping them in that one activity.
- B. In the second place a critical feature of fellowship pertains to the specific action.
 - 1. Fellowship entails "aiding and abetting" an action that is sinful.
 - a. Merely appearing at a particular event would not constitute fellowship if the activity is not sinful.
 - b. Or if it is sinful one does not participate in that activity.
 - 2. Even visiting an event that has religious overtones need not entail fellowship.
 - a. Attending a debate between a Baptist and an Atheist would not imply fellowship.
 - b. Attending an informational meeting of the Masonic Lodge would not imply fellowship.
- C. "The biblical factors that determine fellowship entail intent and whether an individual participates in any specific action that is sinful" (Dave Miller).

V. Misconceptions About Fellowship

- b. Brochures are written advertising it.
 - c. Paul would be returning as guest speaker.
 - d. Suppose in addition to Paul certain pagan philosophers would speak.
 - e. Would Paul's participation in such a venture constitute fellowship?
3. If some brethren today had gotten hold of this they would have written Paul up and attacked him unmercifully.
- F. Jesus did not isolate himself from those in error, but took every opportunity to speak to the lost, regardless of how others may have viewed it.

FELLOWSHIP

A. "Fellowship" translated from the Greek word "koinonia" in the following places: Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 8:4; Gal. 2:9; Eph. 3:9; Phil. 1:5; 2:1; 3:10, 1 John 1:3,6,7.

B. The word "koinonia" (or family word), in other places, is translated:

- 1. Contribution (Rom. 15:26).**
- 2. Communion (1 Cor. 10:16; 2 Cor. 6:14; 13:14).**
- 3. Distribution (2 Cor. 9:13).**
- 4. Communication (Philemon 6)**
- 5. Communicate (Heb. 13:16)**
- 6. Partaker (Matt. 23:30)**
- 7. Partners (Luke 5:10).**

C. We have fellowship with:

- 1. God--1 John 1:3.**
- 2. Christ--1 John 1:3.**
- 3. Holy Spirit--Phil. 2:1.**
- 4. One another because:**
 - a. Fellow-Citizens (Eph. 2:19-20)**
 - b. Fellow-heirs (Eph. 3:6; Rom. 8:17).**
 - c. Fellow-soldiers (Phil. 2:25).**
 - d. Fellow-laborers (Phil. 4:3).**
 - e. Fellow-servants (Col. 1:7).**
 - f. Fellow-travelers (Heb. 11:13-14)**
 - g. Fellow-helpers (3 Jn. 8; Gal. 1:1-4).**

D. We cannot have fellowship with:

- 1. Devils (1 Cor. 10:20)**
- 2. Unbelievers and unrighteousness (2 Cor. 6:14-16).**
- 3. Works of darkness (Eph. 5:11)**
- 4. False Teachers (2 John 9-11)**
- 5. Brethren withdrawn from (2 Thess. 3:6)**

ARE BABIES BORN SINNERS?
ARE WE ETERNALLY PREDESTINED?

James Meadows

Introduction

1. One of the greatest influences in the religious world, and even in the church, is Calvinism. The name comes from the teachings of John Calvin.
 - a. John Calvin was born July 10, 1509 at Nogon, France.
 - b. He was highly educated and had an "incredible memory."
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 - U – Unconditional predestination in election
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 - a. Are babies born sinners?
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 - a. What Calvin and others taught about it.
 - b. What are some verses used to teach depravity?
 - c. The Bible teaches
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Discussion:

- I. Are Babies Born Sinners?
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 - a. It does not say we were born "children of wrath."
 - b. "By nature" means by custom and practice. Paul said "nature" teaches that it is a shame for men to wear long hair (1 Cor. 11:14). "Nature" did not teach them this before birth, but custom later taught them.
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1. Matthew 18:3: "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."
 - a. Jesus taught that one must become as a little child to enter the kingdom.
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- A. Rex Turner wrote the following definition of predestination: "God foresaw that Adam would sin, and thus before the foundation of the world, from all eternity

F. What are some of the consequences of eternal election?

1. First, it destroys the "free will agency" or "free will" of man.
 - a. Does man have freedom of will?
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 - (1) If man possesses freedom of will (both the liberty and the ability) to choose his destiny, he can either: (a) as a last man choose to be saved; or (b) as a last saved man choose to be lost.
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2. Second, it makes God a respecter of persons, but the Bible teaches he is not (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11).
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1.
E. R. Harper

Yet Calvinism is the "background" out of, from which, all this Holy Spirit issue in the church was born.... Every phase of the "direct, immediate, miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit's person upon the Biblical heart of man" connects at some point to the Calvinistic concept of the "nature of man at birth...."

Franklin Camp

Calvinists' teaching that the sinner was dead and could do nothing called for the direct operation of the Spirit in conversion....

Since the emphasis of the Restoration Movement was to turn men from emotional experiences back to the Bible, one would never have thought the day would come when the false teaching of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit would become a matter of

3.

controversy in the church. But it is here, and unless we can stop it, we are headed the same way that the Protestant world has gone.... The Bible study that has characterized us in the past will cease unless the claim of the direct leading of the Holy Spirit is repudiated—lock, stock, and barrel. The claim of the direct leading of the Holy Spirit has no place in the church....

Franklin Camp

Here is evidence in black and white that the source of our trouble today is the teaching of Calvinism instead of the Scriptures. It is time that we not only reject Calvin's teaching on the operation of the Holy Spirit and the sinner, but that we also reject his teaching of the Holy Spirit empowering the Christian and enabling him to obey the commands of the gospel.

Rice

The difference between us, so far as this subject is concerned, is in general terms this: Mr. Campbell believes that in the work of conversion and sanctification the Spirit operates only through the truth. I believe the Holy Spirit operates through the truth where in the nature of the case the truth can be employed, but I deny that the Spirit operates only through the truth....

We believe and teach that in

conversion and sanctification, there is an influence of the Spirit in addition to that of the Word and distinct from it.

Jay Guin

If God never operates directly on the heart of the Christian, then this guidance and direction must occur only through Bible study. If so, wouldn't our prayer time be better spent reading our

Bibles...do not suppose that God grants a vision or verbatim prophecy in response to such a prayer. But we do believe that He empowers the Christian to be more open to His Word, to have a deeper, wider and higher understanding of His revelation.

And the empowerment is beyond the action of the Word itself, or else prayer means nothing.... If God the Father can be active in history, help physicians heal our loved ones, improve our Bible study, and give preachers "a ready recollection"—All by direct operation on the hearts of people, why is there any problem with believing that God sometimes does these things through the agency of the Spirit.

Steve Flatt

How are we led by the Spirit of God? Well, we are led by the Word if we spend time there. But folks, it goes beyond that. I have become a great believer in my life that the Holy Spirit will lead us in all kinds of decisions and attitudes and emotions when we stay with Him in the Word and in prayer.... You

say, well, He only does that through the Word. Oh, I believe He does it through the Word but I don't believe He does it only through the Word.

I believe He does it through the Holy Spirit living in our hearts. I believe that is part of the way we are led by the Holy Spirit.

10.
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Joe Beam

"I am a Spirit-filled Christian. The Spirit is alive. He is here. He is vibrant. And to try to say that the Spirit works only through the written word is to take His power away, because he is working in the hearts and lives of people...."

Dale Underwood

You see, I fully believe that the Spirit gave me the subject of "Drawing Water From Empty Wells." I had not planned on my thoughts going in that direction, nor had I intended in addressing such issues. Yet, as I prayed for God's blessing and leading, the subject came to me and then would not leave my mind.

I sense that we're discussing more freely the Holy Spirit. We're learning about and experiencing his guidance, his renewal, his conviction (our doctrine never got farther off course than when some claimed the Holy Spirit's work is limited to the Word of Scripture).

Franklin Camp

Thus, what has happened in the church today is that some brethren have simply adopted the Calvinistic doctrine of the direct, invisible, and mysterious influence of the Spirit on the Christian, rather than teaching what the Bible teaches. The direct operation of the Spirit on the Christian, in addition to the Word and distinct from the Word, is Calvinistic teaching purely and simply.

Ron Crosby

Does this appear to be a new form of Calvinism? Old Calvinism teaches that the sinner must receive the Spirit within to enable him to become a Christian. New Calvinism teaches that the sinner does not receive the Spirit but that the Christian does. Only with this inward aid of the Spirit can he remain a Christian. Old Calvinism teaches that the sinner must receive power to become a Christian while

new Calvinism teaches that the Christian must receive this power to remain faithful.... If it is necessary for the Christian to have the "personal help (of the Holy Spirit) within" "helping man" do that which he otherwise could not do" then the Word of God cannot do what God said it could do.

Christian Reformed Church
"God will not suffer those
who are joined to Christ in
true faith to totally fall from
faith and grace...believers
will persevere in the way of
salvation to the end."

Baptist Manual

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their preserving attachment to Christ is the grand mask which distinguishes them from superficial professions; that a special providence watches over their welfare, and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Norman Culpepper

One cannot hold out. If that be one's hope, then he cannot begin.... Saved and saved forever—a soul once saved can never be lost....

A special providence cares for them. "They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Pet. 1:5).

L. H. Brown

Question: Does Paul's statement in Galatians 5:4 concerning falling "away from grace" mean that we cannot fall?

Answer: Galatians 5:4 certainly does not mean that the regenerated, blood-washed, born-again child of God can so act as to finally be lost in hell....In no sense is it possible for the born-again child of God; the true believer in Jesus Christ to so fall as to be lost, 1 John 3:9; 5:18.

Canons of Dordt

This elect number, though by nature neither better nor more deserving than others, but involved with them in common misery, God has decreed to give to Christ and to be saved by Him and effectually to call and draw them to His communion by His Word and Spirit; to bestow upon them true faith, justification, and sanctification; and having powerfully preserved them in the fellowship of His Son.

John Calvin

God...compacted with himself what he willed to become of each man. For all are not created in equal condition; rather eternal life is fore-ordained for some, eternal damnation for others.... As Scripture then, clearly shows, we say that God once established by his eternal an unchangeable plan those whom he long before determined once for all to receive into salvation, and those whom, on the other hand, he would devote to destruction.

Primitive Baptist

"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished."

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The once dead sinner is drawn to Christ by the inward supernatural call of the Spirit who through regeneration makes him alive and creates within him faith and repentance.... For the grace which the Holy Spirit extends to the elect cannot be thwarted or refused, it never fails to bring them to true faith in Christ.

John Calvin

Calvinism means "universal damnation" unless—
remember this word unless—
unless God sends the
"miraculous operation" of
the Holy Spirit into his heart
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saves him, for his "natural
man, the sinner," cannot
receive the Word of God;
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Indeed, it does not so stand in man's own impulse, and consequently even the pious and those who fear God still have need of the especial prompting of the Spirit.

Lydia, the seller of purple, feared God, yet her heart had to be opened to receive Paul's teaching (Acts 16:14) and to profit by it. This was said not of one woman only but to teach us that the advancement of every man in godliness is the secret work of the Spirit.

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CALVIN

- 1. Infants “bear with them an inborn corruption from their mother’s womb. . .If they are born sinners as both David and Paul affirmed (Eph. 2:3; Psa. 51:5). . .” (Institutes, Vol. II, p. 1340).**
- 2. “Indeed, their whole nature is a seed of sin; hence it can only be hateful and abhorrent to God” (Institute, Vol. I, p. 251).**
- 3. “They must be cleansed of it before they can be admitted into God’s kingdom, for nothing polluted or defiled may enter therein” (Rev. 21:27) (Institute, Vol. II, p. 13:40).**

WHAT THE RELIGIOUS WORLD BELIEVES

- 1. The Presbyterians believe infants are born depraved, but they believe God makes arrangements to save the elect babes. “Chapter X, sec. 3, they tell us that elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when and where and how he pleases.”**

2. Brents quotes from the Cumberland Presbyterian Confession of Faith the following: “All infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit who worketh when and where and how he pleases.”

3.V. E. Howard quotes a Baptist preacher:

“Infants dying in infancy must by some process known or unknown, be freed from depravity—morally renewed or regenerated, or they can never be saved—never participate in the joys of heaven.

ARE WE ETERNALLY PREDESTINED?

Definition of predestination: “God foresaw that Adam would sin, and thus before the foundation of the world, from all eternity unchangeable, God foreordained, or predestined, or elected all that will be in heaven with him; as well as all of the other things that have come to pass/or will come to pass for all times to come upon the earth.”

John Calvin

1. "We call predestination God's eternal decree, by which he compacted with himself what he willed to become of each man. For all are not created in equal condition; rather, eternal life is foreordained for some, eternal damnation for others. Therefore, as any man has been created to one or the other of these ends, we speak of him as predestined to life or to death."

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T – Total Depravity

U – Unconditional Predestination or Election

L – Limited Atonement

I – Irresistible Grace

P – Perseverance of the Saints

"Could it really happen?" (Scientific Phenomena Discussed)

Lesson Presented At Valdosta, Ga. on a Lecture Dealing with Miracles

Intro.

1. All that we are teaching about miracles, etc. are gleaned from a book that claims to be the word of God (1 Cor. 2:16-17; ~~2~~ Gal. 1:11-12; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Jude 3).
2. What are the facts that support this claim. as Science means

b.

3. What are the facts to show that these things really happened?

Discussion

- I. Consider some facts from the six days of creation. (note each day carefully)
- II. Building the Cities of Pithom and Raamses. (Exod. 1:11-14; 4:7-12)
- III. The Paths of the Sea (Psa. 8:1-9)
- IV. Jonah and the Whale (Big Fish) (Jonah 1:17) Jesus accepted this story as true (Matt. 12:38-40).
- V. Treasure of the Snow (Job 38:22)

THE PURPOSE AND DURATION OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

By James Meadows

INTRODUCTION

Ephesians 4:7-16¹ is a vital part of the book of Ephesians, but we must recognize the place it occupies in the whole context of the book. The distinct features of God's eternal purpose are clearly revealed. First, God purposed to save man from sin "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). Second, Jesus Christ is the one through whom God purposed to save man (Eph. 1:3-5). Third, God's grace is revealed and enjoyed through the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7). Fourth, God revealed this salvation to man through the gospel (Eph. 3:6,8,9). Fifth, all who accept Christ are saved in the church which is a part of God's eternal purpose (Eph. 3:8-11).

A proper understanding of God's eternal purpose will cause tremendous results in our lives. We will strive to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Eph. 4:1). We will endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). We will consider the platform on which the unity of the Spirit did exist and on which it can be kept (Eph. 4:4-6). We will consider that even "the diversity of gifts, both ordinary and extra-ordinary, bestowed on different members of the church were designed to promote its unity, harmony, and efficiency."² We will also remember the four yardsticks that Paul lists that are essential in developing the cause of Christ and keeping "the unity of the Spirit."

The material in these ten verses divides itself into the following divisions: (1) by whom were the gifts given (vv. 7-10); (2) to whom were the gifts given (v. 11); (3) for what purpose were the gifts given (v. 12); (4) how long were the gifts to last (v. 13); what

are the results? (1) Doctrinal stability (v. 14); (2) a proper declaration of the word of God (v. 15a); (3) a right relationship with the head (v. 15b); and (4) individual development of each member of the church (v. 16).

EXEGESIS AND EXPOSITION OF EPHESIANS 4:7-16

Chapter 4:7-10: By whom were the gifts given?

Verse 7: Certain things are necessary for the church to mature. Today we mature by partaking of the word of God (1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18; Acts 20:32; Heb. 5:12-14). The scriptures furnish us completely (2 Tim. 3:16-17). But most of the New Testament had not been written when Paul wrote the Ephesians; hence Christ gave special gifts to supply the infant church their special needs. What were these gifts?

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit... For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gift of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues" (1 Cor. 12:8-10).

The "word of wisdom" appears to have been the doctrine of the gospel communicated by inspiration (Cf. 2 Pet. 3:15; Col. 1:28; 1 Cor. 2:6-13). The "word of knowledge" may have been the power to retain the "word of wisdom." "Faith" here is not the faith that comes from hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17), but that miraculous faith that could remove mountains (Cf. Matt. 17:20; 1 Cor. 13:2). "Gifts (plural) of healing" could indicate one of two things: (1) All kinds of ailments were healed, or (2) Different ones had specific ability to heal specific diseases. The healing was not done according to "medical knowledge, but by supernatural power." "Working of miracles" included the ability to work miracles of various kinds. "Prophecy" was by no means

confined to the prediction of the future, but it had to do with forth telling or teaching (Acts 19:6; 13:1). "Discerning of spirits" enabled one to discern if one was speaking by the Spirit of God or was a pretender. "Divers kinds of tongues" were different languages which they had never studied, but God enabled them to speak (Acts 2:4-8; Cf. Acts 19:6). "Interpretation of tongues" enabled one to make known the tongue in which another was speaking. One was not to speak in a foreign language to his audience unless another could interpret what was said (1 Cor. 14:27-28).

These gifts were bestowed "according to the measure of the gift of Christ," according to His sovereign purpose. Man did not receive them according to his capacity, merit, or effort.

Verse 8: This is a quote from Psalms 68:18 where the speaker is God, the author of the scripture.

The original picture is of a victorious king ascending the mountain of the Lord in triumphal procession, attended by a long train of captives, receiving tribute from his subjects (according to the one reading) and bestowing largesse upon the crowds which line his processional route (according to the other reading). For Paul's present purpose the reading which speaks of the conqueror as giving gifts is more appropriate than that which speaks of him as receiving them...the ascended Christ may well be pictured as receiving from His Father the gifts which he proceeds to bestow among men.³

"He led captivity captive." It was an ancient custom that the conqueror led those he had conquered in chains. Hamilton believes this refers "to the righteous dead who had been held captive."⁴ Bruce writes that "the captivity which He led captive consists here of the souls of men whom His victory liberated from the thralldom of death."⁵ Coffman thinks it means a personification of all of the bondage which oppresses human life, such as "captivity to death," the imprisonment of our morality, "the captivity to sin"

(2 Tim. 2:26), etc."⁶ Christ, by His death and ascension has taken captive those things (sin-John 8:34 and fear of death-Heb. 2:15), and when He comes again he will, at the resurrection, redeem us from the captivity of death itself (1 Cor. 15:54-57).

Verses 9-10: The New English Bible translates this verse as follows: "Now, the word 'ascended' implies that he also descended to the lowest level, down to the very earth. He who descended is no other than he who ascended far above all heavens, so that he might fill the universe."⁷ It is obvious that Paul believed in the pre-existence of Christ with God. He had glory with the Father before the world was (John 17:5; cf. John 1:1) and he came into the world (John 1:14; Phil. 2:5-9).

The phrase "lower parts of the earth" has received numerous explanations. Some refer it to Hades, some to the grave, and some even to hell itself. The Greek word for "earth" can be understood as a genitive of identity. "The meaning then is 'the parts lower [than heaven]; that is, the earth,' the reference then being to the incarnation of Christ."⁸ The "lower parts of the earth" does, in some scriptures, indicate the womb (Psa. 139:15) and in Psalms 63:9 seems to refer to the grave. Paul emphasizes this same truth in his letter to the Philippians.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:5-8).

He ascended "far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." Christ is exalted far above all the heavens (Cf. Heb. 7:26). "After Christ ascended, there was given unto Him dominion, glory, and a kingdom (Daniel 7:14). Truly, He fills all things, for in him all

things consist (or hold together). (See Colossians 1:17.)"⁹

Chapter 4:11: To Whom Were The Gifts Given?

Verse 11: The term "apostles" here should probably be used in its strictest sense to refer to the twelve and the apostle Paul. Those were apostles who had been commissioned by Christ himself (Matt. 10:2-4). They had seen the risen Lord (Acts 1:21-22; 22:14-15; 26:16; 1 Cor. 15:5-8), thus were witnesses of His resurrection. The Lord had promised to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles to teach them all things and bring all things to their remembrance (John 14:26), to testify of him (John 15:26) and to guide them into all truth (John 16:13). Their authority was supreme (Matt. 18:18; Gal. 1:8-9); they left no successors. There are no living apostles today, but the apostles still "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28; spiritual Israel. Cf. Gal. 6:16). It is true there were others called apostles (Acts 14:14; Heb. 3:1), but the twelve were singled out, in a special sense, and for a special function, to serve as the personal ambassadors of Christ (2 Cor. 5:20), and physical witnesses of his incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection (Acts 10:41; 1 John 1:1-3).

The "prophets" referred to here are the New Testament prophets, such as Silas, Agabus, etc. (Acts 11:27-28; 13:1; 15:32). The church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets..." (Eph. 2:20). The mystery of God's grace was "revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3:5). The prophets spoke and acted under the extraordinary divine impulse and inspiration of God.

The "evangelists" were likewise given miraculous gifts. Philip the evangelist (Acts 21:8) received miraculous power through the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 6:5-

6). Timothy is likewise called an evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5).

Pastors are also called overseers (Acts 20:28), bishops (Tit. 1:7), elders (Acts 20:17), and shepherds (1 Pet. 5:4). They were given power to even lay hands on the sick and restore their health (cf. Jas. 5:13-15).

The absence of the article the before teachers in the Greek text, plus the fact that it is connected with pastors by a different conjunction than is used to separate the other offices, seems to indicate that the pastors and teachers are the same office viewed from two different aspects, namely from the teaching and shepherding aspects.¹⁰

Since gifts were given unto men then how were they given? The apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4). They were then able to give miraculous power to others by laying their hands on them. The apostles laid hands on the seven (Acts 6:6). Philip was able to perform miracles (Acts 8:6), but he could not give that power to others. Peter and John had to lay hands on the Christians at Samaria (Acts 8:17). Paul laid his hands on the twelve at Ephesus and they spake in tongues and prophesied (Acts 19:6).

Chapter 4:12: What were the purposes of the gifts?

Verse 12: "For the perfecting of the saints...."

First, miracles were the badges for God's messengers. The Patriarchal Age began with miracles (Gen. 1-2). The Mosaical Age began with miracles (Exod. 19:20), continued at various times till Malachi, and then for four hundred years no miracles. God called Moses and gave him his credentials—the power to work miracles (Exod. 4:2-9, 29-31). The people recognized Jesus as being from God by his miracles (John 3:1-5; 5:36). Miracles were "the signs of an apostle" (2 Cor. 12:12).

Second, they were "to equip the saints for the work of service, for building up the body of Christ."¹¹ Perfecting means "equipping, fitting out, preparing, or strengthening." "As a result of the perfecting they would be able to minister. The ministry would result in the body being edified. Paul longed to impart a spiritual gift to the church at Rome 'to the end ye may be established' (Romans 1:11; cf. 1 Corinthians 2:4,5)."¹² It means "with a view to the equipping [complete outfitting] of the saints for the work of services [and this] for the building up of the body of Christ."¹³

The word "for" is used three times. The first word "for" is from the Greek pros which means "with a view to." The word "perfecting" is from the Greek word which means "training, instructing, fitting or adapting." And the next two words are from a different Greek word eis, and these two words mean "into." And he gave...with a view to training, instructing or fitting the saints for the work of ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ.¹⁴

Third, the gifts were given for the profit of all (1 Cor. 12:7). "...the spiritual gifts were designed for the 'profit' or benefit of the church, as the function of the eye or ear are intended, not for itself alone, but for the whole body."¹⁵

Fourth, the gifts were necessary to confirm the word of God. "Confirm" means to establish, to settle, to make sure.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen. (Mark 16:17-20).

The Hebrew writer shows that Christ is greater than angels in at least six different ways (Heb. 1:1-14). He then draws a conclusion.

Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we

have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gift of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will (Heb. 2:1-4).

The Lord gave testimony unto the word of his grace (Acts 14:3; Cf. 4:29-30).

Fifth, they were all special gifts and endowments that existed before "that which is perfect is come" (1 Cor. 13:10). They were necessary in the absence of a complete revelation from God. The message was then in earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4:7)—the inspired men, but it is now in the inspired book.

Sixth, miracles were provisional and not accommodative in their nature. "Provisional" means "provided for a temporary need: suitable or acceptable in the existing situation but subject to change or nullification" (Webster). Miracles were not merely to accommodate the sick. Paul did not heal Timothy, but told him to "use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (1 Tim. 5:23). Paul left Trophimus sick at Miletus (2 Tim. 4:20). "Certainly there would have been immediate and functional advantages to his healing, but it did not serve the overall purpose of the miraculous, and hence he was not healed."¹⁶ Miracles were, as already shown, for the purpose primarily of confirming the word—not for personal benefit.

Chapter 4: How long were the gifts to endure?

Verse 13: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith...."

'Till' or 'until' marks duration. It places a limit. 'These gifts were to last until' the unity of 'the faith' come, or until 'the faith' was delivered to all. 'Till' is an adverb of time, which fixes the duration of these spiritual gifts, definitely establishes their temporary character. They were to exist in the church only

till a certain time. 'Till' a unity of the faith was reached was the expressed duration.¹⁷

These special gifts of the Holy Spirit qualified those who received them to teach the first principles of the gospel. They were bestowed immediately upon his ascension (Eph. 2:8). They were necessitated by the infant state of the church (Eph. 2:12). They were to continue only for a limited time.

The limitation is clearly marked by the adverb mechri ("until" in English), which also denotes "time how long"; that is, in this case, "until we attain unto the unity of the faith," etc., and be no longer children" (nepioi, literally "babes"); in a word that the Church be not always composed of nepioi "tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine..."¹⁸

The "unity of the faith" does not refer to the time when all religious people will be united in one faith (as most commentaries state). It refers to the gospel, the truth, the complete revelation of God's will to men. "...and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). Paul preached, "...the faith which once he destroyed" (Gal. 1:23). Christians are "...to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). If the Unity of the Faith does not occur until the next life, it will never be, because Faith will end in Sight in heaven, and there will never be Unity of the Faith (1 Cor. 13:13).

Miraculous gifts were to last until that "which is perfect is come."

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away (1 Cor. 13:8-10).

The word "perfect" (teleios) is never used in the Bible to refer to the second coming of Christ (Matt., 5:48; 19:21; Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 2:6; 13:10; Eph. 4:13; Phil. 3:15; Col. 1:28;

4:12; Heb. 9:10; Jas. 1:4,17,25; 3:2; 1 John 4:18). "Teleios" (perfect) means "brought to an end, finished, wanting nothing necessary to completeness; perfect" (Thayer). In fact it cannot refer to a person at all. "Since the Greek neuter article is used with teleios here, it does not refer to a person."¹⁹

There are many similarities between Ephesians 4:7-16 and 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14.²⁰

1 Corinthians 12,13,14

Ephesians 4:7-16

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Apostles set in the church (12:28) | 1. Gifts to apostles (4:11) |
| 2. Variety of gifts (12:30) | 2. Gave gifts (4:8) |
| 3. They were to "cease when" (13:10) | 3. Continue "till" (4:13) |
| 4. "That which is perfect" (13:10) | 4. "Unity of the faith" (4:13) |
| 5. "Then I shall know..." (13:12) | 5. "Knowledge of the Son of God" (4:13) |
| 6. "When I was a child" (13:11) | 6. "Henceforth no more children" (4:14) |
| 7. "Became a man" (13:11) | 7. "May grow up" (4:15) |
| 8. "Put away childish things" (13:11) | 8. "No more children" (4:14) |
| 9. "Now see...darkly" (13:12) | 9. "Carried about with every wind of doctrine" (4:14) |
| 10. "Then face to face..." (13:12) | 10. "Measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (4:13) |
| 11. Members have different work (12:27) | 11. "Whole body...every joint" (4:18) |

"And these signs shall follow them that believe..." (Mark 16:17-18). These verses have often been used to prove that miracles will continue until the judgment day. These verses do not state when believers would receive the gifts. They do not state how

believers would receive the miraculous gifts; they are simply a promise that believers would receive the power in some way.

The following explanation by G. Greenwall plainly shows the absurdity of the assertion that Mark 16:17-18 applies to believers today:

It has often been urged, that in the great commission there is a promise running thus: These signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils, etc...." If we are not to confine the promise to the apostolic era, but must consider it as absolute and universal in its aspects, the case will stand thus: "If there have been believers in all ages without super-natural power, the promise in the commission has been falsified. On the other hand, if the promise has not been verified, because the conditions of belief and obedience have been absent, then we are forced to the dreadful conclusion that there have been no believers since apostolic days." "...this choice of impalement is offered to all who are looking for...miraculous power. On one of these horns they must be tossed; and so far as a matter of comfort is concerned, it matters little which." The reader can plainly see the embarrassing position men are placed in who believe that the application of Mark 16, 17, 18 is to believers of all ages; for to consistently prove themselves believers in Christ, according to their own application of this passage, they must be able to cast out demons, speak with new tongues, take up serpents and drink any deadly thing without being HURT. Without this proof they unwittingly mark themselves as unbelievers. We doubt that any of the contemporary performers of MIRACLES will demonstrate their would-be miraculous power by drinking any deadly poison submitted to them. They are most bold and brazen to assert their claims of miraculous power but utter helpless in practicing what they preach.²¹

"And of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." When "the faith" was complete then the "knowledge of the Son of God" was fully revealed and the church would reach spiritual maturity as a "perfect man" in contrast to its present infancy. The completed scriptures are able to furnish us completely unto all good works that we "may be perfect" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Chapter 4:14-16: What Will Be The Results?

Verse 14: There will be doctrinal stability. When Paul wrote these words only about

eight of the Testament epistles had been written.

For that reason they were easy victims of false teachers, and were easily "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." But the time would come when these saints could "prove all things" by God's complete and inspired will, as believers can now do with His Word.²²

"Sleigh" is from Kubos (meaning cube) and actually refers to dice-playing. False doctrines are sometimes presented by dishonest means even as dice players use dishonesty. This word was familiar in later Greek, in the sense of deceit, sharp practice, in general.

"And cunning craftiness" carries with it the idea of "bad working." False teachers do not overlook a single opportunity to promote their doctrines.

Lit. in cunning, with a view to the scheming of [their] deceit.... But the Gr. preposition far more often means "with a view to" than "according to...." The apostle here recognizes and exposes the sad fact of intentional misguidance on the part of these preachers of "another Gospel" (Gal. 1:6,7).²³

Error never comes out into the open and honestly represents itself. It uses wiles to deceive the unsuspecting. Paul wrote that some use "good words and fair speeches" to "deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:18). Paul warned Timothy against those teachers who will teach anything that one wants to hear (2 Tim. 4:1-4). Peter said there would be some who "through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you..." (2 Pet. 2:3). "In truth, those who live good and exemplary lives but do not teach the truth are the most dangerous of all people."²⁴

Verse 15: There will be a proper declaration of the word and a right relationship with the head. "Speaking the truth," literally translated "truthing in love." The margin has "being sincere." This verse emphasizes that we can know truth (else how can we speak

it) (John 8:32; 17:17) and that truth should be spoken in love. Barnes wrote:

When we state truth to others, it shall be with love to their souls and with a sincere desire to do them good. When we admonish a brother of his faults, it should not be in a harsh and unfeeling manner, but in love. When a minister pronounces the awful truth of God about...death, the judgment, and future woe, it should be in love.²⁵

Paul joins truth and love together. One can utter truth without love. One can have such a repulsive attitude that the truth spoken will repel instead of attract. On the other hand one cannot show real love without speaking the truth. One does not show true love when one allows a person to go to hell to avoid "hurting his feelings." "By this shall all men know that we are the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:2-3).

Verse 16: This verse emphasizes the value of the local church and the importance of every member therein contributing his part to the growth of the body. The body derives vital substance from Christ, the head. It pictures the body of Christ (the church) as an "organism in which each member contributes to the growth of the whole by receiving and passing on the life drawn from Christ, the Head."²⁶ It reveals Christ as the source of the church's growth; the relation of each member to one another; the individual action of each member; the channel of supplies; the element or the sphere in which the growth takes place—Love; and the result of the growth.

This text teaches that the body is joined to Christ—"from whom...Christ"; that the body is to be together, joined together, yea fitly joined together; that the body is to be compacted by that "which every joint supplieth"; that this is according to the working, the

"effectual working of every part," yea, of our "every part," and, that on the basis of all of this the body "maketh increase...unto the edifying of itself in love."²⁷

David Lipscomb wrote:

The evil in the church is that we lay too much stress on certain offices and work, too little in that universal work of each and every member of the body. The welfare and development of the whole body is dependent upon the proper working of each and every member. In the human body there can be no proxy work. One member cannot do the work of all or any other member without injury to the other members and to the whole body. It is even so in the spiritual body of Christ.²⁸

CONCLUSION

God's wonderful grace has always provided all that man needs. He provided the spiritual gifts in the first century to enable men to reveal and confirm the truth. He knew that this truth would enable His followers to be grounded in His Word and walk faithfully in harmony with His will. He made it possible for every member of the church to contribute whatever measure he could to the successful growth of the church. God's word now furnishes us all that we need.

The only safeguard against apostasy is for the church to love the truth, receive the truth in love and practice the truth.

ENDNOTES

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The Purpose and Duration of Spiritual Gifts Ephesians 4:7-16

Introduction

1. Ephesians 4:7-16 is a vital part of the book of Ephesians. Distinct features of God's eternal purpose.
 - a. First, God proposed to save many from sin "before the foundation of the world" (1:4).
 - b. Second, Jesus Christ is the one through whom God proposed to save man (1:3-5).
 - c. Third, God's grace is revealed and enjoyed through the blood of Christ (1:7).
 - d. Fourth, God revealed this salvation to man through the gospel (1:6,8,9).
 - e. Fifth, all who accept Christ are saved in the church — a vital part of God's eternal purpose (Eph. 3:8-11).
2. There will be tremendous results in the lives of those who have a proper understanding of God's eternal purpose.
 - a. We will "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (4:1).
 - b. We will consider the platform on which the unity of the Spirit did exist and can be kept (4:4-6).
 - c. The diversity of gifts, both ordinary and extraordinary, were designed to promote unity.
3. The material in these verses in five sections:
 - a. By whom were the gifts given?
 - b. To whom were the gifts given?
 - c. For what purpose were the gifts given?
 - d. How long were the gifts to last?
 - e. What are the results?
 - (1) Doctrinal stability.
 - (2) Proper declaration of the word of God.
 - (3) Right relationship with the head.
 - (4) Individual development of each member.

Discussion

I. By Whom Were The Gifts Given?

- A. Certain things are necessary for the church. Today we mature by feeding upon the word of God (Acts 20:32; Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18).
- B. But before the New Testament was written Christ gave special gifts to supply the infant church her needs.
 1. These special gifts are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-11. (Use overhead here.)
 2. These special gifts were bestowed "according to the measure of the gift of

THIRD

1. First, miracles were the badges for God's messenger.
 - a. The Patriarchal Age began with miracles (Gen. 1-2).
 - b. The Mosaical Age began with miracles (Ex. 19:20; 4:2-9, 29-31).
 - c. The people recognized Jesus by the miracles he did (John 3:1-5; 5:36).
 - d. Miracles were the "signs of an apostle" (2 Cor. 12:12).
2. Second, they were "to equip the saints for the work of service, for building up the body of Christ."
 - a. "Perfecting" means "equipping, fitting out, preparing...."
 - b. As a result of the perfecting they would be able to minister.
 - c. All this would result in "edifying the body of Christ."
3. Third, gifts were given for the profit of all (1 Cor. 12:7).
4. Fourth, gifts were necessary to confirm the word of God (Mk. 16:17-20; Heb. 2:1-4).
5. Fifth, they were special gifts and endowments that existed before "that which is perfect is come" (1 Cor. 13:10).
6. Sixth, miracles were provisional (provided for a temporary need), but not accommodative (merely to heal the sick) (cf. 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:20).

IV. How Long Were The Gifts To Last?

A. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith."

1. "Till" or "until" marks duration of time.
2. "The faith"
 - a. It does refer to a time when all religious people will be united in one faith.
 - b. It refers to the completed faith or faith as a unit (Acts 6:7; Gal. 1:23; Jude 3).
3. Till that which is "perfect" is come (1 Cor. 13:8-13).
 - a. The word "perfect" is never used in the Bible to refer to the second coming of Christ (cf. Mt. 5:48; Rom. 12:2, etc.)
 - b. It does not refer to a person.
 - c. Note the similarities between Ephesians 4:7-16 and 1 Corinthians 12,13,14. (Use overhead here.)

B. We now have the completed word of God that is able to furnish us completely (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3).

V. What Will Be The Results?

A. First, there will be "doctrinal stability."

1. Only eight New Testament books written when Paul wrote these words — thus Christians easily tossed to and fro.
2. "By the sleight of men" false doctrines are sometimes presented by

The Purpose of Miracles in the Old Testament

Exodus 8:19

Introduction

1. Miracles were very much a part of the Old and New Testaments.
 - a. There are 54 miracles recorded in the Old Testament.
 - b. There are 60 miracles recorded in the New Testament.
 - (1) 34 performed by our Lord.
 - (2) 26 performed by angels, the apostles and certain disciples.
2. Miracles are the very heart of Christianity.
 - a. "...with the truth of miracles the entire citadel of Christianity stands or falls. For its beginning is a miracle, its author is a miracle; its progress depends upon miracles.... If the principle of miracles be set aside, then all the heights of Christianity will be leveled with one stroke, and naught will remain but a heap of ruins. If we banish the supernatural from the Bible, there is nothing left us but the covers" (Christlief, Modern Doubt and Christian Belief, p. 286).
 - b. "A Christianity without the confirmation of miracles, the tokens of God's approval, is one without a spinal column" (Stanley Sayers, "For This Cause," p. 128).
3. In this study the following plan will be followed:
 - a. What is a miracle?
 - b. Some things that are not at question in this issue.
 - c. What was the purpose or purposes of miracles?
 - d. Some general thoughts on Old Testament miracles!
 - e. Some specific Old Testament miracles and their purpose.
 - f. Conclusion.

Discussion

- I. Some things that are not a question in this issue.
 - A. It is not a question of whether or not they were performed yesterday.
 1. Miracles a definite part of the O.T. picture.
 2. Christ and his apostles did perform miracles, Acts 4:12,16.
 3. It is not what they did, but where is the passage that says they are for today?
 - B. It is not a question of power.
 1. God has power enough to do anything He chooses, but it is not what God can do but what does God do?
 2. God can make peas grow on a rosebush, but His law is that they grow on a pea vine.
 3. It is not what God can do, but what is His law concerning that particular thing?
 - C. It's not a question of prayer for the sick.
 1. Certainly the Christian believes that the "effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," Jas. 5:16.
 2. We all believe that we must pray for the sick, but we also believe that God

has certain natural laws in regard to the sick.

3. We are to pray for our daily bread (Mt. 6:11) but we don't expect God to hand us a loaf of bread while we disregard His natural law.

D. It is not a question of whether or not God heals.

1. All healing is divine healing but not all healing is miraculous healing.
2. All bread is divine, but not miraculous like Israel in the wilderness. One must plant, harvest and make it.

E. It's not a question of what history says about it, but what does the Bible say about it?

F. It is not a question of whether any sort of healing ever occurs in modern healing revivals.

1. Some extremists frequently deny that any sort of healing ever occurs in a healing campaign.
2. There is some healing that goes on in these campaigns, but "these healings are not produced miraculously by the influence of divine power."
3. The field of medicine has long recognized the power of certain psychological factors in relation to health, sickness, etc. The two most common are:
 - a. Suggestion which is "the arousing of ideas, or a thought pattern, in one's mind by another."
 - b. "Autosuggestion would be the same process self-induced."
4. Yes, certain functional and hysterical maladies have been helped through suggestive methods employed by faith healing, but no genuine cures of organic disturbances have been wrought.

II. What Is A Miracle?

- A. A tremendous amount of wrangling is usually indulged in over a suitable definition of a miracle. But one can "accept any definition of a miracle which will distinguish God's special, supernatural manifestations from things which occur by natural force or law, or by a fixed spiritual law" (Sayers, p. 15).
- B. "An extraordinary divine casualty, and not that ordinary which we acknowledge everywhere and in everything belongs, then, to the essence of the miracle. The unresting activity of God, which at other times hides and conceals itself behind the veil of what we call natural laws, does in the miracle unveil itself; it steps out from concealment, and the hand which works it is laid bare" ("Notes on the Miracles of our Lord," Trench, p. 10).
- C. "An event or effect brought about by an extraordinary interposition of divine power" (System Bible Study, "Historical Digest," p. 225).
- D. "A miracle is a work out of the usual sequence of secondary causes and effects, which cannot be accounted for by ordinary action of these causes" (The Gospel

Miracles in Their Relation to Christ and Christianity, Taylor, p. 173).

- E. "Miracles are events in the external world, wrought by the immediate power of God and intended as a sign or attestation. They are possible because God sustains, controls, and guides all things, and is personal and omnipotent" (Westminster Dictionary of the Bible).
- F. "...the laws of nature are nothing else than the common operations of divine power in the government of the world, which depends entirely for their existence and continuance on the divine will; and a miracle is nothing else than the exertion of the same power in a way different from that which is common; or it may be a mere suspension of that power which is commonly observed to operate in the world" (Evidences of Christianity," Alexander, pp. 67, 68).
- G. "An interference with nature by supernatural power" (Leurs, p. 10).
- H. "That is to say, a miracle is the immediate action of God, as distinguished from his mediate action through natural laws" (Trench).
- I. "A miracle is an incident in which results are produced independent of the laws of nature" (Frank Van Dyke).
- J. "An event or effect in the physical world deviating from the known laws of nature, or transcending our knowledge of these laws..." (Webster).
- K. "A miracle in the Biblical sense is an event which happens in a manner contrary to the regularly observed processes of nature" (Richardson, p. 152).
- L. The skeptic argues that miracles are contrary to natural law and therefore could not have happened. "A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature," so said Hume. Thus what natural law will not permit today it would never admit in the past.
- M. "A miracle is something above the laws of nature, something that laws of nature could not do in its ordinary course and operations" (Adam & Eve—Mature—Without Parents).
 - 1. It is not a miracle to produce an oak tree with an acorn, but it is a miracle to produce one without an acorn.
 - 2. No law of nature ever raised a person, a miracle did.
 - 3. Five loaves, two fishes...

III. What was the Purpose or Purposes of Miracles?

- A. First, miracles were provisional and not accommodative in their nature.
 - 1. "Provisional" means "provided for a temporary need: suitable or acceptable in the existing situation but subject to change or nullification" (Webster).

V. Some Specific Old Testament Miracles and Their Purposes

- A. God gives Moses miraculous power to confirm his faith and to convince the people (Ex. 4:1-9).
1. The rod turned to a serpent and back to a rod (4:1-5).
 2. Moses' hand made leprous and then healed (4:6-8).
 3. Water taken from the river became blood on the land (4:9).
 4. Purpose: (1) To convince Moses that God was with him and (2) to convince the people that God sent him.
- B. The ten plagues were aimed directly at the gods of Egypt, and were designed to give convincing evidence and proof of the superiority of the God of Israel over the gods of Egypt (Ex. 6:7; 7:5; 8:22; 10:2; 12:12; 14:4,18; Num. 33:4).
- C. God destroyed the walls of the city of Jericho (Josh. 6:1-20).
1. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down (Heb. 11:30).
 2. But there were 15 acts of obedience.
 3. Yet it was a miracle.
 4. Purpose: To show God's power over man's strongest forces.
- D. Naaman is cured of his leprosy (2 Kgs. 5:1-14).
1. Elisha gave Naaman instructions as to how to be cured of his leprosy.
 2. Naaman had to obey God and a miracle removed his leprosy.
 3. Purpose: To show God's authority over disease.

VI. What Were The Significant Characteristics of Bible Miracles?

- A. First, they exhibit the character of God and teach truths about God.
1. They are constructive, healing miracles.
 2. They are never capricious, or immoral, or unethical.
- B. Second, they are in harmony with the established truths of religion.
1. They never contribute to dishonest purposes, nor fight against the good.
 2. They are consistent with the ethical principles of which we read in the scriptures.
- C. Third, there is an adequate occasion for them (religious purpose).
1. They are always designed to do something.
 2. They serve as "signs" as suggested in the gospel of John (John 20:30-31).
- D. Fourth, they are established, not by the number of witnesses (although there were many), but by the character and qualifications of the witnesses.
1. Those in the scriptures who write of the miracles and who believe in the miracles are the finest people that the world has ever known.
 2. "They are competent to observe, careful in their recording, and highly ethical in their lives" (Batsell Barrett Baxter).

2. Miracles were not merely to accommodate the sick.
 - a. Timothy was not healed but told to take a little wine for his stomach, I Tim. 5:23.
 - b. Paul left Trophimus at Miletus sick, II Tim. 4:20.

B. Second, miracles were to confirm the truth.

1. "Confirm" means to establish, settle, make secure.
2. Jesus promised to enable the apostles the power to perform miracles to confirm their word, Mk. 16:15-20.
3. The Lord gave testimony unto his word of grace, Acts 14:3; Cf. 4:29,30.
4. The word was confirmed, Heb. 2:1-4.

C. Third, miracles were the badges for God's messengers.

1. The Patriarchal Age began with miracles, Gen. 1,2.
2. The Mosaic Age began with miracles (Ex. 19:20), continued at various times till Malachi and then for 400 years, no miracles.
3. God called Moses and then gave him his credentials--the power to work miracles, Ex. 4:2-9, 29-31.
4. Christ worked miracles, Jn. 3:1,2; 5:36; 20:30,31; Acts 2:22.
5. The apostles worked miracles, Mk. 16:17-20; Heb. 2:1-4; II Cor. 12:12.

IV. Some General Thoughts on O.T. Miracles.

A. As already stated there are 54 miracles recorded in the Old Testament.

B. Fifteen of the miracles are connected with rebuking and punishment (Gen. 19:11, 24-25, 26; Lev. 10:1-2; Num. 16:31-35, 41-50; Num. 21:7-9; 22:28-31; 1 Sam. 6:19; 2 Sam. 6:7; 1 Kgs. 13:4,6; 2 Kgs. 1:9-12; 5:24-27; 19:35; 2 Chron. 26:19-21; Jonah 1:17).

C. Seven miracles were for the purpose of convincing, compelling and encouraging (Ex. 3:2; 4:2-5, 6-7; 7:10-12, 7-12; Num. 17:1-8; 1 Sam. 5).

D. Twenty miracles were to show God's concern and to supply their needs (Ex. 13:20-21; 14:21-22; 15:24-25; 16:13-35; 17:5-7; Josh. 3:14-17; 6:6-21; 10:12-13; Judg. 15:19; 1 Kgs. 17:10-16; 2 Kgs. 2:11; 4:1-7, 32-36, 40-41, 42-44; 6:19; 7:6-7; 19:35; Dan. 3:19-27; 6:16-23).

E. Four miracles were in answer to prayers (Num. 12:10-15; 2 Kgs. 2:19-22; 19:35; Jonah 2).

F. One miracle was to defeat wrong ambition (Gen. 11:7-9).

G. Six miracles show God's power and authority in special ways (Num. 17:8-16; Lev. 9:24; 2 Kgs. 5:10-14; 6:6; 13:20-21; 20:9-11).

Conclusion:

1. The O.T. miracles clearly set forth the hand of God we serve.
2. The O.T. miracles become confirming evidence of the truthfulness of the O.T.

SUGGESTED SUBJECT FOR TERM PAPER IN COUNSELING:

HOMOSEXUALITY

O.P.K.

Introduction.

1. Grave time in the history of our nation.
2. Many movements in our society tending to greatly influence our life style.

Discussion.

- I. THE GROWING PROBLEM AND TOLERANT ATTITUDE TOWARD IT.
- II. THE MEANING OF HOMOSEXUALITY AND POSSIBLE CAUSES.
- III. WHAT DOES THE WORD OF GOD SAY ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY?
- IV. SOME ARGUMENTS OFFERED TO SUPPORT HOMOSEXUALITY.
- V. WHAT ARE SOME THREATS TO, AND EFFECTS OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN OUR SOCIETY?
- VI. WHAT SHOULD BE OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD AND TREATMENT OF THE HOMOSEXUAL IN RENDERING THE GREATEST HELP?

Conclusion.

False Doctrines About The Lord's Day

By JAMES MEADOWS

The theme of this lectureship, "Doctrines and Commandments of Men," is a most appropriate one. The doctrines and commandments of men will cause multitudes of people to be eternally lost. Jesus clearly taught that the "commandments of men" render one's worship vain (Matt. 15:9) and that men reject God's commandments in order to keep their own (Mark 7:1-13). The commandments of men "turn from the truth" (Tit. 1:14). It is my responsibility in this lecture to discuss some false doctrines that are taught about the Lord's day.

Sabbatarianism and Some of Its Proof Texts

Sabbatarianism is a system of thought which maintains that the seventh day of the week or the sabbath day must be regarded as holy and set aside for religious purposes. Such religious groups as the Jews, the Seventh-Day Baptist, and the Seventh-Day Adventists are Sabbatarians who regard Saturday as God's holy day today.

Genesis 2:1-3

Seventh-Day Adventists teach that ". . . the Sabbath was instituted at Eden before sin entered, that it was honored of God, set apart by divine appointment, and given to mankind as the perpetual memorial of a finished creation . . ." "The

MIXED MARRIAGES

James Meadows

The destiny of our nation is being decided in her homes. Between the ages of birth and twenty-one the average child spends 105,000 hours awake. Of these waking hours a maximum of 2,100 are spent in Bible school and worship; 10,000 hours in secular schools; and 92,000 hours at home. Thus as the home goes, "so goes the nation. An ancient proverb holds: "If there be righteousness within the individual there will be happiness within the home; if there be happiness with the home there will be harmony in the nation; if there be harmony in the nation there will be peace in the world." "A civilization is sound as the homes of that civilization are sound; and a civilization is weak when the home that makes up that civilization are weak."¹ "The stability of our social order depends upon the basic institution of the home, and the stability of the home depends upon the moral and spiritual integrity of the husband and wife."²

"People who marry will, in that marriage gain a little taste of heaven or a little taste of hell. Marriage can either degrade or elevate every person who is involved in it. It will either tend to integrate one's personality and help him to be the kind of person he should be, or else it will tend to disintegrate his personality." (Thomas Warren) "The highest happiness on earth is in marriage. The man who is happily married is a successful man even if he has failed in everything else. And every man whose marriage is a failure is not a successful man even if he has succeeded in everything else." (William Lyon Phelps)

In this lesson on mixed marriages we purpose to study the following questions:

1. What Is Marriage?
2. Who Has The Right To Marry?
3. What Are The Purposes of Marriage?
4. What Is a Mixed Marriage?
5. What Are Some Forms of Mixed Marriages?

WHAT IS MARRIAGE?

"Marriage is an institution ordained of God for the honor and happiness of mankind, in which one man and one woman enter into a bodily and spiritual union pledging each to

the other mutual love, honor, fidelity, sympathy, forbearance, and comradeship, such as should assure an unbroken continuance of their wedlock so long as both shall live."

(H. Leo Boles)

"Scriptural marriage is the blending of the lives of two eligible persons of opposite sex into one through mutual agreement, legal contract, and sexual cohabitation. The union is further confirmed, sealed, and exemplified in the offspring."³

Guy N. Woods wrote "The requisites of a valid, scriptural marriage, in our day, include the following: (1) There must be the intention to enter into such a union. An adulterous relationship engaged in for the moment or, for that matter, over a period of years, is not marriage. (2) Each party there to must be capable, mentally and physically and psychologically, to effect such a union and consummate it. (3) The agreement to enter into marriage must be unrestrained; it must be freely entered into, and with full consent of both. (4) Each must be scripturally and legally free to marry; obviously, one already married, in God's sight, is not free to contract another marriage. (Matt. 19:9)"⁴

People may marry for one or more reasons--some good and some bad.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Love | 9. Sexual attraction |
| 2. Economic security | 10. Protection |
| 3. Desire for a home and children | 11. Social position |
| 4. Emotional security | 12. For pity |
| 5. Escape loneliness | 13. Escape a home situation |
| 6. For money | 14. For adventure |
| 7. For spite | 15. Parents wishes |
| 8. For companionship | 16. Pregnancy |

Most people marry to have their basic needs fulfilled and "happy marriages are those in which both husband and wife find fulfillment of their basic personality needs."

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Someone to love me. | 8. Someone to stimulate my ambition. |
| 2. Someone to confide in. | 9. Someone to look up to. |
| 3. Someone to show affection. | 10. Someone to give me self-confidence. |
| 4. Someone to respect my ideals. | 11. Someone to back me in difficulty. |
| 5. Someone to appreciate what I wish to achieve. | 12. Someone to appreciate me just as I am. |
| 6. Someone to understand my moods. | 13. Someone to admire my ability. |
| 7. Someone to help make my decisions. | 14. Someone to make me feel important. |
| | 15. Someone to relieve my loneliness. |

WHO HAS THE RIGHT TO MARRY

Does everyone have a right to marry? Does every person who has a legal right to marry have a scriptural right? If not, who has the right?

First, those who have never been married and are physically and mentally able to

perform the obligations of marriage. Both husband and wife are obligated to give their bodies to each other in marriage (I Cor. 7:1-5). A short time spent reading such passages as Ephesians 6:1-4; I Timothy 5:8,14; Titus 2:1-4, will make one realize the tremendous mental obligations in marriage. "All the states have laws on this subject, but it is noteworthy that many of them do not positively forbid such marriage but are satisfied merely to provide for their annulment, thus showing that they are concerned much less with the protection of the public on eugenic grounds than with the legal question of the absence of intelligent consent by the mentally deficient party involved."⁵

Second, the man or woman that has been married and his or her companion is dead. Paul clearly shows in Romans 7:1-4 that a woman whose husband is dead "is free from that law" and she "is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." (I Cor. 7:39)

Third, the man or woman that has been married and his or her companion is guilty of fornication (Mt. 5:31,32; 19:1-9). God intended from the beginning that a man and woman live together until death (Gen. 2:24; Mt. 19:4-6). It is important to realize this point because the attitude that one has upon entering marriage will have more to do with its success than the intensity of love at the time they marry. But the Lord does allow divorce and remarriage for the cause of fornication providing it "occurred without fault on the part of the person claiming the right to remarry."

WHAT ARE THE PURPOSES OF MARRIAGE?

One purpose of marriage is to propagate the human race. ". . . Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. . ." (Gen. 1:28; 9:1; cf. I Tim. 5:14).

A second purpose of marriage is to provide companionship. "And the Lord God said, it is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." (Gen. 2:18).

Prevention of immorality is a third purpose of marriage. "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting

and prayer: and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."
(I Cor. 7:1-5).

Marriage, in the fourth place, also places responsibilities on both husband and wife. (Eph. 5:22,23,25,28; 6:4; I Tim. 5:8,14; Titus 2:3-5; I Pet. 3:7).

WHAT IS A MIXED MARRIAGE?

All marriages might be considered "mixed marriages" in some areas because of these facts. First, the fact that a man and a woman marry. Second, the fact that all marriages will have some problems. Third, the fact that all marriages must go through adjustments. The first part of marriage is "that unnecessary period, that period one must go through before reality sets in." Both husband and wife are trying to adjust to three families at the same time--his family, her family, their family.

"Mixed marriages," as we are considering and defining them, are marriages in which there are considerable, obvious, extreme or unusual differences between the spouses. "A mixed marriage may result from a combination of factors, all of which make for extreme differences. . . a marriage that involved differences serious enough to make it a 'mixed' marriage will put special requirements on the partners. Further it seems that the differences in mixed marriages do not decrease with the passing of time after marriage. . ."6 "In a mixed marriage the number of problems is increased and some problems that would normally exist are intensified."7

WHAT ARE SOME FORMS OF MIXED MARRIAGES?

First, extreme age difference might constitute a mixed marriage, but not necessarily so in every case. There will be some age difference in most marriage and studies show that "the combinations with the largest percentage of good adjustments were those in which the wife was older than the husband."8 This, despite the popular romantic notion that, "for marital happiness, the husband should be somewhat older than the wife."9

What are some problems that might arise in this type of mixed marriage? First, there may be a difference in "habit set." The younger person, in most cases, will need to make more adjustments. Second, an older husband may assume a paternal attitude toward his wife. Third, common friends may be hard to find since both may desire friends of their own age bracket. Fourth, they face public opinion which may place their marriage in the peculiar or unusual bracket. Fifth, special physical problems may arise, especially in later years.

Second, extreme differences in size, especially height, loom large in the minds of some people. "It is not a physical difference, but rather the attitude held toward a difference, that may cause problems in a marriage."¹⁰

What are some problems that may arise in such a marriage? First, they may become the source of amusement to others where the wife is considerably larger or taller than the husband. Second, the husband may feel inferior and become spiritless and submissive where he is smaller than his wife. Third, where the husband is much smaller he may become egotistical or "bossy" to make up for his size. Fourth, there may be special problems in physical adjustments.

Third, international marriage may constitute a mixed marriage. "There is no criticism of marriage between nationalities provided each respects the others' nationality, thus eliminating strong feelings of superiority and inferiority in their minds or in the minds of their peers."¹¹ "If people are going to marry across lines of difference they should consider whether they both have the qualities that will enable them to make all the adjustments required."¹² "For two people to be from different countries--nationality differences alone--may be of little importance to their happiness if they happen to be of the same religion, of approximately the same economic level, and if things they value in life are not too different."¹³

Such a marriage may involve several kinds of differences. First, some marriages have failed because of the language barrier. This may involve, not only the spoken language, but a different language in their concepts of what makes life worth living. Second, most of these marriages will involve a difference in religion. Third, customs and habits are different. "An American girl married a man from East Pakistan and fled his country later with the complaints, 'His mother sat on the floor to sew! They expected me to stay behind a wall with the other women! They always had tea instead of coffee, and I couldn't bear their food.'"¹⁴

Fourth, interracial marriages constitute mixed marriages. At one time forty of our states had laws prohibiting interracial marriages, especially between a black and a white but, in 1967 the United States Supreme Court "handed down a ruling, that, in effect, declared all such laws unconstitutional."¹⁵ There is less than 1 percent of marriages across any racial lines in the United States today. Studies show that "interracial marriages are terminated much sooner than intraracial marriages and that black-white marriages

are terminated sooner than all other types of mixed racial marriages."¹⁶

What are some specific problems that must be faced in interracial marriages? First, prejudice must be faced. "The fact that there is no sound biological basis for the opposition to interracial marriages becomes merely an academic point; as long as prejudice against such marriages still exist, social attitudes are likely to create special difficulties for interracial marriages."¹⁷ Second, satisfactory housing, in many parts of the United States, may be hard to find despite laws designed to protect them. Third, the children usually find themselves discriminated against by both races. Fourth, finding mutual friends friendly to both spouses. Fifth, when the problems do inevitably arrive, one or both may blame the other "so that when the pressure of opposing backgrounds become severe the marriage may not survive."¹⁸

Fifth, extreme differences in economic status may constitute a mixed marriage. "In the story book the princess marries the page, the heiress marries the chauffeur, the millionaire marries the chorus girl and they live happily ever after," but in real life the story does not always end that way. Some of the specific problems that may arise in such a marriage are: First, the rich "in-laws" may snub the formerly poor party. Second, the rich party may regularly remind the poor party of his or her former condition. Third, the newly acquired wealth may go to the head of the formerly poor party.

Sixth, there may be specific problems due to extreme differences in backgrounds. Our background and early training are things we carry into marriage and marriage won't miraculously change them. First, there may be special problems due to differences in tastes, attitudes and social behavior, as when a boy from a loud, unmannered, rowdy family marries a girl from a strict, well-mannered, quiet family, Second, there are great differences in individuals from different sections of the country that create special problems.

Seventh, differences in education may constitute a mixed marriage. Terman's studies show "that when the husband was far superior to the wife in intelligence, the husbands rated low in happiness although the wives rated high."¹⁹ If the husband's intellectual rating was inferior the wife's happiness rate dropped. "Couples with the highest rating for both husband and wife were those in which both husband and wife, were equal in intelligence."²⁰

What are some of the problems that may arise in such a marriage? First, interest may differ. Second, the higher educated person may be ashamed of the lower educated person. Third, mutual friends may be harder to find. Fourth, where there is a "great disparity of education between husband and wife there are in general four possible courses that their marital life may take. (1) They may make a satisfactory adjustment, with little actual change on either side. (2) There may be formed between them an unbridgeable chasm. (3) The one with the higher education may assist the other to raise himself to the higher level. (4) The one with the lesser education may drag the other down to the lower level, the last is the path of least resistance and is not infrequent in actual experience."²¹

Eighth, difference in previous marital status may create special problems and may take two forms. First, one may marry one who has been married before and his or her companion is now dead. In some cases both may have been married before and their companions are dead. Second, one may marry an individual who is divorced.

What are some special problems that may arise and some questions that need to be asked where one marries one who has been married before. First, the Christian needs to consider I Corinthians 7:39. Second, was the first marriage happy? In some cases one can know, in others one may not. Third, can the previously married person adjust to a second marriage or will he or she always be living too much in the past? Fourth, can you learn to tolerate mention of, and comparison with, the former companion? Fifth, children may cause conflict as the uninterrupted honeymoon and adjustment period will be shorter. Where both have children by a previous marriage, is there conflict? Sixth, where one who has never been married, marries a previously married person, two factors may create special problems. There will be a greater desire on the part of the previously unmarried for a longer honeymoon period than the other. Where the previously unmarried is considerably older, before marriage, the long-time independence may call for special effort toward adjustment.

What are some special problems that may arise and questions to consider where one marries a divorced person? There may be some of the same problems as when one marries a widow or widower, but there are also differences, in some areas. First, the Christian must ask, why the divorce? Fornication constitutes the only grounds for divorce and

remarriage. (Mt. 5:32; 19:1-9) Second, can you accept and live with the criticism that is sure to come? True, it will be unjust in most cases, but it will still be there. Third, how many divorces? People commonly repeat their mistakes. Fourth, what about the former spouse? Will he or she be always appearing on the scene? Fifth, can you live with alimony payments? Are they involved? Sixth, are children involved? Can you become a step-parent? Do the children accept you? Are you willing to share the children with their mother or father? Seventh, what about your religious conviction? Can you live with your conscience in this marriage?

Ninth, religious differences constitute one of the most difficult, if not the most difficult, form of mixed marriages. "Religion is more important in marriage than many young people in love are inclined to think. It may be a uniting force or a disrupting influence."²² "Sociologists tell us that people with a religious faith are more likely to have successful marriages and happy homes. People who have attended Sunday school when they were children and people who are church members have happier marriages on the average than those who have nothing to do with a church."²³ Marriage between two people who are not members of the same religious body is a religiously mixed marriage. Under this form of mixed marriage we propose to observe what the Bible says, some statistics, and some warnings and problems.

What does the word of God say? Some contend that the Bible teaches it is sinful or wrong for a Christian to marry a non-Christian.

First, some argue that God in all ages has had a uniform law forbidding mixed marriages. Is such a law found in the Patriarchal Age? If so, where? Hager was a concubine of Abraham (Gen. 16:3) and he also married Keturah (Gen. 25:1,6) but to say they were of the same faith is to assume the point that must be proven. "Certainly Abraham did send a servant to his homeland to find a wife for his son Isaac, but the point of agreement between Isaac and Rebekah was that of blood relationship; not spiritual unity-- 'But thou shalt go into my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac' (Gen. 24:4). Rebekah had a brother, Laban, who was an idolater (Gen. 24:29; 31:19) and his idols were stolen by his daughter. By what twist of imagination could Rebekah be thought to have the same faith as Abraham when her blood brother and childhood playmate was an idolater? . . . These men married women who were of the same ancestry as they; not

of the same faith. To argue that they 'probably' adopted the faith of their husbands after marriage is but to beg the question. The question is whether God had a law against religiously mixed marriages in the Patriarchal Age. No such law is recorded."²⁴

Second, it is argued, God's law during the Mosacial Age shows mixed marriages to be sinful. "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly." (Deut. 7:3,4) This is the first time such a commandment was given to man and here it applies only to Israel. To say it applies to Christians because it applied to Israel would bind Christians to observe all other requirements of the law which were fulfilled (Mt. 5:17,18; Eph. 2:15,16; Col. 2:14-16). The penalty for such marriages would likewise apply--"So will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly." Furthermore all Christians who have married out "of the church" would be forced to divorce their companions as Nehemiah and Ezra forced the Jews to divorce the foreign wives they had married (Neh. 13:23-30; Ezra 10:10-19). There are specific examples of Israelites marrying non-Israelites under the law without God's disapproval or judgment. Moses married an Ethiopian or Cushite woman (Num. 12:1) and Boaz married Ruth, a Moabite (Ruth 4:13). Deuteronomy 21:10-13 sets forth some regulations where an Israelite might marry a non-Israelite under certain conditions.

Third, it is contended that 2 Corinthians 6:14 definitely forbids a Christian marrying an unbeliever. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. . ." It is to be admitted that the exhortation may be thus applied, but it certainly does not seem to be the apostle's meaning in this place. If it applies primarily to marriage (1) it forbids a Christian to marry an unbeliever, (2) it forbids a Christian to remain married to an unbeliever, for it says, "Be ye not," not "become ye not"!, (3) it demands all such marriages be dissolved because verse 17 says "wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate. . .," (4) it would be contrary to I Corinthians 7:14 which recognizes such a marriage as holy and the children born as legitimate, (5) it would contradict I Peter 3:1,2 which tells a Christian wife how to live in order to lead her unbelieving husband to Christ, (6) it would mean that all who refuse to come out of such marriages are walking disorderly and should be disfellowshipped. The expression "unequally yoked

together" comes from the word heterozugountes--a compound of two words. "Heteros" means "otherwise, differently:" "zugos" means a "cross--bar or band; a yoke; metaphorically, a yoke of bondage, state of slavery, servile condition" (Westcott & Hart). By what rule of logic, language or scripture can marriage be called a yoke? The word "yoke" is used literally and figuratively in the Bible, fifty times in the Old Testament and eight times in the New Testament, and is never used with reference to marriage. (Cf. I Kings 12:4; Jer. 28:4; Lam. 1:14; 3:27; I Tim. 6:1; Acts 15:10; Mt. 11:29,30) "The unequal yoke of ver 14, of this context, is therefore some relationship with the world, or a worldly person, that makes it impossible for us to be received and treated as children of God. Whatever the unequal yoke may be, it is of such nature that God will not receive us or be our Father or allow us to be his children as long as we remain in that unequal yoke."²⁵ By a series of short questions Paul "shows the utter folly, the inconsistency and incogruity of every form of alliance which entangles the children of God with the children of the devil. The world has not so improved, and Satan has not so repented, as to in any way nullify, or even weaken, the weight and applicability of this apostolic warning."²⁶

It is the conviction of this writer, as P. D. Wilmeth well states, "that neither Christ nor the apostles taught the marriage of a Christian and a non-Christian as an unlawful or unscriptural marriage, or that such would constitute an act or state of sin."²⁷ This is not to encourage a Christian to marry a non-Christian, (later points will show how unwise such an action is) but to show that because a thing may be unwise or inadvisable does not necessarily mean its wrong or sinful. "I would urge Christians to marry only in the Lord, there are many reasons which may be advanced why this should be done; but, we must not misuse or misapply this passage, or any other, to teach what may be shown to be expedient in other passages. There are grave risks in all marriages; the risks increase when one of the parties thereto is not a Christian. It is one thing however to say that it is inexpedient to enter into such a relationship, and an entirely different matter to say that it is a sin. I have long believed the scriptures teach the former, but not the latter."²⁸

Statistics show a much higher rate of divorce and separation among people of different faiths. First, the American Institute of Public Opinion directed by George Gallup,

in one survey, showed "That only four in every ten people think that marriage between those of different religious faiths would have a good chance of success."²⁹ Second, a survey in Maryland in 1952 of 13, 528 young people between ages of 16-24 revealed the following about divorce rates.

"Where both parents were Jewish	--	4.6%
"Where both parents were Catholic	--	6.4%
"Where both parents were Protestant--		6.8%
"Where religions were mixed	--	15.2%
"Where no religious affiliation	--	16.7%" ³⁰

Third, Landis and Landis analysis of data from 4,108 mixed and nonmixed marriages among the parents of college students "showed that mixed marriages in which both husband and wife held to their separate religious faiths have always had a much higher rate of failure than other marriages. Where both parents were Catholic the divorce rate was lowest, only 4.4 percent of the marriages ending in divorce; if both were Protestant, 6.0 percent ended in divorce. Of the marriages in which neither parent claimed any religious faith, 17.9 percent ended in divorce. The highest divorce rate of all existed in marriages in which the husband was Catholic and the wife Protestant. Of this group 20.6 percent were divorced."³¹

Christians must realize that even though God recognizes such marriages "it does not necessarily follow that such marriages are recommended. There are certain inherent dangers involved in such marriages which render them dangerous to the future happiness and spiritual well-being of the Christian,"³² which must be discussed. "Would either or both of you make religion a bone of contention? How did you reduce your answer to this question? Have you ever discussed religion together? Do you argue about it and find yourselves emotionally rought up and unable to find any common basis for agreement? Would she expect you to change your religion?. . . Would you expect him to change his religion?. . . Has either of these alternates been discussed?. . . If one changed, would it be because of conviction or to remove a barrier to marriage? Have you planned that each will retain his own faith and affiliation? If so, have you carefully thought through the problems that this might involve in later life, when there are children to be reared?. . . How tolerant and broad-minded is the other person?"³³

A Christian's spiritual life should have the preeminence and all action should be to promote its welfare. Entering a religiously mixed marriage will seldom do this. First, they are often in haste without considering the obstacles to happiness. Second, the two are often completely ignorant of the beliefs of each other. Third, there may be considerable unhappiness under the surface but no discussion of it. Fourth, constant bickering over doctrine and attendance may mar the marriage. Fifth, religious differences and side issues may bring about divorce. Sixth, the children will be torn between love of mother and loyalty to father. Seventh, the children may become unhappy, prejudiced or disgusted with religion and their parents. Eighth, one may "join the church" to please the other party without any real convictions. Ninth, the LChristian may "depart from the faith" by joining some religion foreign to the Bible. Tenth, both may completely quit all religion and try to forget God. Eleventh, there may be hindrance to one's prayer life due to the friction. "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." (I Pet. 3:7) Twelfth, one's faithfulness may be hindered. One's companion may not attend at all or very little and see no need. It becomes a great point of contention. Thirteenth, it immediately cuts off a man from ever being an elder, deacon, etc., if his wife never becomes a Christian. Fourteenth, a man or woman whose companion is not a Christian will of necessity be handicapped in what they can do for the Lord.

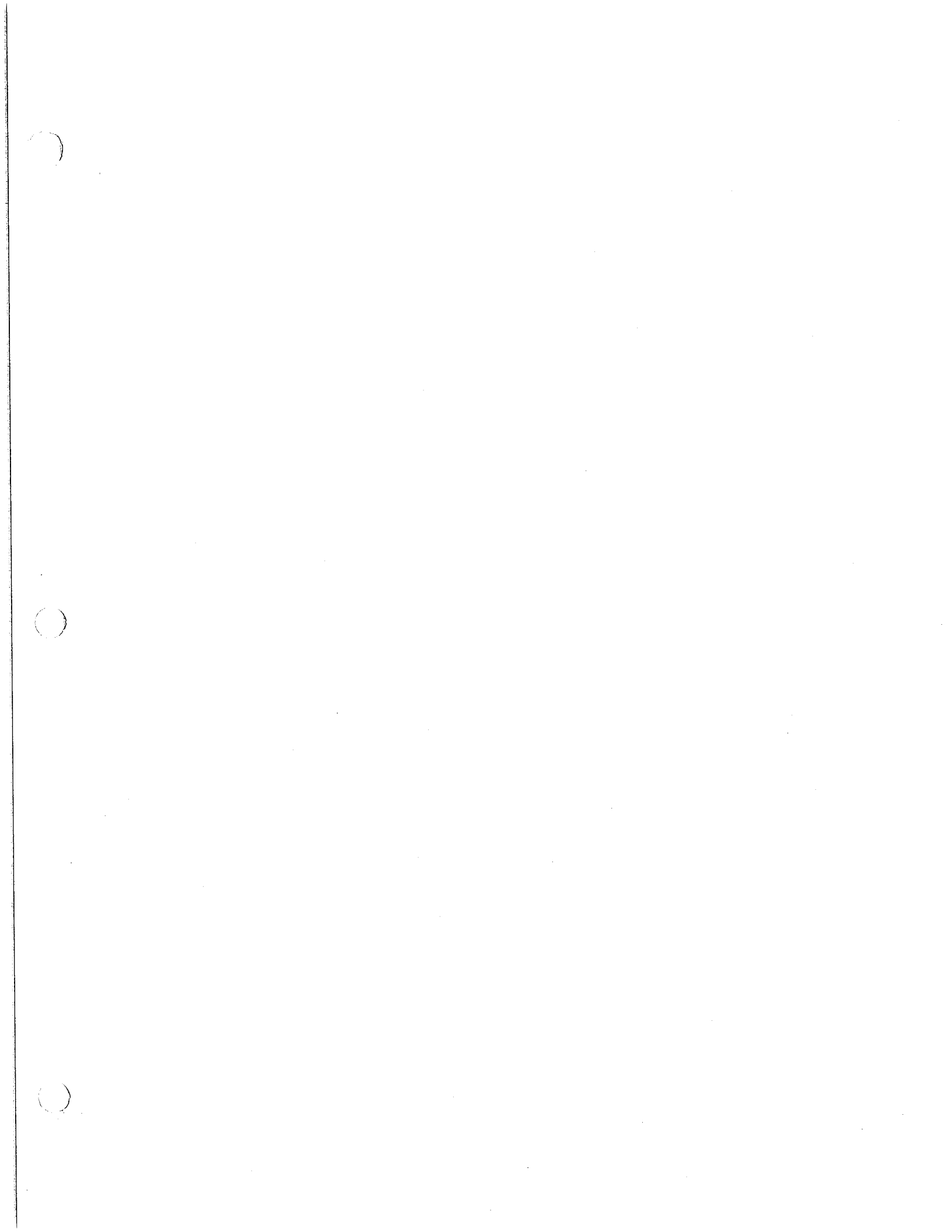
CONCLUSION:

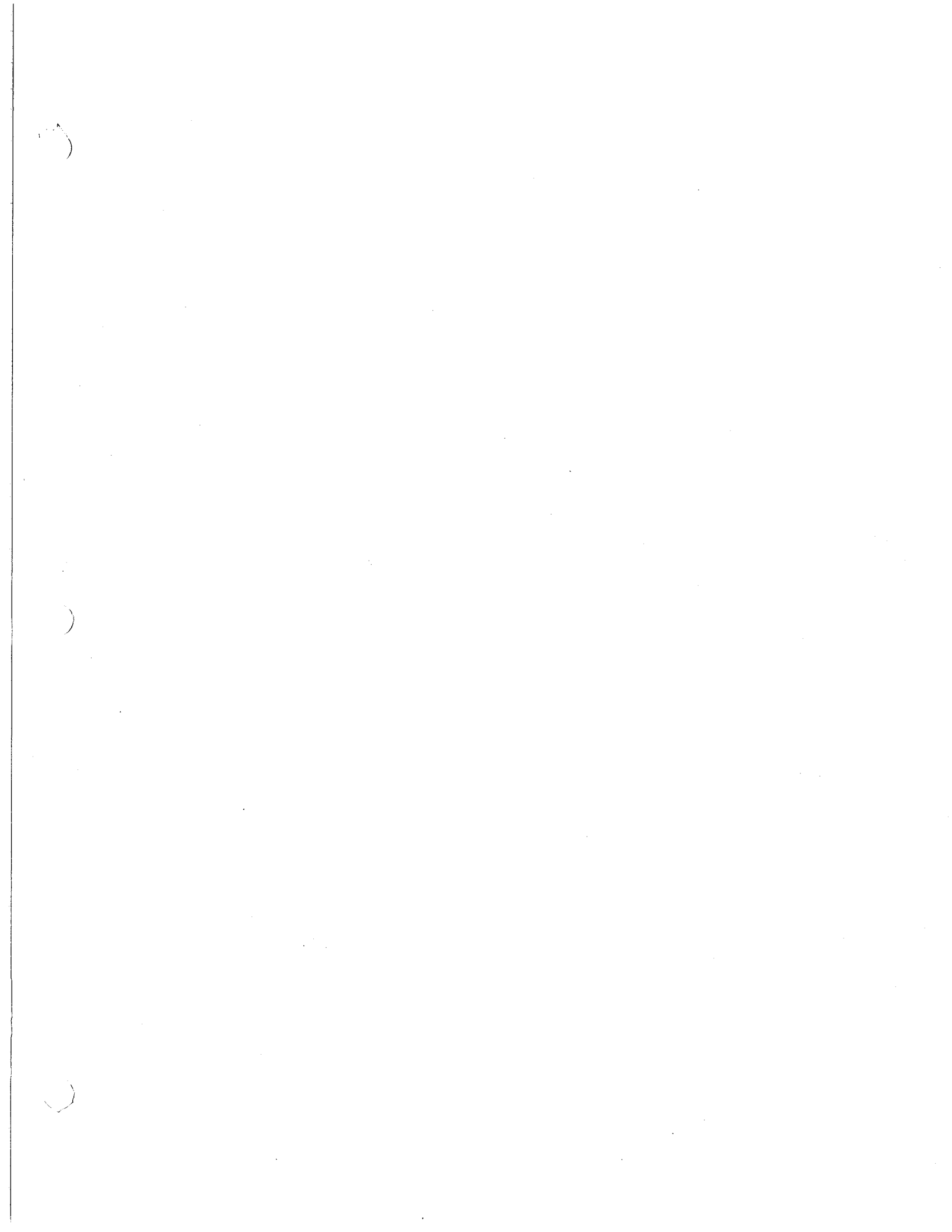
". . . common sense and true piety show the absurdity of two such persons pretending to walk in a way in which they are not agreed. A very wise and very holy man has given his judgment on this point: 'A man who is truly pious, marrying with an unconverted woman, will either draw back into perdition, or have a cross during life.' The same may be said of a pious woman marrying an unconverted man. Such persons cannot say this petition. . . 'Lead us not into temptation.' They plunge into it of their own accord."³⁴

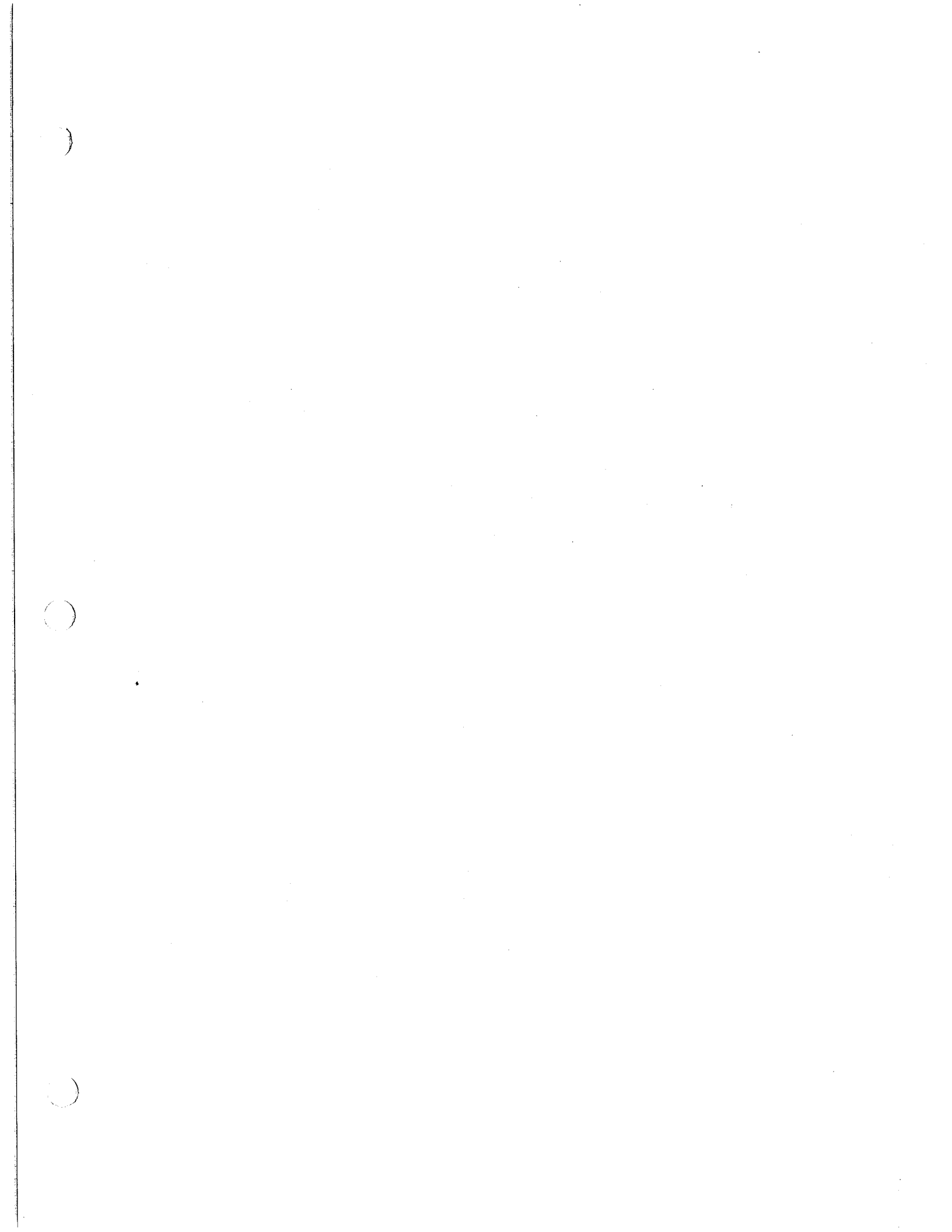
FOOTNOTES

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3. G. C. Brewer, "Marriage And Divorce," Contending For the Faith (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1955) p. 69.
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5. Ray E. Baber, "Marriage And the Family" (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1953), p. 52.
6. Judson T. & Mary G. Landis, "Building a Successful Marriage" (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1973), 6th Ed., p. 181.
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11. Eldon Byrd, Quote from his class notes.
12. Landis & Landis, "Personal Adjustment, Marriage and Family Living," p. 130.
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30. Wilmeth, op. cit., p. 33.
31. Landis & Landis, op. cit., p. 166-67.
32. Nowlin, op. cit., p. 20.
33. Bowman, op. cit., pp. 258, 259.
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"PRINCIPLES OF MORAL-DECISION MAKING"

OUTLINE

Introduction

1. The importance of principles
2. Definition of terms

I. Some Principles or Philosophies That Cannot Be followed

In Moral-Decision Making

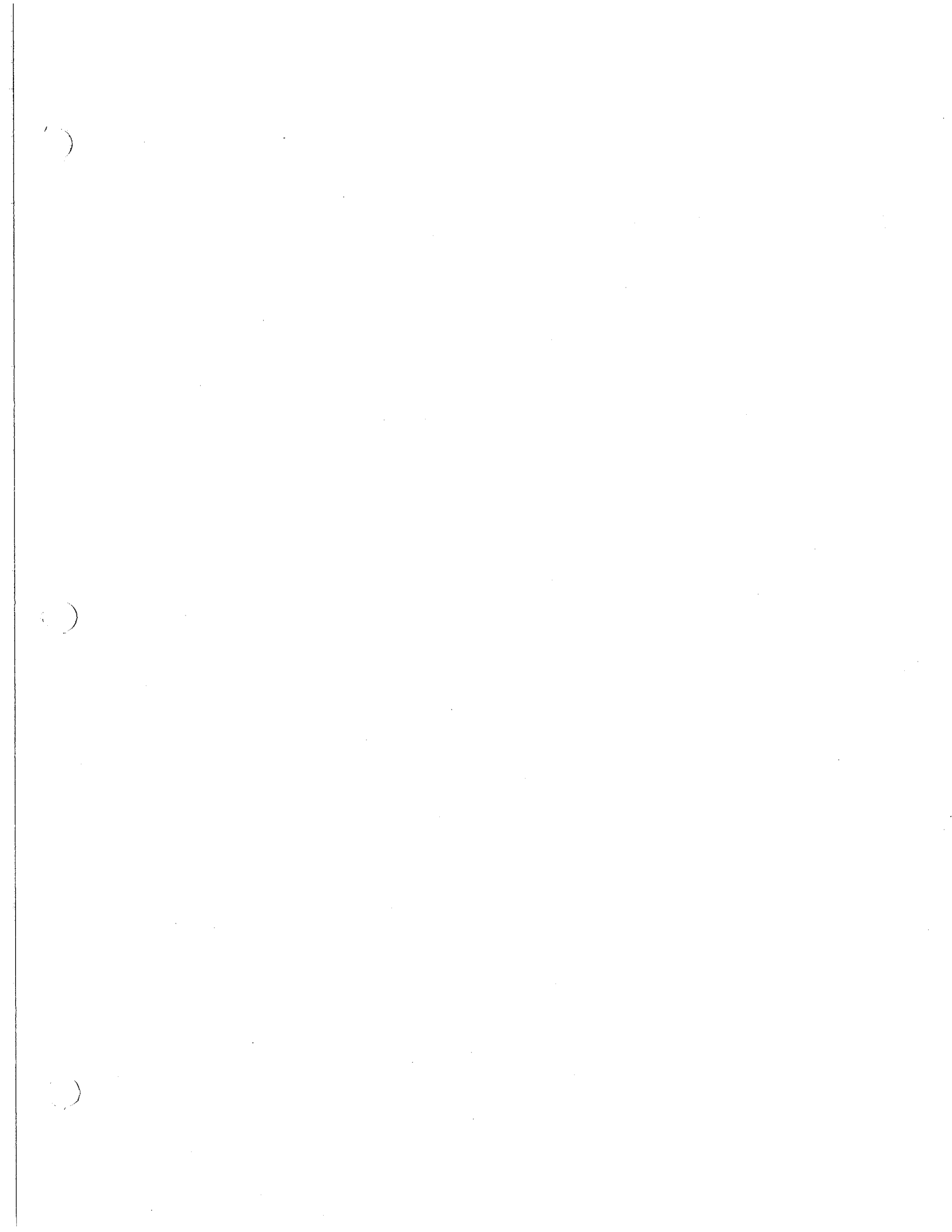
1. Atheism
2. Communism
3. Philosophy
4. Utilitarianism
5. Pragmatism
6. Materialism
7. Humanism
8. The New Morality & situation ethics
9. Existentialism

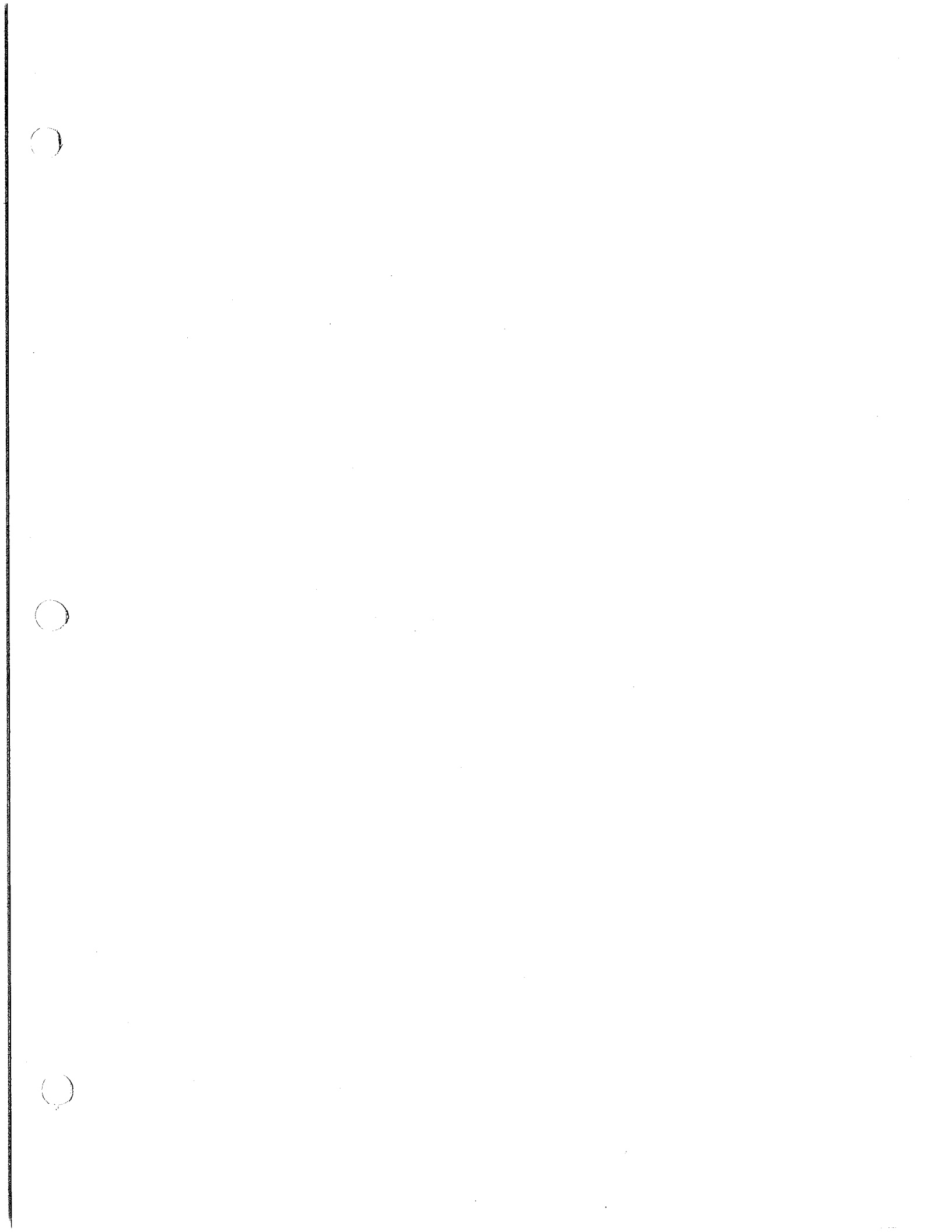
II. Principles For Moral-Decision Making

1. Is there any explicit command of God regarding the matter?
2. Use of the senses in application of principle.
3. Is it expedient?
4. The conscience comes into play.
5. What will be its influence on others?

Conclusion:

1. People Without Principles Become Morally Corrupt.
2. God, the motivating factor.





"Errors in the Bible"

On June 17, 1996, Mr. T. W. Thompson wrote a letter to the editor of The Dallas Morning News. He takes issue with the president of the Southern Baptist Convention who stated that the Bible is inerrant. Mr. Thompson said:

He is referring to the "original manuscripts" (autographs) which living persons do not have and have never seen. The Bible commonly used today is an imperfect translation, based on an imperfect text which is based upon imperfect ancient manuscripts. . . . To expect someone to call this commonly used Bible inerrant is either to be ignorant or a demagogue.

1. If the Bible is not inerrant then it must be errant.
2. If it is errant then it must be full of errors.
3. If the Bible is full of errors, then it must be unreliable because we would be at a loss to figure out which parts are valid.
4. An errant Bible means:
 - a. No certainty about any bible doctrine.
 - b. No words of comfort for anyone.
 - c. No objective standard of morality.

Gary Summers
Spiritual Perspectives
Denton, Texas

Is there an ABSOLUTE STANDARD OF MORALITY?

JAMES MEADOWS

INTRODUCTION:

1. The thoughtful observer will admit we live in a changing world, yet man has not basically changed. He still has the same needs, wants, and desires--food, clothing, and shelter. He still commits the same sins--lust of flesh, lust of eyes, pride of life.
2. But in the midst of this changing world is there an unchangeable standard--an absolute standard of morality.
 - a. "Absolute." "perfect; complete; not mixed; pure; not limited (absolute power); positive; not doubted; real (absolute truth); not relative." (Webster's New Word Dictionary).
 - b. "standard." (1) Something that is established by authority, custom, or general consent as a model or example to be followed; (2) Something that is set up and established by rule . . ." (Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged).
 - c. "Morality." A doctrine or system of ideas concerned with conduct."
3. In this lesson let's consider:

DISCUSSION:

I. IS THERE AN ABSOLUTE STANDARD OF MORALITY?

A. Atheism says no.

1. "Atheism makes morality imposable by defining the moral as simply that which men happen to believe is moral. A thing is good or evil only because people believe that it is good or evil. In other words, it is not good or evil in its nature, but men in their own minds think that it is good or evil; however, the thinking does not make it so." ¹
2. Atheists affirm moral relativism--"to them all morality is but a matter of the customs and mores of a given society. These change, and thus morality is in a state of flux and flow."²
3. "There is no objective moral realm but only subjective human feeling and ideas about morality and these are subject to constant change."
4. There is no real good or evil then but men need only to change their minds to change evil to good and good to evil.

B. Communism says no.

1. We have ethics and morality but we repudiate ethics and morality "in the sense in which it is preached by the bourgeoisie who derived ethics from God's commandments."³
2. "Their doctrine of morality means that there is no moral law to which all men ought to be in subjection. Instead, each class is justified in acting in harmony with its own selfish class interest."⁴
3. "Their relativism teaches that morality is class morality. Anything is right if it justifies, protects, enlarges, or perpetuates the interest of a class."⁵

C. No, say certain philosophers.

1. Bertrand Russell wrote:

"But I do not believe that we can decide what sort of conduct is right or wrong except by reference to its probable consequence. Given an end to be achieved, it is a question for science to discover how to achieve. All moral rules must be tested by examining whether they tend to realize ends that we desire. I say ends that we desire, not ends that we ought to desire. What we 'ought' to desire is merely what someone else wishes us to desire."⁶

2. Another wrote "that what makes actions right is that they are productive of more good than could have been produced by any other action open to the agent."

D. Utilitarianism says no.

1. Utilitarianism means "the ethical theory, that the conduct, under any given circumstances, is objectively right, is that which will produce the greatest amount of happiness on the whole; that is, taking into account all whose happiness is affected by the conduct."⁷

E. Pragmatism says no.

1. Pragmatism judges a theory on the basis of whether or not it serves a successful way of dealing with the problem at hand. . . that the only reason "people have for calling one view true, and another false, is in relation to how the view works in human experience, never in relation to some absolute standards independent of all human experience."⁸

F. The New Morality says no.

1. "The New Moralist does not accept at all the notion that there are moral standards which are revealed by God. He does not believe God laid down laws which are for all men, at all times, under all conditions. He is, therefore, a relativist."⁹

G. The Materialist says no.

1. He believes that as man changes, so must laws and definitions. "As man's knowledge takes on new dimension, hardly any human concept or value will remain sacrosanct. Health and disease, youth and age, male and female, good and evil--all these will take on transformed meaning. Life and death will have to be redefined. Family relationship will be quite different. Even individual identities may be hard to ascertain."

H. Liberalism says no for it is "that attitude which challenges and denies the absolute authority of the Word of God and causes men to set aside God's will in favor of their own subjective speculations and desires in religion."¹⁰

II. IF THERE IS NOT AN ABSOLUTE STANDARD OF MORALITY, WHAT THEN? # 2

A. First, the "new morality" which says that "the Bible and the traditional concept of a personal God is for a pastoral society, is old fashioned and is wholly unfit for man in the modern space age. Rules of conduct based upon the Bible are outmoded and produce unnecessary sense of guilt. Man should free himself from all restraints except 'love' and look upon himself rather than unto a heavenly being for his salvation."¹¹

B. Second, an acceptance of the basic principles and foundation stones of the new morality remove God and degrade man.

1. The first one is its attitude toward God. 19th century modernists developed a new theology which sought to do away with God and supernatural while holding on to the moral teaching of the Bible. God to them is just another name that referred to their own being.
2. The second principle was a change in attitude about man. A new idea based upon the theory of evolution developed. Since God was not then man could not be created in his image, but was nothing more than a highly developed animal.
3. The third foundation stone of "the new morality was a change in attitude toward the scriptures."
 - a. It denies there are moral laws given by God who does not exist.
 - b. "There are no Christian standards that always are valid."
 - c. The philosophy is well expressed in the statement that "a universally binding moral law is legalistically blind to the concrete, peculiar needs of a particular person in a particular situation. Love becomes blind obedience to a moral code."¹²

C. Third, lawlessness always increases.

1. When our country was founded men generally believed in God and His word and the civil statutes reflected the Biblical standard, ~~but~~ today our society no longer shares these basic concepts of God.

2. "The authority of God has been denied, even when His existence has not been scoffed at and the doctrine of moral relativity has left many people without belief in moral law. Law under such conditions is but the expression of the will of man and individuals are deciding that, if man's will is supreme, they will make their own will supreme."¹³
3. The late J. Edgar Hoover, in speaking of young criminals, wrote: "Meanwhile, the question puzzling most people is what caused the principles and morals of some of our youth to degenerate to near animal level. Recognizing the problem comes much easier than its solution. However, of all the factors involved, I am convinced one of the most damaging is the false teaching which tends to blame society for all the frustrations, woes, and inconveniences, real or imaginary, visited upon our young people. Teenagers, and their parents, have been subjected to a fool-hardy theory which condones rebellious conduct against authority, law and order, or any regulatory measures which restrict their whims, wishes, desires, and activities. This astonishing belief has spread into the schoolroom, the living room, the courtroom, and now into the streets of our Nation in the form of wild, drunken brawls.

"No doubt, society has failed our youth, but not in the way many seem to think. Rather, the dereliction has been in the failure to teach them the meaning of discipline, restraint, self-respect, and respect for law and order and the rights of others. Consequently, the lesson now is both painful and costly."¹⁴

4. In the days of Hosea when the people rejected a standard lawlessness prevailed. Hosea 4:1,2

D. Immorality and promiscuity abound.

1. Man always becomes morally corrupt when he has no standard.
 - a. the book of Judges will illustrate this truth when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (Judges 21:25) *This.*
 - b. Paul's description of the Gentile world *(Rom. 1:24-25) write*
2. ~~Bertrand Russell said "outside human desires there is no moral standard."~~
~~A thing is right if it is desired.~~

III. IF THERE IS AN ABSOLUTE STANDARD OF MORALITY, WHAT IS IT? #3

- A. First, we must accept the Bible as the standard of right and wrong. ". . . the Bible has absolute authority over the lives of men and constitutes an absolute standard of morality. . . Right and wrong are determined in relation to the will of God. Those things which are condemned in Scripture as sinful are wrong at all times and under all circumstances."¹⁵
 1. It has all the authority of heaven and earth behind it. Mt. 28:18; Jn. 16:13; Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8
 2. It is complete. II Tim. 3:16,17; II Pet. 1:3; Jude 3
- B. Second, absolute authority is basic to any activity of life.
 1. The federal government has established a Bureau of Standards to guarantee a uniformity of weights and measures.
 2. In athletic contests there are absolute rules that determine the game.
 3. In like manner if men would be accurate and united in religion there must be a common standard. "That standard must be absolute, final and totally trustworthy."
- C. Third, God has definitely spoken to man about sin:
 1. God tells man what sin is.
 - a. Sin means to deviate (veer) away from that which is right; to miss the mark; to violate the divine law by actual transgression or by neglect.
 - b. Negatively, sin is unrighteousness.
 - (1) All God's commands are righteousness. Psalms 119:172

- (2) A failure to keep God's commands is sin. Jas. 4:17
- (3) This we class as sin of omission.
- c. Positively sin is lawlessness and lawlessness is sin. I Jn. 3:4
- 2. God tells man the nature of sin.
 - a. It is deceitful. Heb. 3:13
 - b. It is enticing. Jas. 1:12-15
 - c. It is pleasant. Heb. 11:23-25
 - d. It grows as it is followed. II Tim. 3:13
- 3. God tells man the results of sin.
 - a. Man dies physically. Rom. 5:12
 - b. Man dies spiritually. Eph. 2:1
 - c. Man is separated from God
 - (1) On earth. Isa. 59:1,2
 - (2) In Hades. Lk. 16:26
 - (3) In eternity. Mt. 25:46
- 4. God tells man what sin will do to him,
 - a. It will enslave him. Rom. 6:16; II Pet. 2:19
 - b. It will scar his soul. Cf. David, Paul, Peter
- D. Fourth, God definitely tells man he will be lost eternally if he practices the works of the flesh. Gal. 5:19-21; I Cor. 6:9-11
- E. Fifth, God's word contains some very definite teaching against immorality. I Cor. 6:13-20
 - 1. The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord. v. 13
 - 2. The body will be raised to eternal glory. v. 14
 - 3. Our body is a member of Christ, therefore must not be joined to a harlot in fornication. v. 15-17
 - 4. The man that commits fornication sins against his own body. v. 18
 - 5. Our body: v. 19,20
 - a. Is the temple of the Holy Spirit
 - b. Is not our own.
 - (1) We have been bought with a price.
 - (2) We ought therefore to glorify God.

CONCLUSION:

1. Man must accept God's word as the absolute moral standard or he has no guidance at all. We must both preach and practice the old morality which is the manner of life required by the Lord of the new man in Christ.
2. We must heed the warnings about false teachers bringing in destructive doctrines. II Pet. 2:1,19; II Tim. 4:1-4; I Jn. 4:1

FOOTNOTES

1. James D. Bales, Man On All Fours, Searcy; Harding College, 1973.
2. Ibid, p. 60.
3. Philosophy In Revolution, New York: International Publishers, 1957, p. 131.
4. Bales, Ibid, p. 60.
5. Ibid, p. 59.
6. Bertrand Russell, What I Believe, p. 37.
7. Baruch A. Brady, Edit., Moral Rules and Particular Circumstances, "Utilitarian Morality", Henry Sidquich, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New Jersey.
8. Roy Deaver, "Liberalism and Two Basic Philosophies", Gospel Advocate, Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., Feb. 10, 1973, p. 91.
9. Earnest Howard, A Church Without God.
10. ^{Rufel} ~~Shelly~~ Shelly, Liberalism's Threat To The Faith, Memphis: Simple Studies Publishing Co., 1972, p. 4
11. Clifton Ganus, Abilene Christian College Lectures, 1966, pp. 255-56.
12. "Love Without Law", Christianity Today, Oct. 8, 1965.
13. Bales, Ibid, p. 66.
14. Bales, FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, Sept. 1965, p. 1
15. ~~Shelly~~, ~~Shelly~~, p.8.
Shelly

FOOTNOTES

- Absolute
Standards of
Morality*
1. James D. Bales, Man On All Fours, Searcy; Harding College, 1973.
 2. Ibid., p. 60.
 3. Philosophy in Revolution, New York: International Publishers, 1957, p. 131.
 4. Bales, Ibid., p. 60.
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 6. Bertrand Russell, What I Believe, p. 37.
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 14. Bales, FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, Sept. 1965, p. 1.
 15. Shelly, Ibid., p. 8.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS UNDER GOD OR
THE ERA IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S WORD

INTRODUCTION

1. One of the most powerful national movements today is called "The Women's Lib". More than 75% of the women of this country do not support this movement and there are many divisions within the movement itself.

a. The movement began in 1966 with the founding of the National Organization of Women.

b. In 1963 Betty Friedan published the Feminine Mystique, a tract which argued "that women lose their identity by submerging themselves in world of house, spouse, and children."

2. The "Women's Liberation" movement is determined to abolish all distinctions between men and women. Dr. Harold Voth delivered a speech "The Family and the Future of America", before the National Defense Luncheon, Washington, D. C., April 17, 1978, and made the following observations on this point:

a. "A systematic search being made in order to purge all 'sexist' phraseology - that is reference to male or female - from all government regulations and guidelines." (Harold Voth, M. D.)

b. Senator S. I. Hayakawa says the U. S. Civil Rights Commission is prying into the private business of book publishing in order to eliminate from all textbooks what it labels 'sex bias', that is words or pictures that assume differences between males and females or show them in traditional roles such as mothering."

c. "It is my deep concern and firm prediction that the Equal Rights Amendment, if ratified, within a short time, every aspect of our way of life which is structural on sexual differences, be it physical or psychological, would be held to be unconstitutional."

3. You may wonder what all this has to do with religion and why even discuss it in a sermon. Two of the main targets of this movement have been the Bible and the church (they mean any church).

a. The inspired author Proverbs has been called a "male Chauvinist".

b. The apostle Paul has been called a "woman-hater."

c. They believe the Bible is in a large measure responsible for their repression, that it is designed to keep women down to a second-class citizenship, not only in the world, but in the kingdom of God as well.

d. "We will be silent no longer! Christianity and the Bible have been male-dominated and male-favored too long! We insist on full and equal participation with men in all levels of church decision making power."

4. At this point, the cry is often made "this is a political issue and church has no business in this field." It is a moral issue as well as a political issue.

5. It shall be our purpose in this study to observe what the Bible says about women and their rights, some of the implications of the ERA amendment, and the rights women will lose.

3. The Bible makes it very clear that laws are to protect women from rape and abuse. Deut. 22.

4. The Bible makes it very clear that men are not to look upon women as mere sex objects. Matt. 5:27,28

E. Fifth, a woman has the right to enjoy the protection of her husband (and all men) because she is the weaker vessel.

1. The Bible clearly shows that the woman is the weaker vessel. I Pet. 3:7
2. Women liberationists don't like this idea and are doing everything they can do to change it. In fact, they think that God made a mistake and that men and women are the same.
3. "The underpinnings of personality are biologic underpinnings. None are more fundamental than the biologic imperatives which lead to the psychologic qualities of maleness and femaleness. There are, of course, an array of other potentialities. One of the most fundamental functions of parenting is to evoke, develop, and reinforce gender identity and then proceed to shepherd the developing child in such a way as to bring his psychological side into harmony with his biological side and thereby develop a solid sense of maleness and femaleness.

The quality of maleness and femaleness is intimately woven into the overall fabric of personality. Human beings are not biologically bisexual, despite what the gay liberationists would have believe. The human spirit is greatly impaired when childhood development does not lead to fully developed masculinity or femininity. Fully masculine men and feminine women are by definition mature, and that term implies the ability to live out one's abilities. These include the capacity to mate, live in harmony with a member of the opposite sex, and carry out the responsibilities of parenthood. Mature people are competent and masterful; not only can they make families but they can take hold of life generally and advance it, and in particular they can replace themselves with healthy children who become healthy men and women. Mature individuals can, of course, elect to not have children and deploy all of their energies into their work. The fate of mankind depends on the durability of the heterosexual relationship, and the stability and integrity of the family.

F. Sixth, a woman has the right to expect a husband to provide for his family. I Tim. 5:8

G. Seventh, a woman has the right to be in subjection to her husband. Eph. 5:22-24

H. Eighth, a woman has the right to know that God and his laws show no respect of persons of sexes. Rom. 2:11

I. Ninth, a woman can enjoy the same blessings and privileges in Christ as can a man. Gal. 3:28,29

J. There are many rights which God gives to a woman over a man and which the laws of the land now recognize, but the effort is underway which will take away many of these rights.

II. THE ERA AMENDMENT WILL TAKE AWAY NEARLY ALL OF THE GODGIVEN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

A. What is the ERA?

1. Section I: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the U. S. or by any state on account of sex."

3. There are 42 members of the Committee.

a. 41 of them hold the feminist philosophy and one is opposed.

b. Bella Abzug was chairman of the committee.

(1) She sponsored the first bill in Congress to give "civil rights to homosexuals.

(2) At the time she was congresswoman she sponsored the bill and promised Congress that the money would be used to "afford an opportunity for every kind of women, representing every viewpoint, in every state of this nation to make a statement of her concern" (in Congressional debate, December 1975). This sounds good, and evidently Congress believe her; but the intent of Congress has been ignored and thwarted (see Sen. Helm's report: "What Happened to Congressional Intent?" (Congressional Record, July 1, 1977, p. S11474)."

(3) Congress authorized 5 million dollars for State and National Conferences (IWY conferences)

c. Gloria Steinam, another member, and editor of Ms. Magazine openly proclaims her intent:

(1) "Overthrowing capitalism is too small for us. We must overthrow the whole (blank) patriarchy!" (Michigan Free Press, April 15, 1974).
(Note: "Patriarchy" is the feminist term for the traditional family concept.

(2) At a Houston meeting she said: "For the sake of those who wish to live in equal partnership, we have to abolish and reform the institutional of marriage."

(3) In the Saturday Review of Education, March 1973, Ms. Steinam stated: "By the year 2000 we will, I Hope, raise our children to believe in human potential, not God."

d.

Jean O'Leary, Co-executive Director of National Gay Task Force, is an avowed lesbian. In an article entitled "Struggle to End Sex Bias - Report On Sex Bias in the Public Schools," she issued the following recommendation: 'School counselors should be required to take courses in which ... a positive view of lesbianism is presented.... Students.... encouraged to explore alternate life styles, including lesbianism. Schools... set up lesbian studies... lesbian clubs.' (Published by the N.Y. Chapter of National Organization for Women).

4. What are some of the plans and commitments of the IWY Organization?

a. to provide a report to the President which he must submit to Congress, supposed to give "the consensus of women's concerns" - show what U. S. women want - and furnish a blueprint of future legislation.

(1) "A resolution advocating ratification of the ERA to enforce and advance equality for women in such areas as pay and jobs.

(2) "A 'reproductive' freedom resolution asking that government funds be available on demand.

(3) "A resolution calling for federally funded, twenty-four child care development centers. (The October issue of Public Interest predicted costs of programs requested by child-care activists could reach \$25 billion annually.)

(4) "A 'sexual preference' act calling for full legal rights for homosexuals and lesbians. (This would include legalization of homosexual marriages, child custody rights for homosexuals, and freedom to teach homosexuality as an alternative life-style in the schools.)" (Christian Today, December 30, 1977, 434)

E. Information based upon "The Yale Law Journal, Vol. 80, No. 5, April, 1971 by ERA proponent Professor Thomas I. Emerson, Senators Birch Bayh and Marlow Cook, Congresswoman Martha Griffiths, and Congressman Don Edwards, the leaders for the Equal Rights Amendment have all relied heavily on Prof. Emerson's explanation and have highly praised it as an accurate account of the purposes and effects of ERA; Harvard Civil Liberties Review, Vol. 6, No. 2, March 1971, and Analysis of ERA by Prof. Paul A. Freund, who opposes it as a result of study spanning more than 25 years; the Library of Congressional Research Bulletin, No. HQ 1428, U. S. D. which includes the Congressional Record of March 21 and 22, 1972, Senate debate on ERA, the following horrendous implications (which even the proponents of ERA admit) are true:

1. ERA will invalidate all state laws which make the husband primarily responsible to support his wife and children, because every wife and mother will lose her right to support from her husband unless she has pre-school children and even then if child care centers are available.

2. ERA will make every wife in the U. S. legally responsible to provide 50% of the financial support of her family.... It will invalidate all laws which require the husband to support his family and will make the wife equally responsible for support. The woman can be forced to supply half the family support, or all of it, if she is a better wage earner.

3. ERA will make women subject to the draft and for combat duty equally with men. (Read from *Speech of Sen. Birch Bayh, leading proponent of ERA*) "Record by Senator Birch Bayh, leading proponent of ERA." (pp. 944, 945, Yale Law Journal, which was inserted in the Congressional Record of March 21 and 22, 1972, Senate debate on ERA, the following horrendous implications (which even the proponents of ERA admit) are true:

a. The "Equal Rights Amendment will have a substantial and pervasive impact on military practices and institutions. As now formulated, the Amendment permits no exceptions for the military."
b. "Women will serve in all kinds of units, and they will be eligible for combat duty. The double standard for treatment of sexual activity of men and women will be prohibited." (p. 978)

4. ERA will wipe out criminal laws which protect only women from rape and sex crimes. The ERA will abolish "seduction laws, statutory rape laws, laws prohibiting obscene language in the presence of women, prostitution and 'manifest danger' laws" and all laws against forcing women into prostitution. (Yale Law Journal, pp. 954, 964)

- 8. ERA means there will be no difference in roles of men and women within the family on the basis of sex. "The current trend is to consider men and women interchangeable in a vocational sense and even within the family. We are told that men can be mothers while women assume the role of bread winner." (Dr. Harold Voth)
 - 9. ERA means a woman need not take her husband's last name. He can take hers or they can agree on a third.
 - 10. ERA prohibits the state from requiring a child's name be the same as his or her father's or that it remain the same as his or her mother's.
 - 11. ERA would prohibit laws about which parent was the proper parent based on sex (90% of children now go to mother.)
12. ERA would give the Fed. Gov. the power to force
change to certain women & admit them to command.
(Read from certain pages 7 & 8)
- A. Despite posted claims that most women in America want ERA, polls show to the contrary. In fact, while the Houston National IWMY Meeting was going on, some 20,000 to 50,000 women were meeting at the Houston Astrodome making their own resolutions.
- B. Most women agree with Elsie Thorpe, May, 1972, in Reader's Digest: "If they don't stop their commotions, their rumbuling of discontent and pleas for equality, we might end up getting what they are asking for. And who wants equality when we women are doing so much better now? Biologically, legally, temperamentally, and just about every way that matters, we women are the favored sex."