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The Need For A Mother Church

By Ronnie Wolfe

We will consider this topic in four sections with the following titles: **A Church Enclosed, A Church Fragmented, A Church Estranged, A Church Extended.**

A Church Enclosed

"A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse" (S of S 4:12).

The Lord's church is a distinct and separate organization from any other on the earth. The local church is not simply a fraction or a part of a larger and similar organization. She is loved by God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. God purchased the church (local concept) with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Jesus Christ delegated authority to His church (Mt. 28:18-20). The Holy Spirit approved the church (local concept) on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:5; 2:1-3).

As we think of the church's being a distinct organization unlike any other in the world, let us consider briefly her authority by example.

Example #1: In Acts chapter 6 we read of a problem arising in the church regarding the "daily ministration." The church exercised her distinct authority in doing this. Being members of this church, they voted in agreement to select

these seven men.

Proposition #1: What if ten of the members of this church met somewhere away from the regular meeting place and voted to do something about the problem of the "daily ministration"? Would their agreement together or their vote determine what was or what was not to be done in regard to this "daily ministration"? The answer is no!

Example #2: In Acts chapter 15 we read of the disagreement that came to the churches over circumcision and the Mosaic Law. When the meeting took place, an agreement was made that is recorded in verse 20. In verse 22 we find that it pleased the apostles, the elders, with the whole church.

Proposition #2: If there were some in the church who met on their own and came to some conclusions concerning circumcision, would it have any validity in the "inclosed" church? The answer is no. In fact, the sect of the Pharisees (verse 5) did just that; but when it was considered in the context of the church, their decision was refused. Notice also that the persuasion of this "sect" was not even considered by the local church until their influence had caused confusion within the local church.

So, in saying that the church is "inclosed" this writer is advocating that each church of the Lord Jesus is completely independent of all other organizations and that no decisions pertaining to the work of God through the churches can be made outside this local establishment.

Keep this in mind as we consider the next point, which naturally follows:

A Church Fragmented

"That there should be no schism" (1 Cor. 12:25).

This very sect mentioned under our first point (the sect of the Pharisees, Acts 15:5) show their true form in this chapter. First, we must notice that they were believers. These were not lost sinners who were trying to penetrate the church, but this "sect" formed right within the church itself.

They had formed their own clique and had formed their own sub-theology. They were not teaching works for salvation; they were simply putting the burden of the Law on Christian believers.

The most important aspect of this example, though, is that this sub-set of believers had separated themselves from the

church and had taken authority upon themselves to carry on the business of the Lord's church. Acts 15:24 tells us that they "went out from us." This is the perfect example of a small group of believers in a particular church who decide arbitrarily to meet in a different location and appoint themselves to be a body and take upon themselves the authority to select a pastor and deacons and to serve the ordinances; namely, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

This is done on a regular and ongoing basis in Baptist churches around the country. What is wrong with this? Let us consider it by example.

EXAMPLE: Bro. and Mrs. Swakley are saved through the ministry of the Shawnee Baptist Church. They both submit themselves to baptism under the authority of this church. After baptism, they are members in good standing with the privilege of participating in various aspects of that church's ministries and activities. They may now vote on issues brought up by that church. They may be served the Lord's Supper by that church and may partake of the same on a regular basis as long as they are members in

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The Book of Revelation -- Message #26**The Church of Philadelphia**

By M. L. Moser, Editor

[This message on “*The Church of Philadelphia*” was preached June 18, 1979 and is being printed “as preached,” and is one of a series of 113 messages on the Book of Revelation preached at the Central Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas over a period of two years, 1979-1981. It is our hope to complete transcribing all of them and to print them in the form of a verse-by-verse commentary. For those who might be interested, tapes of these messages are available from the editor.]

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can

shut it: for thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” — Rev. 3:7-13

This morning we want to

look at the church of Philadelphia. We have been studying these various churches and we’re reaching church number six this morning. As we have pointed out to you, each of these churches has more than one representation. The letter itself is written to a specific church located in a specific location, and deals with specific problems that were being confronted by that church then. In addition, each of these churches also is typical, or representative, of “kinds” of churches that were in existence at that time. All seven of these churches were in existence then, and each of these seven represents a classification or a kind of church that was on the earth at that time.

There is a third representation, and that is that each church, beginning with the church in Ephesus and ending with the church in Laodicea, represent a period of church history. The church at Ephesus represents the majority of churches that were present on the earth during that time. There would be some of all seven, but the majority of them would be like the church at Ephesus. The same is true concerning the church at Laodicea. It represents the church of the last days, the churches immediately preceding the Second Coming of the Lord. The majority of the churches on the earth then will be similar or like the church of Laodicea. There will be some like all seven of them, but the majority will be like the church of Laodicea in the last days.

Now the Philadelphia church represents the most evangelistic and the most missionary time of church history, and this is represented by the years around 1750 to 1900. In other words, the period after the Reformation Period, the time when we see that missionaries seemingly just “over night” were scattered all over the world,

and we find great missionary work being conducted in areas of the world where man had never gone with the gospel. This is the Philadelphia church age. So we are going to be looking at that this morning. We will only cover about half of our message this morning. Tonight we will cover the second portion. I hope to finish it up with just two messages. However, you will recall that on the church of Thyatira, I believe that we had five messages on that. Of course, when you’re dealing with Jezebel you always have to take a little more time.

The church of Philadelphia, is not the Philadelphia located in Pennsylvania. This Philadelphia is located in the same general area of the Middle East where we found these other churches. Philadelphia is located about 28 miles southeast of Sardis. We’re just about to make a complete circle as we follow the trade routes among these seven churches.

Now this city of Philadelphia has the longest history and it seemingly was the most prosperous of all of these seven cities. The city itself was built by Tiberius Caesar following a great earthquake in A.D. 17, and the chief opposition to this church in the city of Philadelphia came from the Jews. Though they had many enemies, and though there were many adversaries there, yet the Lord says that no man could shut the door that God opened, and so we see that they were not able to quiet the witness of this church.

I think most of us know here in the United States, that the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is termed “the city of brotherly love.” That is what the Greek word means. The name comes from two Greek words, one “*philos*” meaning “love” and “*adelphos*” meaning “brother”.

(See **CHURCH** on page 18)**THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE**

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How Old Are The Baptists?

By M. L. Moser, Editor

A few years ago in the *Texas Baptist Standard*, official paper of the Texas Baptist State Convention, there was some discussion concerning the origin of Baptist churches. The editor, Bro. E. S. James in answering some of the letters written to him in the "Letters to the Editor" section made the following statements"

"Students have been trying for centuries to find the exact time when Baptist began to be, and they have come up with multitudes of answers. Not all their history is recorded, and many of us believe Baptists in principle have been on earth ever since Jesus established the first church. Nevertheless, those of us who want documentation are compelled to acknowledge that there is no proof of a Baptist church by name prior to 1609 when one was organized in Holland."

In another answer to a gentleman from Paris, Texas he says: "Landmark Baptists do not have a monopoly on the belief that there has been a true body of Christians in every generation since our Lord was here.

Graves and his followers have held that Baptist churches have existed since the apostolic days, but that cannot be proved by history. Various Anabaptist groups held many things in common with modern Baptists, and we can claim a kinship with them. Nevertheless, we have no right to say they were Baptists. The first Baptist church of record was organized in 1609, but throughout Christian history there were people who closely resembled them."

Now whether Bro. James realizes it or not, and I'm sure he did, this puts him against some of the greatest Baptist historians of the Southern Baptist Convention. Men such as John T. Christian, author of "**The History of the Baptists**" have proven from history that there have been Baptist churches throughout all the centuries since the day of Christ to the present time. Mr. Christian himself says:

"I have no question in my mind that there has been a historical succession of Baptists from the days of Christ to the present time" (**A History of Bap-**

tists, pg. 5). Not only does he prove it, but he uses those who were not Baptists as his proof, citing chapter and verse for every quotation. Many of these quotations are quoted in the Appendix of the Book "**Baptist Doctrine In One Year**" which I compiled while printing the book. (Available from **The Baptist Challenge**.) John T. Christian himself was one of the most respected scholars in America and the world and taught on the faculty of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (then known as the Baptist Bible Institute) until his death. He was a member of the Society of Christian Archaeology of Greece, Academy of History of France, Academy of Science, Arts and Belles Letters of the Mediterranean, American Society of History, New Orleans Academy of Sciences, Baptist Historical Society as well as at that time the only living American member of the World Greek Historical Society. Certainly he has the background that shows how thorough a historian he was.

The following list of quotations show that Baptist churches have a history dating back to the first church organized in Jerusalem by the Lord Jesus Christ. Before one rejects the scriptural teaching of church perpetuity, one should take into consideration these quotations from men who were historians, many of them the enemies of Baptists.

Roman Catholics

Cardinal Hosius, Roman Catholic, the president of the Council of Trent. "If the truth of religion were to be judged by the readiness and boldness of which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinion and persuasion of no sect can be truer and surer than that of the

Anabaptists (an earlier name for Baptists - see Edinburg Cyclopedia quotation further on in this article) since there have been none for these *twelve hundred years past*, that have been more generally punished or that have more cheerfully and steadfastly undergone, and even offered themselves to the most cruel sorts of punishment than these people (Hosius, Letters **Apud Opera**, 112-113).

Cardinal Hosius wrote in A.D. 1554 and this dates Baptists back to at least 354 A.D.

Swiss Reformed

Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, co-worker with Luther and Calvin in the Reformation of 1525: "The institution of Anabaptism is no novelty, but for three hundred years has caused great disturbance in the church, and has acquired such strength that the attempt in this age to contend with it appears futile for a time."

Lutheran

Mosheim, Lutheran historian of great note: "Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay secreted in almost all the countries of Europe persons who adhered tenaciously to the principles of modern Dutch Baptists"

Quaker

Robert Barclay says: "We shall afterwards show the rise of the Anabaptists took place prior to the Reformation of the Church of England, and there are also reasons for believing that on the Continent of Eu- (See **BAPTISTS** on page 4)

The First Church

By S. E. Anderson

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BAPTISTS...

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rope small hidden Christian societies, who have held many of the opinions of the Anabaptists, have existed from the times of the apostles. In the sense of the direct transmission of Divine Truth, and the true nature of spiritual religion, it seems probable that these churches have a lineage or succession more ancient than that of the Roman Church (Barclay, **The Inner Life Of the Societies of the Commonwealth**, 11, 12. London, 1876).

Encyclopedia

“**Crossing The Centuries**”, edited by William C. King, having as associate counselors, editors and contributors such as: Cardinal Gibbons, Roman Catholic; Bishop John H. Vincent, Methodist; President Theodore Roosevelt; President Woodrow Wilson; W.H.P. Founce, President of Brown University; Albert Bushnell Hart, Ph.D., L.L.D., Head of the History Department of Harvard University; Geo. B. Adams, M.A., Litt.D., of Yale, and many more such famous men, says:

“Of the Baptists it may be said that they are not Reformers. These people, comprising bodies of Christian believers, known under various names in different countries, are entirely independent of and distinct from the Greek and Roman churches, and *have an unbroken continuity from apostolic days down through the centuries*. Throughout this long period they were bitterly persecuted for heresy, driven from country to country, disfranchised, deprived of their property, imprisoned, tortured and slain by the thousands; yet they swerved not from the New Testament faith, doctrine and practice.”

Methodist

John Clark Ridpath, Methodist author of that monumental work, “**Ridpath’s History of the World**,” in a letter to Dr. W. A. Jarrell (**Baptist Church Perpetuity**, p. 59), says: “I should not readily admit that there were Baptist churches as far back as A.D. 100, although without doubt there were Baptists then, as all Christians were Baptists.” If that be true, then any churches during that time would also be Baptist churches.

Christian Or Church Of Christ

Alexander Campbell, founder of the “Christian” Church or Campbellite, says: “I would engage to show that baptism as viewed and practiced by the Baptists, had its advocates *in every century* of the Christian era ... and independent of whose existence (the German Anabaptists), clouds of witnesses attest the fact, that before the Reformation from popery, and from the apostolic age, to the present time, the sentiments of Baptists, and the practice of baptism have had a continued chain of advocates, and *public monuments of their existence in every century can be produced* (Macalla and Campbell Debate on Baptism, 378, 379, Buffalo, 18240).

Philosopher and Scientists

Sir Isaac Newton, learned English philosopher, student of the Scriptures and of history: “The Baptists are the only body of known Christians that has never symbolized with Rome (Whiston, *Memoirs of*, written by himself, 201)”

PRESBYTERIAN

In the *Edinburg Cyclopaedia*: “*It must have already occurred to our readers that the Baptists are the same sect of Christians that were formerly described as Anabaptists*. Indeed this seems to have been their leading principles from the time of Tertullian to the present time.”

Tertullian was a Montanist. He was born about fifty years after the death of John the Apostle.

Professor of Greek and Latin

Professor William C. Duncan of the Department of Greek and Latin, University of Louisiana: “Baptists do not, as most Protestant denominations, date their origin from the Reformation of 1520. By means of that great movement they were brought out of comparative obscurity into prominent notice. They did not, however, originate with the Reformation; for long before Luther lived; yea, *long before the Catholic Church itself was known, Baptists and Baptist churches flourished in Europe, Asia and Africa*.”

Census Bureau of U.S.

Bureau of Census, United States Department of Commerce: “The Baptist bodies of today trace their origin as distinct communities to the Protestant Reformation. It is claimed, indeed, that the churches of the apostolic age were in doctrine, polity and ordinance the exact counterparts of Baptist churches today.”

Editor of “Church Management”

Edwin A. Lane, Managing Editor of “Church Management”, in an article entitled, “Anabaptists: Forgotten Reformers”, writes: “It is rather

strange that the role of the Anabaptists is all but forgotten, although they played an important part in the Reformation and, according to some church historians, probably had a greater following than the Catholic Church or the Lutheran Reformers.”

Baptist Pastor

Charles H. Spurgeon, eminent Baptist pastor and professor: “History has hitherto been written by our enemies, who never would have kept a single fact about us upon the record if they could have helped it, and yet it leaks out every now and then that certain poor people called Anabaptists were brought up for condemnation. From the days of Henry II to those of Elizabeth we hear of certain unhappy heretics who were hated of all men for the truth’s sake which was in them. We read of poor men and women, with their garments cut short, turned out into the fields to perish in the cold, and anon of others who were burnt at Newington for the crime of Anabaptism.

“Long before our Protestants were known of, those horrible Anabaptists, as they were unjustly called, were protesting for the ‘one Lord, one faith, and one baptism.’ No sooner did the visible church begin to depart from the gospel than these men arose to keep fast by the old way. The priests and monks wished for peace and slumber, but there was always a Baptist or a Lollard tickling men’s ears with Holy Scripture, and calling their attention to the errors of the times. They were a poor persecuted tribe. The halter was thought to be too good for them. At times ill-written history would have us think that they died out, so well had the wolf done his work on the sheep. Yet here we are blessed and multiplied; and

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BAPTISTS...

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Newington sees other scenes Sunday to Sunday. As I think of the multitudes of your numbers and efforts, I can only say in wonder - what a growth! As I think of the multitudes of our brethren in America, I can only say, What hath God wrought! Our history forbids discouragements (Spurgeon's Expository Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, pg. 41).

Dutch Reformed

Dr. Dermont, chaplain to the king of Holland, and Dr. Ypeij, professor of theology at Graningen, a few years since received a royal commission to prepare a history of the Reformed Dutch Church. This history, prepared under royal sanction, and officially published, contains the following manly and generous testimony to the antiquity and orthodoxy of the Dutch Baptists:

"We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and have long in the history of the church received the honor of that origin. On this account, *the Baptists may be considered the only Christian community which has stood since the Apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the Gospel through all ages* (**History. Ref. Dutch Church**, Breda, 1819).

Baptist Historian and Author

Edward T. Hiscox, noted Baptist author says: "Few denominations have better claim to antiquity than have the Welsh Baptists. They trace their descent directly from the Apostles, and urge in favor of their claim which never have

been confuted.

"When Austin, the Romish monk and missionary, visited Wales at the close of the *sixth* century, he found a community of more than 2,000 Christians quietly living in their mountain homes. They were independent of the Roman See, and wholly rejected its authority. Austin labored zealously to convert them -- that is, to bring them under the papal yoke -- but entirely failed in the effort. Yielding things in general, he reduced his demands upon them to three particulars: 1. That they should observe Easter in due form, as ordered by the Church. 2. That they should give Christening or baptism to their children. 3. That they should preach the Word of God to the English, as directed. This demand proves that they neither observed the popish ordinance of Easter, nor baptized infants. They however, rejected all his overtures, whereupon he left them with many threats of war and wretchedness. Not long after Wales was invaded by the Saxons, and many of these inoffensive Christians cruelly put to death, as was believed, at the instigation of this bigoted zealot, the exacting heartless Austin" (**The New Directory for Baptist Church**, pp. 506-507).

Other Baptist Historians

J. B.. Moody: "Church perpetuity is scriptural, reasonable, credible, historical and conclusive" (**My Church**).

Dr. J. L.. Smith: "We have submitted the testimony of more than forty of the world's best historians -- not one of them a Baptist -- who expressly and clearly point out the movement of these Baptist people through the long centuries back to the apostolic days" (**Baptist Law of Continuity**).

J. W.. Porter: "If Baptists have not perpetuity, then Christ's prophecy and promise have failed. This is unthinkable."

H. B. Taylor: "Baptist churches are the only institutions that are divine on this earth. Without them Matthew 16:18 has failed of fulfillment" (**Bible Briefs**).

T. T. Eaton: "Those who oppose Baptist succession have no logical ground to stand on in organizing a church out of material furnished by other churches, and with those baptized by regular ordained ministers.

R. B. Cook: "Baptists are able to trace their distinctive principles to the apostolic age ... When from the union of the church and state Christianity became generally corrupt, there still remained, in obscure places, churches and sects which maintained the pure doctrines and ordinances of Christ, and hence it is certain that these churches and sects held substantially the same principles which are now as the distinctive views of the Baptists" (*Story of the Baptists*).

D. B. Ray: "Baptists have with one voice denied any connection with the Romish apostasy, and claimed their origin as a church from Jesus Christ and the apostles" (**Baptist Succession**).

D. C. Haynes: "The Baptist church is the primitive church -- there had never been a time when it was not in being" (**The Baptist Denomination**, pg. 21-220).

Dr. Geo. Lorimer: "That the Baptists are more likely the oldest, is generally conceded and grows more certain with the progress of scholarly investigation" (**The Baptists In History**, pg. 49).

Dr. Geo. W. McDaniel: "There is no personality this side of Jesus Christ who is a

satisfactory explanation of their origin" (**Churches of the New Testament**).

Editor "Alabama Baptist"

Our own viewpoint is best expressed by Joe T. Odle, former editor of the **Alabama Baptist**, official state paper of the Alabama State Convention. He writes: "Baptist history begins with Christ and the apostles. Other churches must date their origin with men in recent centuries, but Baptist churches had their beginning during the ministry of Jesus when He formed His church out of the material prepared by John the Baptist."

In commenting upon the first church founded by the Lord, he says: "This church was a Baptist church for Baptist churches today are like it in organization, doctrine and practice. It was also organized out of material prepared by the first missionary Baptist preacher, John the Baptist (Jn. 1:6; Mt. 3:1; 3:13-17; Acts 1:22). A church organized out of people baptized by a Baptist preacher must be a Baptist church (1 Cor. 12:28). Furthermore, Baptists alone can trace their teachings and principles back through the ages of Christ."

These above quotations by Odle are from his booklet **Church Member's Handbook, p. 14**.

Where we have given these quotations, there could be many more added to them, but anyone who will not accept the words of these historians would not accept the words of 1,000 more. Regardless of those who deny the perpetuity of Baptists, history confirms that Baptists are the only ones who date back to include the first church organized by our Lord, the Baptist church organized in the city of Jerusalem by our Lord Himself in person. •

MOTHER...

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good standing. They may *not*, however, make personal and private decisions for the church. Whatever decisions are made come before the church for discussion and consideration and are voted upon by the entire membership before any actions are taken.

Now, let us say, that Bro. Swakley moves to a different city and cannot find a Bible-teaching church to attend; so he decides (on his own) that he will get a few believers together and start meeting for prayer and fellowship. After some time and consideration, Bro. and Mrs. Swakley decide that they may as well have a church in that community; so they take the following action: A preacher is called to come to preach to them on a regular basis. The preacher preaches for a while and someone is saved. They determine that the new believer must be baptized, so they decide that the preacher is to do the baptizing. The new convert is immersed in water just the way they used to do at the previous church. Now he is a member of this "church."

At this stage of the drama most people would automatically and without question call this group of people a church. But if we follow through with this example logically, we find that some problems arise. Following are some statements and questions that will, I hope, show the problems.

1. To what church did this couple belong when they were first saved and baptized? Shawnee Baptist Church.

2. By what authority did they perform their privileges in that local church? Local church authority.

3. When they moved away from the community of the Shawnee Baptist Church, where was their membership? It re-

mained at the Shawnee Baptist church.

4. Was there anything wrong with meeting with other believers for prayer and fellowship? Absolutely not!

5. Was it wrong for them to call for a preacher to come and preach to them? Not per se! But a mental attitude is being formed at this time, an attitude of worshiping and functioning as a church.

6. What is now the status of the Swakley's membership at Shawnee Baptist Church? By continuing to be members they remain obligated to the church and are under its authority. Distance does not change that. Names are not removed simply because people move to a different place except for non-attendance, which is done because of lack of faithfulness to the church. That is no way to have your name removed from a church roll.

7. Were they wrong for having the new convert baptized? Yes. Having their membership back at Shawnee Baptist, they usurped the authority of Shawnee Baptist church by asking for the baptism of a new convert on their own.

If they had lived around the corner from the meeting place of Shawnee Baptist Church, would they have taken the same authority upon themselves? Then what makes it all right to do it at a distance? Distance does not change authority.

Do you see what is happening? The same thing that happened in Acts chapter 15. A new "sect" is being organized and is going out "from us."

8. Upon baptizing the new convert the authority for baptism was changed from the church to an individual or a fragment. Making this decision to baptize, whether it be made by one person or a few, is usurping the authority of the

church; because it becomes an arbitrary decision. Now, does the authority for baptism, then, lie in the preacher? Some would say that it does; but if you will notice the above example, the authority is actually wielded by Mr. and Mrs. Swakley.

Mr. & Mrs. Swakley have now decided to vote without consent of the church to which they belong. Remember, distance makes no difference in authority. Mr. and Mrs. Swakley have now fragmented the Shawnee Baptist Church by separating to themselves and claiming authority which they do not have. This is no different from ten of the men of a church meeting outside of the building in the parking lot and making decisions for the church. These ten men have no business deciding who will or will not be baptized, because if their discussion determines that Mr. Back be baptized, they must first bring it up before the church before Mr. Back can be baptized. This is church authority.

If these same ten men decided to carry on church business by themselves and simply stay away from the Shawnee Baptist Church, they are still wrong in these ways:

1. *They are wrong for not attending their church (Heb. 10:25).*

2. *They are wrong for not giving to their church (1 Cor. 16:1).*

3. *They are wrong for not visiting for their church (2 Cor. 5:20).*

You may ask why they cannot simply ask for their names to be removed from the church roll of Shawnee Baptist Church. That can be done, but that is a negative aspect. That is like saying that you no longer agree with the theology or the program of the church and do not want to be like them or a part of them.

Not only that, but if your

name is removed from a roll by request, you are still submitting to the authority of the church and are considered a disciplined member.

Too, if your name were removed from Shawnee Baptist Church by request, to what church would you belong? If you say none, then how do you become a member of another church?

In our example, the person simply places himself in the new church, and others are added according to his agreement; therefore, the first person to begin the work becomes the authority for all the actions of the church. The authority rests completely upon that one person.

You do not become a member of any local church simply by declaring that you are such. We have many people in the Harrison area who claim to be members of First Baptist Church but are not.

So we see how innocently that a church can be fragmented. Christ is against a church schism, and this is what develops under the example given.

A "Church" Estranged

"Certain which went out from us" (Acts 15:24).

When the foregoing example has been developed completely, we find a fine-looking building sitting on the corner of some city somewhere having people attend regularly and being baptized regularly and functioning in the same manner as the Shawnee Baptist Church before mentioned.

But remember that the authority for all this church business comes from one person, the person who got the ball rolling. They will tell you perhaps that the preacher has the

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MOTHER...

(Continued from page 6)

authority to baptize, but you tell me who asked the preacher to come and do the baptizing and I will tell you that it was Mr. and/or Mrs. Swakley. So the authority for baptism, church business, the Lord's Supper, church discipline, etc. came from the Swakleys.

This church, instead of being just another Baptist church on another corner in another city is an estranged church, not a true church at all. At what time did the Shawnee Baptist Church vote to give the Swakleys (members of Shawnee) permission to meet together and carry on business as a church? At no time. They assumed it. They claimed it. Yea, they usurped the authority of their own church, betrayed that church, and estranged themselves from that church just as the "sect" in Acts chapter 15 did.

A Church Extended

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" (Mt. 28:19).

The Bible offers a proper way for extending the church of the Lord Jesus Christ to spread throughout the world with her influence and her gospel. This in modern times is called the "mother church" method. You will not find this phrase in the Scriptures, but the principle is definitely presented by example especially in the book of Acts.

Institutional Authority — A Biblical Principle

Please refer to Deuteronomy chapter 12. This chapter shows an ancient principle that was practiced by Israel from the commandment of God. Notice especially these verses:

Verse 5: "But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your

tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come."

Verse 8: "Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes."

Verse 13: Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest."

This same authority is found in the New Testament beginning with the preaching of John the Baptist and continuing throughout what is commonly called the church age. John was a man "sent from God" (Jn. 1:33). John did not just begin a ministry of his own, but he had God's direct authority.

This authority continues to our present age. The authority of John was given to the church by Christ in Matthew 28:18-20:

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power [authority] is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Jesus And The Apostles Had John's Baptism

Neither Jesus nor any of the apostles did anything regarding the church until they were baptized by John, so John's baptism carried a very powerful authority. Even the Pharisees demanded to know by what authority Christ did the things that He did (Mt. 21:23). Jesus answered the Pharisees with a question: "*The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From hea-*

ven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?" (Mt. 21:25). The Pharisees could not tell Jesus from where the authority of John came. That is because they refused to recognize Heaven's authority (Lk. 7:29-30).

From One Church To Another: The Biblical Pattern

The church at Jerusalem was the first church in existence. When it was found that there were believers in Samaria through Philip's preaching, the church at Jerusalem sent Peter and John; and they laid their hands on the Samaritans, and they received the demonstration of the Holy Spirit [authority] just as the believers in Jerusalem had received. This receiving of the Holy Spirit was God's institutional sanction. This was necessary because the Samaritans thought that God's authority was already upon them (Jn. 4:20).

When Saul of Tarsus was saved he was taken to Damascus. A man by the name of Ananias, who evidently was affiliated with the church at Jerusalem (Vs. 13), was sent (Vs. 17) to Saul that he might pray for him and that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. So, even Paul's ministry was sanctioned by the church at Jerusalem. He was not an authority of himself.

When Paul and Silas were to begin their first missionary journey, they were sent out by the church at Antioch; and when they returned from their missionary journey, they reported to the church at Antioch. That is because they were not a ministry unto themselves, but their ministry was through the local church. Paul teaches us in Ephesians 3:21 that God receives glory only through the church.

So down through the ages a continual line of authoritative baptisms has existed even unto our day.

If a person, then, begins a ministry without the express authority of an existing church of the Lord Jesus Christ, then he is a ministry to himself and has divided the church of the Lord and caused a schism, which the Lord hates. He has become a "denomination" of his own, and his ministry is not approved of God. He has taken authority unto himself despite the pattern that God has laid down in Scripture over and over.

May God bless us as we spread the gospel by way of the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. He promised that no matter how long the world stands, the gates of Hell will not prevail against the church of the Lord. So the authority of God continues throughout history from the time of Christ. Every spiritual worker should be very careful to be sure that this authority is taken with responsibility in order not to usurp the authority of Christ's churches (Eph. 3:21).•

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By Walter Wilson

This book is a study of the book of Ephesians. There are twelve main topics revealed: The Father, Christ, The Holy Spirit, The Christian, The Church, Satan, The World, The Flesh, Victory, The Scriptures, Service and Prayer. Order from:

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We shall be happy to list the dates of fellowship meetings of independent Baptist churches throughout the country. Please send the dates far enough in advance.

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The Evils of Adventism

By Roy Mason

Many people suppose that Seventh Day Adventism is a relatively sound system of doctrine — just a little bit off concerning the Sabbath. Such a notion is untrue for it greatly minimizes the error of this system. The truth is the Sabbath error is *about the least of its errors*. Let us ask then,

What Are Some Of The Errors Of Adventism?

1. Adventism had a wrong founder. That founder like Christian Science and Theosophy, was a hysterical neurotic woman. William Miller originated the first adventist group. He declared that the Lord would return in 1844. When he did not return, he confessed his mistake. Mrs. White took up where he left off, and eventually outlined a whole system of doctrine. She had visions and revelations, which even some Adventists physicians (we

have their names and statements) admitted were the products of her diseased mental condition.

2. Adventism makes the Devil to be the real sin-bearer and Savior. The scapegoat type of the Old Testament — plainly the type of Christ, is made to typify Satan by the Adventists. Mrs. White says: ("The Great Controversy") "The scapegoat typified Satan the author of sin, upon whom the sins of the truly penitent will finally be placed." But contrary to this is the statement, "Who his own self, bare our sins in his own body upon the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24).

3. Adventism teaches that the Lord Jesus inherited a sinful, fallen nature. Lest this be denied, we quote from their writings. (Bible Readings For The Home Circle, page 115, 1915 Edition) "In His hu-

(See SDA on page 21)

Avoiding The Snare of Seventh Day Adventism

By David W. Cloud

"This study is designed to be used as a syllabus for Bible classes, as well as a book to be read for personal profit. An attempt has been made to break down the Seventh-day Adventist heresies and the Bible refutations in a clear, orderly manner to be easily used in Bible classes." This is the best book available today. Challenge Press is pleased to offer this book. Order from:

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Analysis of Alleged Problems Passages In The Bible

By Thomas Strouse

On Saturday, October 23, 1993, Dr. Strouse spoke at the Trinitarian Bible Society's 25th Anniversary Conference and Annual Meeting in Toronto, Canada. He addressed an audience of about 350 with the message entitled "An Analysis of Alleged Problem Passages in the Bible." This was a defense of the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew OT and the textus receptus of the NT. The following are some excerpts from Dr. Strouse's presentation which may be obtained for \$4.00 from Tabernacle Baptist Theological Seminary, 717 N. Whitehurst Landing Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23464

A. The Definition of Inerrancy: The Scripture is entirely without error, including statements regarding history, science, morals, and doctrine, and the data of the Bible are exact and accurate."

B. Biblical Support for this theological definition:

1. "The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" (Psm. 12:6).

2. "Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book" (Jer. 36:4).

3. "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. 2:13).

4. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16).

5. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man:

but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21).

C. Current Views On Inerrancy:

1. *Full Errancy:* the Bible is a product of errant, human thinking.

2. *Limited Inerrancy:* the Bible is inerrant in salvation passages but errant in historical and scientific areas.

3. *Full Inerrancy:* the Bible is without errors, but scientific and historic passages are phenomenal but not necessarily exact.

4. *Absolute Inerrancy:* the Bible is without error in all areas and is exact, as well as accurate.

D. The Real Issue With Errancy:

1. The teaching of errancy in the Bible is an attack upon God's character — *He is not deceitful!*

2. The teaching of errancy in the Bible is an attack upon God's nature — *He is not imperfect.*

3. The teaching of errancy in the Bible is an attack upon God's power — *He is not limited!*

E. Principles In Dealing With Problem Passages:

1. Realize many apparent problems are the result of trying to harmonize different events, or different occasions, or different people.

2. Be persuaded that all apparent problems are just that — *apparent*, and not real.

3. Be cognizant that we are removed from the author's original meaning by at least 2000 years, and we are in a different culture and in a different land.

4. Understand that many alleged problems in the Bible

The Wall of Separation Between Church And State How High Should The Wall Be?

By Haven B. Gow

An article in the September 1993 issue of **Kappan** observed: "In a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court held that the establishment clause does not prevent school districts from furnishing students at sectarian schools with services related to the students' disabilities... Last year, in **Lee v. Weisman**, a tenuous majority, basing its decision on a control/coercion test, ruled against clergy-led invocations are leveled at the Bible by unbelievers.

5. Remember that the Bible is an ancient historical and archaeological record with superior weight over other historical or archaeological records.

6. Reject the liberal idea that there may be copyist errors; if we do not have the original wording extant, then the Lord has not preserved His Word in any manuscript.

7. Be cautious about accepting the fallacious position that the NT writers cited the *LXX* (Septuagint). It is unwise to suggest that any NT writer utilized the *LXX* as an authoritative source for divine revelation instead of the Hebrew OT. The NT writers were bilingual, knowing Hebrew and Greek, and there is no reason to think that the Holy Spirit could not have lead them to interpret the OT Hebrew and to express the new revelation in their own statements. The Lord did not need the uninspired *LXX* to convey His truth when He moved the Apostles to reveal new truth.

8. If the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior, He is your Friend, so give your Friend the benefit of the doubt and accept His inerrant Word rather than His critics' fallacious attacks. •

and benedictions at school graduation exercises. During this term, 10 days before it considered **Zobrest**, the Court interpreted the establishment clause as allowing a church access to school facilities during non-school to exhibit a film for public viewing and religious purposes." The article added: "The five-person majority in **Zobrest** did ignore (past Church-State rulings) in its zeal to lower the wall of separation. But this majority included Justice White, who has announced his retirement. His replacement may well shift the balance back in the direction of repairing or rebuilding the wall of separation."

The fact is, though, that the Founding Fathers — for better or for worse — would have approved recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings lowering the wall of separation between Church and State. As Christian scholars Peter Marshall, David Manuel and Anna Wilson Fishel point out in **From Sea to Shining Sea** (Baker Book House), most of our Founding Fathers "believed in God. And because they knew He loved them, they tried to live the way He wanted them to, being obedient to Him and caring for one another . . . They believed that God had a plan for each one of them, and their job was to find out what it was and then ask His help in doing it. They also believed that He had a plan for all of them together — for America."

Ironically, it was the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, well known for his liberal judicial philosophy, who observed in the 1952 case of

(See **WALL** on page 15)

In Search of the Perfect Church

Once upon a time ... Marge and Sally came face to face in the produce section of their grocery store, as they both reached for the same red-ripe tomato.

Marge stepped back and said, "Oh excuse me. I didn't see you there. You go ahead and take that tomato, and I'll find another."

"Well, I did see it first," snapped Sally. "Besides, I've got to get a salad to the church before noon."

Marge brightened. "You go to church? Me, too. Things have been so exciting lately that I can't wait until Sunday arrives just to see what happens next."

"You're kidding," said Sally. "I wish my church was like

yours. Mine is so dull and boring. I can hardly wait until the last 'Amen' when I can get out the back door."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that," said Marge, as she placed a twist tie on her bag of tomatoes. "I guess we take our church for granted. You see, we have a new pastor, and we're enjoying his sermons so much."

"We have a new pastor, too, I'm sorry to say," said Sally, "but his sermons are dry and much too long. Not only that, but our music is so formal. I just don't know what's gotten into our choir."

"Oh, I love the music in my church," said Marge. "It never fails to inspire me, and it sets the tone for worship for the

whole congregation."

Sally frowned, "I suppose the next thing you're going to say is that you also have a good youth program."

"Well, now that you mention it, we do have an especially good group of young people and an excellent youth worker."

"I envy you," said Sally. "Our teens hardly speak to the rest of us, and our youth worker doesn't seem to take his job very seriously."

"I'm sorry to hear that," said Marge. "I'll be glad to ask my prayer group to pray for your church, if you like."

"Prayer won't help us much," said Sally, as she threw two heads of lettuce into her buggy without even glancing at them. "Besides, I would never share anything so personal with anyone in our prayer group for fear that they would use the information to gossip about me."

"How awful," whispered Marge. "You can say that again!" responded Sally.


Sally wheeled her cart around and started to leave, but then paused. "You know, you look kind of familiar. Do I know you?"

"Well, I was thinking the same thing about you," said Marge. "Do you live in this neighborhood?"

"No," said Sally.

She looked back over her shoulder and said, "Wait! I know where I've seen you."

"Where?" said Marge.

"Church," said Sally grinning sheepishly. "You and I go to the same church." — Maggie Chandler, copied in *The Baptist Trumpet*. 

'Expert-itis'

Among the afflictions of the race today, few, if any, can be more tragic than "Expert-itis."

The Expert is a very ordinary man away from home — usually very ordinary.

"Expert-itis" is born of laziness and bigotry and is worse than the "seven year itch." "Seven year itch" afflicts the body, while "expert-itis" afflicts the mind and the head — and then levies a tribute upon the masses.

"Expert-itis" is a full exemplification of non-sense. The world would indeed be better off if all experts were confined in a mechanized infirmary and there refrigerated with their own egotism, thereby helping their few but fevered brain cells to cool off. The expert has two major qualifications, to-wit: He is long on talk and spending the other fellow's money, and short on old-fashioned horse sense and moderation.

Religion, education, and government is woefully afflicted with "expert-itis" today.

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Baptist Handbook For Church Members

By M. L. Moser, Editor

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The Drift of the Times

SOUND THE ALARM!

By Charles H. Spurgeon

[This article was written in 1888. It is Spurgeon's statement as to why he separated from the compromising London Baptist Association.]

Separation Not Alone Our Privilege But Our Duty

Friends will have noticed with interest the repeated debates in the London Baptist Association, as to whether there should be "A credal basis" and what that basis should be, if it were decided to have one. There seems to be a current opinion that I have been at the bottom of all this controversy, and if I have not appeared in it, I have, at least, pulled the wires. But this is not true. I have taken a deep interest in the struggles of the orthodox brethren; but I have never advised those struggles, nor entertained the slightest hope of their success. My course has been of another kind. As soon as I saw, or thought I saw, that error had become firmly established, I did not deliberate, but quitted the body at once. Since then my one counsel has been, "come [ye] out from among them" (2 Corinthians 6:17). If I have rejoiced in the loyalty to Christ's truth which has been shown in other courses of action, yet I have felt that no protest could be equal to that of distinct separation from known evil.

I never offered to the Union, or to the Association the arrogant bribe of personal return if a creed should be adopted; but

on the contrary. I told the deputation from the Union that I should not return until I had seen how matters went, and I declined to mix up my own personal action with the consideration of a question of vital importance to the community. I never sought from the Association the consideration of "A credal basis," but on the contrary, when offered that my resignation might stand over till such a consideration had taken place, I assured the brethren that what I had done was final, and did not depend upon their action in the matter of creed. The attempt, therefore, to obtain a basis of union in the Association, whatever may be thought of it, should be viewed as a matter altogether apart from me, for so indeed it has been.

Should The Association Be Exclusive or Inclusive?

I may, however, venture to express the opinion that the evangelical brethren in the Association have acted with much kindness, and have shown a strong desire to abide in union with others, if such union could be compassed without the sacrifice of truth. They as good as said — We think there are some few great truths which are essential to the reception of the Christian religion, and we do not think we should be right to associate with those who repudiate those truths. Will you not agree that these truths should be stated, and that it should be known that persons who fail to accept these vital truths cannot join the Association? The points mentioned were certainly elementary enough, and we did not wonder that one of the brethren exclaimed, "May God help those who do not believe these things. Where must they be?" Indeed, little objection was taken to the statements

which were tabulated, but the objection was to a belief in these being made indispensable to membership. It was as though it had been said, "Yes, we believe in the Godhead of Jesus; but we would not keep a man out of our fellowship because he thought our Lord to be a mere man. We believe in the atonement; but if another man rejects it, he must not, therefore, be excluded from our number." Here was the point at issue: one party would gladly fellowship with every person who had been baptized, and the other party desired that at least the elements of the faith should be believed, and the first principles of the Gospel should be professed by those who were admitted into the fellowship of the Association. Since neither party could yield the point in dispute, what remained for them but to separate with as little friction as possible?

Why Should The New Religionists And Believers Wish to be Together?

To this hour, I must confess that I do not understand the action of either side in this dispute, if viewed in the white light of logic. Why should they wish to be together? Those who wish for the illimitable fellowship of men of every shade of belief or doubt would be all the freer for the absence of those stubborn evangelicals who have cost them so many battles. The brethren, on the other hand, who have a doctrinal faith, and prize it, must have learned by this time that whatever terms may be patched up, there is no spiritual oneness between themselves and the new religionists. They must also have felt that the very endeavor to make a contact which will tacitly be understood in two senses is far from being an ennobling and

purifying exercise to either party.

The Brethren In the Middle

The brethren in the middle are the source of this clinging together of discordant elements. These who are for peace at any price, who persuade themselves that there is very little wrong, who care chiefly to maintain existing institutions, these are the good people who induce the weary combatants to repeat the futile attempt at a coalition, which, in the nature of things, must break down. If both sides could be unfaithful to conscience, or if the glorious Gospel could be thrust altogether out of the question, there might be a league of amity established; but as neither of these things can be, there would seem to be no reason for persevering in the attempt to maintain a confederacy for which there is no justification in fact, and from which there can be no worthy result, seeing it does not embody a living truth. A desire for unity is commendable. Blessed are they who can promote it and preserve it! But there are other matters to be considered as well as unity, and sometimes these may even demand the first place. When union becomes a moral impossibility, it may almost drop out of calculation in arranging plans and methods of working. If it is clear as the sun at noonday that no real union can exist it is idle to strive after the impossible, and it is wise to go about other and more practicable business.

Separation A Duty

Numbers of good brethren in different ways remain in fellowship with those who are undermining the Gospel; and they talk of their conduct as though it

(See **DRIFT** on page 16)

Mailing List Being Revised.

We are presently revising the mailing list of *The Baptist Challenge*. We included a letter in the January issue of TBC informing our readers that if they wished to continue receiving TBC they needed to notify us before the end of March else their name will be dropped from our list. We do not charge a subscription price for the magazine, and we are supported wholly by the mission offerings received from churches and individuals, plus the sale of Challenge Press books. Some of you may not know it, but as of January, 1995 our postage rates have increased, and according to *The Mississippi Baptist Record*, 1/19/95 "postal rates have just jumped 23% for nonprofit mailers". The article further stated, "If one item in the 'Contract with America' — now being debated in Congress — is adopted, rates will rise another 22-23%, according to Bob Terry, editor of *Word & Way*, the state Baptist newsjournal of Missouri. Therefore we need to have an increase in our support or decrease the number of subscriptions that we have. Presently we are mailing out nearly 6,000 per month and increasing every month. We appreciate very much the fact that the pastor of a church in Joshua, Texas called and stated that their church has voted to begin supporting *The Baptist Challenge* with \$50 per month. If just a few more churches would help out, we would be able to take care of the postage increase and also increase the size of

The Baptist Challenge to 24 pages. In fact, we are printing 24 pages this month. But, if you want to continue to receive TBC, simply notify us and we will see that your name remains on the mailing list.

* * *

Church-School Conflicts Avoided. At the request of local Southern Baptist leaders, school officials in Crittenden and Livingstone counties in Kentucky agreed not to schedule activities on Wednesday evenings or on Sundays before 2 p.m. or after 5 p.m. Under the agreement, if unavoidable conflicts arise, students who must miss school activities to attend church are not to be punished or reprimanded.

* * *

The World's Worst Persecutors? Who are the world's most severe persecutors of Christians? According to Open Doors, they are Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Sudan, China, Comoro Islands, North Korea, Iran, Egypt, Morocco and Yemen. All except China and North Korea are in the Muslim world. An Assemblies of God pastor charged with trying to convert three Egyptian women to the Christian faith was released Dec. 19 after spending 37 days in prison. Four other Coptic Christians arrested in October and November are still being held in Egypt, according to the International Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity, a London-based institute which monitors Christianity in

Islamic countries.

* * *

Christian Leader Jailed in Morocco. A prominent Baptist from El Salvador was abruptly released Jan. 9 after he was sentenced to a year in a Moroccan jail for sharing his Christian faith. Six days earlier, in a twice-delayed trial, Gilberto Orellana was convicted of "proselytization" and sentenced. Orellana, former conductor of the San Salvador Symphony Orchestra and a member of Miramonte Baptist Church in San Salvador, moved to Morocco in 1992 to teach music at a conservatory. He was arrested during December while meeting with five Moroccans, most or all of whom are Christian believers. Three of the Moroccans were released. The other two were sentenced to eight months in prison; they also reportedly have been freed. "The case of a resident of Morocco being imprisoned for living out his faith, and nationals of a religious minority being harassed and incarcerated, demands a response," said a Christian worker who requested anonymity because of security concerns. Morocco, a heavily Muslim country in North Africa, is known for its anti-Christian repression. Some Christian workers fear anti-Christian actions may increase in North Africa as militant Muslims push their efforts to set up Islam-dominated, Iran-style church states.

* * *

House To House Visitation. An elementary school teacher

spent six months visiting the homes of each of her 600 students to tell them about Christ. Joyce Gleave of Mustang, OK had taught for 23 years. At school she was not permitted to distribute 600 olive wood crosses she had brought back from the Holy Land. So she went to every student's home and gave the souvenir plus a salvation tract. Not one parent made Gleave unwelcome, and "many were moved to tears that I care for their child."

* * *

Another College Closes. The King's College, an interdenominational liberal arts school, closed December 30. Financial problems and a lack of qualified faculty led the State of New York, to order its closing. Enrollment had fallen to 172 students from 862 students in 1980.

* * *

Christian Jurors? Are serious Christians losing their right to serve as jurors? A report in *World* indicates that jurors are often asked detailed and highly personal questions about their religious affiliations and convictions. Trial lawyers asking these questions are "worried that a juror with Bible-based principles might not be friendly to their client if the evidence shows he committed a heinous crime."

* * *

Radical Feminists. Today's radical feminists have come a long way from historical femi-

nism, according to authors Connie Alt and Judy Fetters, writing in *Good News*, that “without exception, all of the early feminists of the last century were opposed to abortion.” In contrast to today’s feminist abortion-on-demand stance, suffrage crusader “Susan B. Anthony called abortion ‘child murder,’ and Elizabeth Cady Stanton declared, ‘When we consider that women are treated as property, it is degrading to women that we should treat our children as property to be disposed of as we wish.’”

* * *

Landlord Rights Upheld.

Massachusetts is giving up its discrimination case against Paul and Louise Deilets, the Catholic couple that refused to rent an apartment to an unmarried couple. The state’s Supreme Court said the Desilets broke the law, but the law also “substantially burdened” their religious freedom.

* * *

Now You Know Why.

As part of its search for a new religion reporter, the *Washington Post* placed notices of the job opening on company bulletin boards, urging employees with an interest in covering religion to contact the editors by Nov. 19. In a line that says much about the coverage of religion in today’s general press, the editors wrote, “the ideal candidate is not necessarily religious nor an expert in religion.”

Gay Politicians Invited To White House.

Elected officials who are homosexual have been invited to the White House. “We want them to give us some indication that yes, they do care about us, that we are an important community, an important part of their constituency,” San Francisco Supervisor Susan Leal, who was asked to put the meeting together, said. The meeting would bring some 30 of the more than 80 gays now holding public office together with administration officials responsible for areas key to gay interests. It’s being planned for late February or early March. President Clinton is expected to show up briefly, although that’s not assured. (*San Francisco Examiner*).

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Baptism By Immersion.

In the January 21, 1995 issue of the *Arkansas Catholic* appears the following statements relative to baptism. “Writing about baptism a few years ago, the American bishops said that ‘immersion is the fuller and more appropriate symbolic act in baptism...’ Now there we have an idea that is very new and very old. The first followers of Jesus were adults; and we may presume that they were baptized by immersionAdult converts were immersed in water to remind them that they were dead to an old way of life and that they had risen to share in the life and the mission of the Son of God.” One wonders why if “immersion is the fuller and more appropriate symbolic act in baptism” why they changed from immersion to

sprinkling, and why Protestants still try to argue that sprinkling was the original form of baptism.

* * *

Evangelicals Demonstrate Against Pope In Philippines.

About 500 placard-bearing evangelicals accused Catholics of practicing “God-like adulation of the pope” and urged them to stop. Some members of the group at a rally in front of Manila’s main post office held up placards reading “Kneel before Christ, not to the pope” and “No to the pope as Holy Father. The Vicar of Christ is the Holy Spirit, not the pope.”

* * *

Bible Being Sued.

OK, we concede that litigation is the American way, but Joel Ford surely deserves the American Bar Association award for taking a good thing too far. According to an item in *U.S. News & World Report*, the Mississippi man filed a lawsuit against the Bible. Mr. Ford was asking \$45 million in damages from Oxford University Press and others on the grounds that the Bible is hearsay that oppresses blacks and homosexuals. But so far, the Good Book remains safe from legal attack—Mr. Ford dropped the suit for lack of funds. — *Washington Times*, 12/1/94

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AMA Drops Support For Converting Gays.

Reversing a 13-year-old policy, the American Medical Association has stopped recommending efforts

to turn unhappy gay men and lesbians into heterosexuals. In a report adopted by the AMA’s governing House of Delegates, the association calls for a “nonjudgmental recognition of sexual orientation by physicians. All patients, regardless of their sexual orientation, have a right to respect and concern for their lives and values,” the report says. The policy paper, titled “Health Care Needs of Gay Men and Lesbians in the U.S.,” was adopted without dissent December 6. It replaces a 1981 paper titled “Health Care Needs of the Homosexual Population.” The 1981 paper supported the treatments aimed at changing the sexual orientation of homosexuals.

* * *

Religious T-shirts Approved In Texas School.

An elementary school in Spring, Texas, has agreed to allow its students to wear T-shirts with religious messages on them, the Rutherford Institute has announced. The non-profit religious liberties group based in Charlottesville, Va., said school officials had told the parents of Jason and Justin Hutchens that the twins could no longer wear T-shirts that depicted Jesus’ bloody, nail-pierced hands with the slogan, “His pain, your gain.” School officials said the shirts promoted violence. But the Rutherford Institute insisted the boys had a First Amendment

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right to wear the shirts. After being contacted by the institute, the school changed its policy.

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Vatican-U.S. Aid Ties.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State has called on the U.S. government to make public letters between the Vatican and President Clinton proposing ties between the United States and the Catholic Church to deliver humanitarian aid overseas. "We are deeply troubled by recent news media reports suggesting that the United States government plans to establish a new formal relationship with the Roman Catholic Church to deliver humanitarian aid overseas," the Rev. Barry Lynn, executive director of the Washington-based advocacy group, said in a letter to Clinton.

* * *

Spurgeon Wrote This Nearly 100 Years Ago.

"At any rate, cost what it may, to separate ourselves from those who separate themselves from the truth of God is not only our liberty, but our duty. I have raised my protest in the only complete way by coming forth, and shall be content to abide alone until the day when the Lord shall judge the secrets of all hearts; but it will not seem to me a strange thing if others are found faithful, and if others judge that for them also there is no path but that which is painfully apart from the beaten path." —The Blu-Print.

* * *

Nudity Clause Required For NYPD Blue.

An article appearing in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and quoted in the 1/23/94 Arkansas Democrat-Gazette says that all actors appearing on the ABC program NYPD Blue are required to sign a contract stating they will appear in the nude when necessary. The article states: "Ever wonder what it would be like to parade your naked, probably underbuffed body in front of a bazillion television viewers? Naw, probably not. And neither had Dennis Franz, until he signed on with the ABC Tuesday night hit 'NYPD Blue,' which requires its actors to sign a nudity clause in their contracts."

* * *

Death Penalty Foes Support More Murders.

The editor of National Review gives evidence of the slaughter that results from the failure to sentence murderers to death: "Of the roughly 52,000 state prison inmates serving time for murder in 1984, an estimated 810 had previously been convicted of murder and had killed 821 persons following those convictions. Executing each of these inmates ... would have saved 821 lives ... Would not life imprisonment serve as well? No! A 1987 Justice Department study showed at least five federal prison officers killed since December 1982, in three cases by inmates serving murder sentences." — CC

* * *

Billy Graham Says Homosexuals Born That Way.

Billy Graham said on the Larry King show in December that homosexuals are born homosexuals, since, he said, it's in their genes. Homosexuals have long blamed God for their homosexuality, and will no doubt use Graham's un-scriptural remarks to excuse their wicked sin. — CC

Kennedy Marriage Annulled After 23 Years.

Pam Hughes, an aide to Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., told *The Boston Globe* the senator's second marriage, to the former Victoria Reggie, has been recognized by the Roman Catholic Church, an apparent sign the church has granted an annulment of his 23-year marriage to Joan Kennedy. — *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, 1/26/95

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Religion In America.

"There is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men," Alexis de Tocqueville wrote of the U.S. in 1835. But Tocqueville's Christian monopoly is no more. According to *Time Magazine* 1/30/95 "Though Christianity still dominates by sheer numbers the U.S. 'now has a greater diversity of religious groups than any country in recorded history,' observes J. Gordon Melton, who will list 1,600 denominations, 44% of them non-Christian, in his next *Encyclopedia of American Religions*. Half of these have blossomed since 1960; some are homegrown, others imported by immigrants.

* * *

Top Three Officials In Congress Are Baptists.

For the first time in history, the top three officials of the U.S. government are Baptists, but the nation's largest evangelical denomination ranks far behind the Roman Catholics in terms of total clout in the 104th congress. Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich is a Southern Baptist, as are President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, who presides over the Senate. Overall in Congress, however, Baptists number 65, behind Catholics, with 148 ad-

herents. Thirty-three members of Congress describe their religious affiliation as Southern Baptists, while several others who also belong to Southern Baptist congregations are among the 24 congress members described simply as Baptists. Five members are American Baptists, two are Missionary Baptists and one is an Independent Baptist. Behind the Baptist groups rank United Methodists with 63 members and Presbyterians with 62. Per capita, the mainline Protestant churches are well represented. The 2.4 million-member Episcopal Church has 49 adherents in the 104th Congress, while the Assemblies, one of the fastest-growing denominations with 2.2 million members, has three. Thirty-four members of congress are Jewish. Lutherans number 22, while 20 Congresspersons describe their religious affiliation as Protestant. The Mormons and United Church of Christ tie for the 10th largest bloc, with 13 members each.

* * *

U.N. Troops In Mississippi?

Late-night televangelist Jack Van Impe's claim that United Nations troops and equipment are poised in Saucier, Miss., for a massive invasion and takeover of the U.S. is a fabrication, according to an investigation by the Mobile (Ala.) *Press-Register* newspaper. Van Impe's show, features a look-alike TV news studio from which his blonde wife Rexella tosses him current event topics. *Church and State* magazine reported that when the Mobile newspaper pressed Van Impe for proof of the Saucier buildup, his office supplied photos of standard U.S. military equipment—one of which even had a U.S. government license plate. The magazine

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Miracles of Science**The Honey-Bee At Work -- Part 2**

By Arthur I. Brown

In previous messages we have considered briefly some of the strange mechanical equipment of the honey-bee, as well as the process by which honey is manufactured by these skilled chemists. In addition to honey, the bee's mind — if we think of it as having a mind — is intent on two other things — pollen-dust or flour, and propolis or bee-glue.

The pollen, gathered daily by the bees as they enter and leave the flowers, is literally gold-dust to them. Rich in protein, it is fed to the workers in the summer colony. The fertilization of plants depends principally on the work of these busy bees; and if they were to be destroyed, there would be famine in the land, so the omniscient Creator, with great wisdom, has planned that these tiny insects should be in dispensable to mankind.

Propolis, the dark colored bee-glue with which they fill cracks and smooth over rough places within the hive, is gathered from the gums of buds, plants, and trees. It is a most effective varnish, and yet the bee never seems to have any difficulty in preventing itself from becoming "stuck up" with it.

Another product of the chemical factory of the bee is wax. This very interesting material, so essential to hive making, is manufactured from its body after it has gorged itself with honey. Six or seven pounds of honey are required to make one pound of wax.

After a series of exact preparations by the inmates of the hive, the purpose of which seems to be to generate suffi-

cient heat, as their movements reach a vigorous stage, the wax, secreted from four tiny factories on each side of the abdomen, appears as small thin flakes looking like fish-scales.

Each scale is removed by the hind pair of legs, carefully transferred to the middle pair, then to the mouth where it is mixed with saliva and changed from its first transparent form to the pale yellow color of the finished article.

Bees' wax is unlike anything else in the world. It contains a fatty acid called cerin, minute quantities of alcohol, myricin, hydrocarbons, and another acid which gives the wax its characteristic odor. It floats on water and is very resistant to heat, enduring a temperature of 140° degrees F. before melting. No other wax has such a high melting point.

The reason for this is easily discerned. The entire store of liquid gold would be lost if the thin-walled treasure vaults, the storage chambers, softened under the influence of moderate heat and gave way.

In manipulating the wax, in order to form the marvelous six-sided cells, real mechanical engineering skill is apparent. Without any chief engineer to issue commands, one piece of wax, and then another is laid down by the busy workers, a tap here, a dab there, and presently a cell takes shape. What is the explanation of the ability to perform these precise and intricate operations? If it be that "spirit of the hive" mentioned by Maeterlinck, is that spirit not the Spirit of God? Certainly, it cannot be accounted for by thinking that the bee has gradu-

ally evolved this skill. If there ever was a time when it did not possess this knowledge, all bees would have died. The first bees, then, must have known how to do these things. That means creation, not evolution.

Yes, there are many inexplicable wonders wrapped up in the structure and work of the honey-bee. We find it difficult to explain these wonders without accepting the idea that God made it possible for these tiny life forms to acquit themselves so admirably in the struggle for existence.

To an even greater degree we find ourselves faced with an unsolvable dilemma if we attempt to explain the Bible without a supernatural God as Author. The qualifications of the human scribes, who produced the 66 books making up the Bible, are wholly inadequate to explain what we find in the pages of this remarkable volume.

Here is a book which is the greatest literary possession of the race, the enduring Revelation of God to man. It constitutes the title-deed to human institutions. It is the lesson-book of Christian faith, the final code of human conduct. Man, unaided, simply could not originate it.

If asked to describe in advance what the Bible of the human race should be, certainly no one would have guessed this particular form. It would be natural to ask if we might not have a book with fewer mysteries and digressions, a book that leaves nothing untold, a book which might be demonstrated like a problem in Euclid, a book which Higher Critics could not dissolve into a thin mist of wavering dates. A revelation given to all, given simultaneously, and adequately, seems to be what is needed.

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also said that Van Impe has claimed John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963 to pave the way for one-world government and the return of the Antichrist. *The New American* magazine, which also conducted an investigation into the Saucier myth and several similar stories from around the country, concluded late last year that there was no reality to the reports. *The Baptist Record*. •

WALL...

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Zorach v. Clauson: "The First Amendment does not say that in every and all respects there shall be a separation of Church and State... Otherwise, the state and religion would be aliens to each other — hostile, suspicious, and even unfriendly." Mr. Justice Douglas added: "We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being."

The Founding Fathers intended the First Amendment not to insulate society or the state from the influence of religion but, rather, to preserve and protect religion and religious freedom from transgressions by the state; they understood that a society's public morality depends upon a religious foundation, and that the wholesome influence of religion on private and public morality is essential to the preservation of a free and civilized society; consequently, they wanted government to champion and defend religion and religious freedom.

The First Amendment scholar O. Carroll Arnold rightly observes: "One would never dream of asserting that the government is neutral toward freedom of speech or the press, and it is (or at least should be) equally non-neutral toward religion and religious freedom." •

DRIFT...

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were a loving course which the Lord will approve of in the day of His appearing. We cannot understand them. The bounden duty of a true believer towards men who profess to be Christians, and yet deny the Word of the Lord, and reject the fundamentals of the Gospel, is to come out from among them. To stay in a community which fellowships all beliefs in the hope of setting matters right is as though Abraham had stayed at Ur, or at Haran, in the hope of converting the household out of which he was called.

Complicity with error will take from the best of men the power to enter any successful protest against it. If any body of believers had errorists among them, but were resolute to deal with them in the name of the Lord, all might come right; but confederacies founded upon the principle that all may enter, whatever views they hold, are based upon disloyalty to the truth of God. If truth is optional, error is justifiable.

The Army of Intermediates Should Cease Being Politic

There are now two parties in the religious world, and a great mixed multitude who from various causes decline to be ranked with either of them. In this army of intermediates are many who have no right to be there; but we spare them. The day will, however, come when they will have to reckon with their consciences. When the light is taken out of its place, they may have to mourn that they were not willing to trim the lamp, nor even to notice that the flame grew dim.

Our present sorrowful protest is not a matter of this man or that, this error or that; but of principle. There either is something essential to a true faith —

some truth which is believed; or else everything is left to each man's taste. We believe in the first of these opinions, and hence we cannot dream of religious association with those who might on the second theory be acceptable. Those who are of our mind should, at all cost, act upon it. The Lord give them decision, and wean them from all policy and trimming!

The Sixteenth Century Gospel Now Derided

The party everywhere apparent has a faith fashioned for the present century — perhaps we ought rather to say, for the present month. The sixteenth century Gospel it derides, and that, indeed, of every period except the present most enlightened era. It will have no creed because it can have none; it is continually on the move; it is not what it was yesterday, and it will not be tomorrow what it is today. Its shout is for "Liberty," its delight is invention, its element is change. On the other hand, there still survive, amid the blaze of nineteenth century light, a few whom these superior persons call "Fossils"; that is to say, there are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who consider that the true Gospel is no new gospel, but is the same yesterday, today, and forever. These do not believe in "Advanced views," but judge that the view of truth which saved a soul in the second century will save a soul now, and that a form of teaching which was unknown till the last few years is of very dubious value, and is, in all probability, "another gospel: which is not another" (Gal. 1:6-7).

It is extremely difficult for these two parties to abide in union. The old fable of the collier who went home to dwell with the fuller is nothing to it. The fuller would by degrees

know the habits of his coaly companion, and might thus save the white linen from his touch; but in this case there are no fixed quantities on the collier's side, and nothing like permanency even in the black of his coal. How can his friend deal with him, since he changes with the moon? If, after long balancing of words, the two parties could construct a basis of agreement, it would, in the nature of things, last only for a season, since the position of the advancing party would put the whole settlement out of order in a few weeks. The adjustment of difficulties would be a task forever beginning, and never coming to an end. If we agree, after a sort, today, a new settlement will be needed tomorrow. If I am to stay where I am, and you are to go traveling on, it is certain that we cannot long lodge in the same room. Why should we attempt it?

Difference of Spirit Between New Religionists And Old Believers

Nor is it merely doctrinal belief — there is an essential difference in spirit between the old believer and the man of new and advancing views. This is painfully perceived by the Christian man before very long. Even if he be fortunate enough to escape the sneers of the cultured, and the jests of the philosophical, he will find his deepest convictions questioned, and his brightest beliefs misrepresented by those who dub themselves "Thoughtful men." When a text from the Word has been peculiarly precious to his heart, he will hear its authenticity impugned, the translation disputed, or its Gospel reference denied. He will not travel far on the dark continent of modern thought before he will find the efficacy of prayer debated, the operation of divine Providence questioned, and the

special love of God denied. He will find himself to be a stranger in a strange land when he begins to speak of his experience, and of the ways of God to men. In all probability, if he be faithful to his old faith, he will be an alien to his mother's children, and find that his soul is among lions. To what end, therefore, are these strainings after a hollow unity, when the spirit of fellowship is altogether gone?

The world is large enough, why not let us go our separate ways? Loud is the cry of our opponents for liberty; let them have it by all means. But let us have our liberty also. There is a right of association which we do not forego, and this involves a right of disassociation, which we retain with equal tenacity. Those who are so exceedingly liberal, large-hearted, and broad-minded might be so good as to allow us to forego the charms of their society without coming under the full violence of their wrath.

Separation The Only Complete Protest

At any rate, cost what it may, to separate ourselves from those who separate themselves from the truth of God is not alone our liberty, but our duty. I have raised my protest in the only complete way by coming forth, and I shall be content to abide alone until the day when the Lord shall judge the secrets of all hearts; but it will not seem to me a strange thing if others are found faithful, and if others judge that for them also there is no path but that which is painfully apart from the beaten track.

"(17) Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. (18) For they that are such

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serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. (19) For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. (20) And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen" (Rom. 16:17-20).

**A Faithful Message From
The Past and A Timely
Word for the Present**

"For there is some danger of falling into a soft and effeminate Christianity, under the plea of a lofty and ethereal theology. Christianity was born for endurance; not an exotic, but a hardy plant, braced by the keen wind; not languid, nor childish, nor cowardly. It walks with strong step and erect frame; it is kindly, but firm; it is gentle, but honest; it is calm, but not facile; obliging, but not imbecile; decided, but not churlish. It does not fear to speak the stern word of condemnation against error, nor to raise its voice against surrounding evils, under the pretext it is not of this world; it does not shrink from giving honest reproof, lest it come under the charge of displaying an unchristian spirit. It calls sin sin, on whomsoever it is found, and would rather risk the accusation of being actuated by a bad spirit than not discharge an explicit duty. Let us not misjudge strong words used in honest controversy. Out of the heat a viper may come forth; but we shake it off and feel no harm. The religion of both Old and New Testaments is marked by fervent outspoken testimonies against evil. To speak smooth things in

such a case may be sentimentalism, but it is not Christianity. It is a betrayal of the cause of the truth and righteousness. If anyone should be frank, manly, honest, cheerful (I do not say blunt and rude, for a Christian must be courteous and polite); it is he who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and is looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God. I know that charity covereth a multitude of sins; but it does not call evil good, because a good man has done it; it does not excuse inconsistencies, because the inconsistent brother has a high name and a fervent spirit; crookedness and worldliness are still crookedness and worldliness, though exhibited in one who seems to have reached no common height of attainment. •

BEES...

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Well, let us imagine a committee of philosophers, poets, lawyers, historians, or newspaper writers, employed to draw up in advance a plan for the Bible. It is highly probable that such a committee would never have agreed among themselves, but it is certain that, if they had, they would have given us a Bible quite unlike the one it has pleased God to bestow.

The lawyers would have given us a code; the theologians a catechism. The committee of newspaper editors would have provided us with an up-to-date book, all headlines, sensation, and picturesque descriptions. The poets would have given us an epic embroidered with sonnets. The scientists would have made science itself unnecessary by preparing a compendium of all knowledge, the natural history of things in general, a book which would have left the planet without a secret, and the human intellect with nothing to interest it.

Uninspired human literature presents many differences from this great book. For instance, Hodder's "Life of the Earl of Shaftesbury" contains some 360,000 words. Mr. Morley writes "The Life of Gladstone" on a still ampler scale in two stupendous volumes.

But for the Life of Christ, we have four thin pamphlets not much larger than tracts. Matthew tells the amazing story in 23,000 words, while Mark requires only 15,000 words.

In spite of innumerable attempts at destruction, the book lives on. Henry Rogers wrote that "The little ark of Jewish literature floats upon the surges of time, while the wrecked archives of huge oriental empires are turned into mere flotsam and jetsam."

How often has the Bible been torn into rags, refuted and destroyed! But, the anvil outlasts all the hammers that smite it. The men who attack the Bible, the volumes written to disprove it, are forgotten, while the immortal book lives on, surviving its friends as well as its enemies.

Some strange gift of indestructible life is hidden in this volume. History is strewn with the wrecks of a hundred perished literatures, but time has no destroying office for biblical records.

Some element, not born of human genius, lies in its pages, and outshines genius. Other books have their day and die. Their language grown obsolete. The world's thought runs in new channels, and they are left mere stranded wrecks on time's shore, but this Book belongs to all the centuries and outlives them all.

One sublime idea shines behind the many books of the Bible. This idea is the recovery of a fallen race, and the instrument of this great process is the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible is nothing but a frame of historical

events in which the face of Christ is set. All the early books of the Bible prepare for Him, point to Him, all the later books look back to Him. Under all its forms the Bible is thus the servant of but one idea.

Or, to vary the figure, the Bible is a portrait. The face of Christ looks out, tender, pure, divine,—it may be, with varying clearness, but from every page. Is it credible that sixty-two chance daubs of chance colors, made without any agreement among themselves by a number of chance men, could possibly produce a face that not only arrests the attention but stirs the love of the world?

Tried by ordinary tests, the Bible is thus the great puzzle of all literature. What is the explanation of the puzzle? The only answer is that the Bible is not the product of human genius. It does not reflect the mind nor record the discoveries of man. It reflects the mind of God. It is a channel through which runs a stream of spiritual force. It is not a discovery but a Revelation.

The Bible does not argue. It pronounces. It is not concerned to prove by argument the foundations of religion, the existence and holiness of God, the eternal authority of righteousness, the moral nature of man, the fact of sin, and of redemption from the guilt and power of sin, and that final judgment that awaits all human deeds.

It assumes these truths and proclaims them as certainties that find their attestation in the soul, itself. The Bible offers us, not an argument, but a message. It is not man's thoughts about God, but God's thoughts about man. So the note is always one of authority — an authority which cannot be assailed nor challenged because it is final and absolute. *God has spoken.*

In view of this great Revela-

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CHURCH...

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When combined together, Philadelphia, means "brotherly love." This word appears some seven other times in the New Testament and in every place where it appears, it is translated "brotherly love." I want to look at these this morning, because this will show us something about the nature and the character of the church of Philadelphia.

In the 12th chapter of the Book of Romans and verse 10 we read: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with philadelphia," that is with "brotherly love." In 1 Thessalonians 4:9, "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." In Hebrews 13:1, "Let brotherly love continue." In 1 Peter 1:22, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." Lastly, in 2 Peter 1:7 "And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." We see here that it is used twice in this verse.

Now this is the same "brotherly love" that characterized this church in the city of Philadelphia. It was a church that did have much love, that did have great love, and it is during this time that churches manifested their love by sending forth missionaries to all the known continents of the world. So this city of brotherly love is a city that should be emulated. This church of "brotherly love" should be imitated, for we too are to be a church of "brotherly love." Not just in the sense of loving our brother who is our brother in Christ, but in the sense of loving our brother who is our brother in Adam in order that we might let them know, and

that we might prevail upon them to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. God intended for His churches to be missionary. God intended for us to be interested in our brothers in the flesh, so that we might make them to become brothers in the Lord by preaching unto them the gospel in order that they might be saved.

Now then let us begin reading and go through this passage as we have been doing on a verse-by-verse basis. "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David." As in every case, the author of the letter is identified. As in all other cases, the identity of this author is shown by mentioning certain facts that were mentioned concerning the Lord Jesus Christ in the first chapter of this book. Here we find three marks of identification. The first mark is "He that is holy." Now this deals with character. The One that is holy is the one that is right in character. The word "holy" means to separate from evil and to hate it.

Now some people have a misunderstanding about the nature and the character of God. All they know about God is that God is love. That is true. I would not deny that for one moment. But remember this. God is also a God of justice, a God of righteousness, and because of His justice and His righteousness, there are certain things that God hates.

Don't get the idea that it is wrong to hate. There are some things that we ought to hate. Whatever God hates we ought to hate, and we find here that there are some things in the Scriptures that God says that He hates. God hates sin. That's one thing. In the Book of Proverbs there are some six things, yea seven, the Scripture says, that God hates.

In chapter 6 beginning with verse 16 we read: "*These six things doth the Lord hate: yea seven are an abomination unto him.*" Here are five things that God hates, and there are two kinds of people that God hates. Some people say that God does not hate people, He just hates their sin. Here we see that God does hate certain kinds of people. Let us note beginning in verse 16. "*These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief*" (Prov. 16:16-18). That's the five things. Now I want you to notice these last two.

"A false witness that speaketh lies" (Prov. 6:19a). Now He does not say that He hates the lie, but He says He hates the false witness that speaketh the lie. Then He gives a second one, "And he that soweth discord among brethren" (Prov. 6:19b). God says these are seven things He hates, so that God is not only a God of love, but He is a God of righteousness, a God of justice, and a God of wrath. Therefore we need to be careful lest we misunderstand and think that because God is a God of love that we can live in sin and get by with our sins; that somehow the love of God is going to overlook all of this and not do anything at all. But God says that He is a God of judgment as well as God of love.

Now the word "holy" implies this. When you think of a holy God you think of one who can do no wrong. You think of one who is perfection into its ultimate degree, and God is holy. Now when we read here "*These things saith he that is holy*" this identifies for us that Jesus Christ also is God. In several passages of the Old Testament you will read about God

saying "The holy One of Israel." Here we see that Jesus Christ and the God of the Old Testament are identified as One, for none except God is absolutely holy. Jesus Christ then is God. Regardless of what some people may say today concerning the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is holy and therefore He is God.

Not only does it say, "*These things saith he that is holy,*" but it also says, "*He that is true.*" He is not only right in character, but He is also right in His conduct. Christ is always right. He can do no wrong. He cannot ever do wrong. Jesus is contrasted here with all the false gods so prevalent during that day and time. Jesus Christ is still true, though these New Testament churches were not true. Though they listened to the lies of some round about them and were contaminated by many of these things, and though some of these churches did not remain true, yet Jesus Christ always remains true.

I'm amazed at how far sometimes true churches can go and still be churches. These churches that we have been reading about, [not the church at Philadelphia because this is the church of which there is no condemnation of any kind mentioned] these churches all had something wrong with them. It is amazing that Jesus still recognized them as true churches, as valid churches, but sometimes God's people can be rather wicked people.

Turn with me to the Book of Second Chronicles chapter 33 we read in verse 9, "*So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel.*" Now here is a case of the tribes of Manasseh and

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Judah, and then particularly is mentioned the inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem, God's particular or special city, and it said that they were prevailed upon by their neighbors round about them to do worse than the heathen. So here are some of God's people that were living worse lives than the heathen. When you look at some of these New Testament churches you wonder how God could lay claim to them. When you look at the church at Corinth with all her sins, with everything that was wrong within that church, you wonder how the Lord could lay claim to it and say that it was still one of His churches. But this shows us the longsuffering of God toward His churches. Now these churches, in the New Testament, and particularly these seven churches, maybe the church at Thyatira, but at least some of these were seemingly worse than some of the heathen people themselves. They failed in many cases, yet the Lord Himself remained true all the way through.

He says for the third thing *"He that hath the key of David."* We find a place to tie that verse to, the "key of David," in Isaiah 22:22. *"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open."* So we find here that again Jesus Christ is identified as the One that is the fulfillment of the Scriptures predicting or prophesying concerning the coming of the Messiah. He is to be the one that has the key of David. So that when this church of Philadelphia received this letter, and given the identification of the author, they knew exactly who was writing to them. This is coming from their Head. This is coming from the Lord Jesus

Christ. He is the one that is holy, that is true, that hath the key of David. He that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth.

Now this key represents authority and power, and He has this. In Matthew chapter 28 we read that He has all power. It says in verse 18, *"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."* In Matthew chapter 16 and verse 18 where He commissioned or established or began His church, He says, *"Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"* because He has the power to prevent any from doing such. And then in the first chapter of the Book of Revelation and verse 18, *"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."* So the Lord then has all power, and all authority, and He has all the power that the church of Philadelphia needs. I also want to point out that He has all the power that the Central Baptist Church of Little Rock needs. We do not need to get our power anywhere else. He has all power, and whatever God wants this church to do, He has the power to enable this church to do it, and we don't need to question the fact that He will do it. No matter what the job might be; no matter how great it might be; no matter how much it may require, if God tells us to do it, He has the power to enable us to do it, and He will enable us to do it, because He says, *"And he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth."* He can control all things.

I want you to notice that He opens and He closes according to His sovereign will. God can open mission fields or He can close mission fields. God can open a door and He can shut a door, and whatever door God

opens, you can know that no one will be able to shut it, and whatever door God shuts, you can know that no one will be to open it.

As an example, I look at Noah's ark. God opened the door. He commanded Noah to take the animals into the ark. He then commanded Noah and his family to enter into the ark. Anybody else that wanted to go in the ark, they could go in the ark as long as the door was open. But after Noah and his family had entered into the ark, then when God shut the door, then no one could open that door. It was shut. It was sealed and God is the one who shut it and God is the one who sealed it.

The same analogy is true concerning the door of salvation. At one time God had the door of salvation opened to the Jews. In the Old Testament we see that God's message of salvation was primarily to the Jews, and it was open to the Jew at that day and time, and what Gentiles were saved were a remnant out of the Gentiles and only a few. Following the rejection of the Messiah by the Jewish people, God has shut the door to the Jews and the door is now open unto the Gentiles, and we now live in the times of the Gentiles when the gospel primarily is being preached to Gentiles. Now that does not say that Jews cannot be saved, because there is a remnant among the Jews just as there was a remnant among the Gentiles during the Old Testament dispensation. So there can be and is a remnant today in this New Testament dispensation, a remnant among the Jews.

But just as God opened the door for the Gentiles, one of these days God is going to shut the door for the Gentiles, and when God shuts the door, no man is going to be able to open the door. I am certain that after Noah and his family were in the ark, and God had shut the door

and sealed the door shut, that there were literally thousands who sought to enter that ark when the rains began to fall, but there was no entrance. The door had been shut. And it is going to be the same when Jesus comes. After He catches all of His saved off the earth and the Tribulation Period begins, there are going to be literally thousands, yea millions that are going to seek to enter the door of salvation, and are going to find out that God has shut the door, and there will be no hope of their salvation.

God has an open door right now for you that are unsaved, and the open door is an invitation for you to enter that door, and that door is the Lord Himself. He says in John 14:6, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me."* When He says *"I am the way"* He means He is the only way. When He says, *"I am the door"* He means He is the only entrance into heaven, and therefore the door is open right now, and it is only by going through that door that you'll ever get into heaven.

One of these days, the way is going to be closed. One of these days God is going to seal off your hope of salvation, and then a flood is going to pour out upon this earth. Not a flood of water as it was in the days of Noah, for God says that He will never destroy the world by water again. It's going to be a flood of judgment in which the unsaved will enter the Tribulation Period and see the tribulations of God as they are poured out in judgment, just as it rained 40 days and 40 nights upon this earth before. Just as when the rains began to fall, [they had never seen it rain before], and fright came upon them, they then fled to the door to enter in, and found that the door was shut, and there was no hope.

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One of these days Jesus is going to come back. When Jesus comes, He is going to shut the door as far as you are concerned. There will be some saved during the Tribulation Period and there will be some saved during the Millennium. There will be many that will be saved, for it speaks of them as multitudes out of every kindred, and tongue and peoples and nations upon the earth. You need to know that you will not be one of them, because anybody who has heard the gospel, of the Lord Jesus Christ, anyone who has heard the message of salvation and the fact that Jesus Christ is the door, if you are still here after the rapture when Jesus begins to pour out judgment upon the earth, you may flee to the door, but you will find that He has already shut the door for you. And you cannot be saved!

In Second Thessalonians chapter 2, I want to show you where God is going to seal the door of salvation for you. Though you may continue to live for many years, even if by some means you should survive the Tribulation Period, yet there will not be any opportunity for you to be saved. In verse 7, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let." (That word "let" means hindereth), "he who now hindereth will hinder until he be taken out of the way" speaking of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit is withdrawn from this earth, all believers are going to be withdrawn at the same time, so there will be no saved people on the earth at the point of the time called the rapture. The saved will be resurrected, those who are on earth will be translated, and all will be raptured at that time.

In verse 8 it says, "And

then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." This is talking about the Antichrist. The Antichrist will not be revealed until after the Rapture.

But now notice, verse 9, "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." This is why people are going to be left behind, because they "received not the love of the truth." Who is the Truth? Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, the life." He is the truth and it says that they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. "And for this cause." What cause? Because they did not receive the truth. They heard the message, they heard the truth, they knew how to be saved, but they would not trust Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. They rejected Him.

Verse 11, "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." So, unsaved person, God's door of salvation is open now. You can be saved today. All that God requires of you for you to be saved is that you be a sinner. That's all. If you are a sinner, then God offers you salvation free if you will simply receive Jesus Christ and trust Him as your personal Lord and Savior. If you do that, you can be saved today. If you do not, that is a rejection of salvation. That is what the Bible refers to as unbe-

lief.

Now I'm not going to say you can't be saved tonight. I'm not going to say you can't be saved tomorrow or next week. I don't know, but God does tell you that you can be saved now, and that's all I can tell you. I don't know if you'll be here tonight, or tomorrow, or next week, or next month. I don't know, but I do know you can be saved now, because the door of salvation is open now. I do know this, that when Jesus returns to this earth, and when all the saved are raptured and caught up to be with Him in the air, the door of salvation will be shut for you at that moment. You may live for years, you may have a Bible, you may read your Bible. You may remember being in preaching services. You may even recognize what is taking place. You may even begin to beg and cry and ask God to open the door, but God says when He shuts the door, no man is going to open that door, just as it occurred during the days of Noah. When the beginnings of the Tribulation Period begin, and the awful judgments of God begin to rain down upon this earth, as the rains came down during the days of Noah, you may want to be saved then, but you will find out that it is too late. How come? Verse 11, "And for this cause God shall send them." Who? Unbelievers like you. Those of you who heard the message and did not receive the message. God is going to send you a strong delusion that you should believe a lie. "That they all." All of you that are here this morning unsaved, and who refuse to receive Jesus Christ, "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

You know, that's hard to think of. It's hard to conceive of the fact that men can want to be saved, can beg and cry and

plead unto God, and yet God won't hear. God won't answer them. But this is exactly what God says is going to happen. God is going to shut the door and no man will be able to open it. "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded" (Prov. 1:24). In other words, this is the way it is today. God calls sinners to believe today. God calls sinners to repentance today, yet He says, "I have called, and ye have refused." If you're still unsaved, you have so far. "I have called and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded." Just as a drowning man in the water and a hand is stretched out to him and he ignores the hand, God stretches out His hand, He offers you salvation, and He says you have disregarded. "No man regarded" My hand.

"But ye have set at nought all my counsel." How many times God has counseled you, advised you, exhorted you, and told you what was best for you, and you have rejected His counsel and His advice? "And would none of my reproof." How many times has God reproved you? How many times has God chastened you? How many times has God judged you, made you undergo some kind of illness or sickness to get your attention, and to tell you "I am dealing with you because I want you to realize you need to be saved?" And He says, "And you would none of my reproof," you ignored Me. Then He says in verse 26, "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." When the door is shut, God is going to sit back and laugh at your calamity, because you refused to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

He continues saying, "When

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your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer." Today, God is here, and God will listen, and when you call upon the Lord, receiving Him as your Lord and your Savior, He hears you. He responds to you, but when the door is shut as the door of Noah's ark was shut, you can cry out, you can shout, you can knock on that door, and God says I will not hear. *"They shall call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them."* (Prov. 1:24-32).

But now listen to this last verse, *"But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil"* (Prov. 1:33). God has placed an open door now. No one can shut that door. That means that there is nobody that can prevent you from being saved. Even the Devil himself with all of his power, with all of his demons, the Devil and his demons and hell itself cannot prevent you from being saved, because God has placed an open door there, and the invitation is there for you to come in. And Satan can't stop you from being saved. You may think so, but he cannot do so. If you really want to be saved, God says that there is an open door and all you need to do is to come unto Him, trust Him, receive Him as your personal Lord

and Savior, and you'll be saved. One of these days though that door will be shut. You will not be saved. You may live fifty years after that, and still not be saved, because when God shuts the door, no man can open the door.

What makes the difference? God does. God does this in His sovereign will. He has the right to open the door whenever He chooses, He has the right to close the door whenever He chooses, and right now, God has opened the door of salvation. It is open to us Gentiles today to be saved. One of these days He's going to shut it, and then it will be too late for you. Will you enter the door today? Will you trust Jesus Christ? Will you receive Him as your Lord and as your Savior?

When we get further into this Book of Revelation, you're going to find out that we're living in the last days and it is not long until we're going to see come to pass those things which are written in the Book of Revelation. That means the time is short. It's not long until Jesus is going to come again, and when He does, the door is going to be shut. This could happen to day. I don't know when He's coming, but whenever He comes, you know this, that that is going to seal your doom because you received not the love of the truth," you did not trust Jesus Christ as your Lord and your Savior. Will you trust Him today? Will you receive Him now and be saved?•

SDA...

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manity Christ partook of our sinful, fallen nature." In contrast with this read John 14:30 and 1 John 3:5.

4. Adventism teaches that the soul sleeps after death. They take passages that refer to the *body* and make them to

apply to the whole person. Refutation of this theory is found in Paul's words, "Absent from the body — present with the Lord," and "Having a desire to depart *and be with Christ.*"

5. Adventism teaches conditional immortality. They deny that all persons must live forever somewhere. Immortality they say is received on certain terms, and unless it is received a person is annihilated. They teach, consistent with this, that there shall be no future, eternal punishment. Rather there will be annihilation of the finally impenitent. Matthew 25:46 sufficiently refutes this.

6. Adventism puts the believer back under the law by means of its Sabbath teaching. The truth is the Sabbath was given to only one race, and as a sign between that race, Israel, and God (Ex. 31:12-18). Besides the Scriptures teach (Rom. 6:14) that the believer is "not under law, but under grace."

Despite their Sabbath teaching, the Adventists *do not* observe the Sabbath according to the regulations laid down in the Old Testament. They just "keep at it."

7. Adventism has a warped and unscriptural eschatology. The system foisted on them by Mrs. White cannot be changed no matter how erroneous it is shown to be. Adventists teach that *the papacy is Anti-christ.* This is plain violation of the clear teaching of Scripture that Anti-Christ shall be a *person*, and not a system. They also make *Sunday to be the mark of the beast.* This violates the plain Bible teaching that the mark of the Beast will be an actual mark, imposed by an actual person — not a day advocated by a system.

8. Adventism often works in a sneaking, underhanded way in propagating its faith. Often they put up a tent or tabernacle and advertise attractive

subjects very widely, while keeping the name of the sect in the dark. They give the impression that they are some other group until they secure the confidence of the people — then as they near the close of their meeting, they begin to feed people their adventism. They advertise and sell their books in the same way. "Here is a book to help you understand the Bible better." The book is bought without the person knowing that it is adventism.

Seventh Day Adventism is a form of "Galatianism." It is a legalistic system and it has its refutation in the letter to the Galatians. Adventism grows largely through proselyting tactics, as they get access to homes and bring in their heresies. The proper safeguard for churches to take is to tell people the truth as to their teachings. Few people would be led off after them if they knew their real teachings. •

BEES...

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tion, it surely is worth while to pay attention to the advice given humanity in the Bible. The message it delivers is concerned with the problem of making a way of escape for all of us sinners from the penalty of sin which is death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" ends all discussion. But here God steps in and offers a remedy — a Divine Substitute for us in the Person of His Son, who died for us "in our room and stead." God requires one thing only — that we link ourselves up with this Son — the blessed Man of Galilee. To refuse means eternal punishment; but to accept means eternal life. Who would choose the former when the consequences are known? Will you take Jesus NOW? -- Next: **Baby Bees And their Nurses.**•

An Average Month In the Seminary

Beginning with this month, we expect to bring a report of the seminary and the work in México in **The Baptist Challenge**. Usually it will be about two months late due to the fact that we get the material ready for **TBC** nearly a month ahead of time, and then it takes a while for the information to get to us from México.

Bro. Ezequiel "Zeke" Sánchez is in charge of the seminary and is responsible for seeing that we get the reports each month, but I am sure that there will be times that they will be late. Also, when you are teaching classes in the seminary everything is just about the same every month and it is sometimes hard to make the reports interesting, but we will do our best.

Also, I have asked him to send us a picture and biography of each of the preachers in the seminary, and he says that he will have these shortly. As you will note from his letter, we presently have eight men that are studying, one of which is ready to graduate soon as he will have completed all five years of his training, and then one that is a first year student,

just beginning.

We urge you to pray for these young men as México may be in for some real difficult times ahead. If you have been reading your newspapers lately, you know that México is on the verge of having a war in the State of Chiapas and we have mission work in the State of Chiapas, only on the far side from where the fighting is going on. However, they have had some near riots in Villahermosa, the capital of the State of Tabasco, and Villahermosa is only 30 minutes drive from Cárdenas where our seminary is located. So far it hasn't caused us any problems, but it very well could cause problems in the future.

I asked Bro. "Zeke" to have each of the young men in the seminary to write us a brief resumé of their work, and rather than writing it in the form of a letter, they simply gave details of their work for each week of the month of January. In the next reports, I hope to have more details as to their work, although as you know, they spend the week in studying in the seminary, and only work in the churches and missions on weekends, so most

of their time is taken up in studying.

Today is February 15 and I just received these letters, but they will give you a little information as to how their month is taken up.

Please remember the seminary in prayer and especially the teachers.

Ezekiel Sánchez

Dear Brother Moser:

I take this opportunity to greet you, your family and the Central Baptist Church.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you about the month of January. I am sending the financial report for the seminary and also a report about each of the students and their respective congregations.

The seminary is going along smoothly now. The students have their own study area where they can do their assignments. Also a place for the teachers to work after their classes have ended each day.

Brother, I went through an experience this month that I have never had to go through before. The 15th of January, we were in a service when my wife began to be in great pain. I had to take her to the Red Cross where she stayed for 3 hours. When she worsened, I took her out of there. At home she got no

better, so I went to look for a Doctor that has helped us in the past. He came to the house and after applying his treatment, she began to feel better. I just about lost my wife, but, thank the Lord, he left her here with me and restored her to health.

Brother, I would like to tell you that there is a young man that within six months will finish his five years of preparation in the seminary. I am wondering whether to have a graduation service then or wait until the end of the year. I will leave that up to you. If we wait until the end of the year, this young man would stay on to give classes in the seminary next semester, while also traveling to his mission.

As to the number of students, we have eight: one in the first year, Moisés Sánchez Suarez, who is in charge of the church in "Nuevo Centro", the municipality of Huimanguillo, Tabasco.

As to textbooks for the seminary, for this time, I found all the books we needed here. They were very expensive, but thanks to the Lord and you, because you sent enough to cover this amount.

Also, I am being asked for the following titles: "Los Bautistas Atravéz de los

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MEXICO...

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Siglos" (Baptists Throughout The Ages), "¿Por Que Se Debe Ser Bautista?" (Why Be A Baptist), and "La Seguridad Eterna del Creyente" (Eternal Security of the Believer). Please send 20 of each. You can deduct the amount from my salary.

Also, I would like to know when you will begin deducting me for the money you loaned me to finish my house.

Please receive warmest greetings from all of the students with all their heart.

Sincerely, the director of the seminary,
Brother Sánchez.

Student Reports

Report for **Jesús Gomez Aguilar** from "Misión Evangélica Bautista Jesús la Luz del Mundo" in Colonia Jacinto López city of Cárdenas, Tabasco.

Jan 6 — Gave study on "What the Bible does in our lives."

Jan 7 — visited the sick.

Jan 8 — Led the program in morning service; preached to young people in afternoon.

Jan 15 — Gave Bible study; taught young people's; led in the evening service

Jan 20 — Preached in the evening service at church

Jan 21 — Traveled back to Seminary.

Baldemar Hernández Díaz from the Congregación Bautista "Cristo es la Verdad," in Trinidad Catalina, Jonuta, Tabasco.

Jan 1 — Sunday School devotional; preached in the evening service.

Jan 6 — Doctrine classes.

Jan 7 — Preached on special themes at Bible Club.

Jan 8 — Sunday School devotional; preached in evening service.

Jan 13 — Doctrine classes.

Jan 14 — Preached funeral service.

Jan 15 — Sunday School devotional; Preached evening service.

Jan 19 — Taught doctrine classes.

Jan 20 — Young People's meeting.

Jan 21 — Sunday School devotional; Preached evening service.

Jan 26 — Taught doctrine class.

Jan 27 — Young People's Meeting.

Jan 29 — Sunday School devotional; Preached evening service

Ismael Miranda López, "Iglesia Bautista Independiente Jesús el Buen Pastor."

Jan 8 — Gave a Bible study in the mission in San Eligio Cunduacan.

Jan 15 — Led the program in the church.

Jan 21 — Preached a service in the home of one of the members.

Jan 22 — Sunday School class to teens at the church.

Jan 27 — Preached a doctrinal message.

Jan 28 — Bible study to young people.

Jan 29 — Sunday School class to teens.

Pastor **Pedro Sánchez Martínez**, "Iglesia Evangelica Bautista Independiente La Nueva." Jerusalem, at Poblado C-40, Huimanguillo, Tabasco

Each Week in January:

Sun. — Sunday School lesson and preached in the morning service; preached in the evening service also.

Mon. — Gave Bible Study to the ladies group.

Tue. — Visits, house to house evangelism and with the sick.

Wed. — Midweek Prayer Meeting.

Thu. — Work in the mis-

sion in Poblado - "Monte de Oro."

Fri. — Bible Doctrine class.
Sat. -- Young People's service

Melquisedec Almeida Jiménez

Jan 6-8 — In a mission out of our church in Linda Vista, VeraCruz.

Friday — Bible study on Articles of Faith.

Sat — Evangelism work with the brethren in the mission.

Sun. — Taught Sunday School and preached evangelistic sermon.

Jan 13-15 — I was in charge of things at the church because the pastor was away at the mission where I work in the State of VeraCruz.

Friday — Message on the Humiliation of Christ.

Sat. — Made a visit.

Sun. — Preached in both services.

Jan. 20-22 In the mission again.

Friday — Study on Articles of Faith.

Sat. — Visitation with the brethren.

Sun. — Sunday School and evening message.

Jan 27-29 In my church in Huimanguillo.

Juan Manuel Palma Pérez, "Iglesia Bautista Independiente - Sol de Justicia" in Ejido Rafael Martínez Escobar., municipality of Huimanguillo, Tabasco.

Jan 6 — Bible Study in evening.

Jan 7 — Lesson preparation in morning. Ladies' Bible Study in afternoon (Baptist Doctrine in One Year) followed by visits to some discouraged brethren.

Jan 8 — Sunday School Lesson, (Baptist Doctrine in One Year); Preached in afternoon on "The Church That Jesus Built"; also preached in evening service.

Jan 13 — Evening Bible

Study

Jan 14 — Morning personal study; Ladies Bible Class in afternoon; visits with the sick.

Jan 15 — Sunday School (Baptist Doctrine in One Year); Afternoon, preached on "The Church that Jesus Built." Preached in evening service.

Jan 20 — Evening Bible Study.

Jan 21 — Morning personal study; Ladies Bible Study (Baptist Doctrine In One Year;," visits with sick.

Jan 22 — Sunday School (Baptist Doctrine In One Year;," Afternoon preached on "The Church that Jesus Built"; Preached evening service.

Jan 27 — Evening Bible Study.

Jan 28 Morning personal study; Ladies Bible Study, (Baptist Doctrine In One Year); Preached in special evening service.

Jan 29 — Sunday School "Baptist Doctrine In One Year;," afternoon preaching (The Church That Jesus Built); preached evening service.

Federico Rodríguez Alejandro, "Congregación Bautista Eben-Ezer" in Ejido Arroyo Nacajuca, Tabasco.

Jan 6-8 — Doctrinal Bible Study; Business meeting; Sunday School and worship service, visits in homes.

Jan 13-15 — Week of special prayer finishing Saturday with evangelization work, Sunday School, visits, preaching service.

Jan 27-29 — Bible Doctrine class; Evangelization; Homiletics class; Sunday School; visits in homes.

Moisés Sánchez Suarez (first year student). La Iglesia Bautista Independiente "El Monte Hermen" de Nuevo Centro, Pico de Oro, Human-

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"Prophets Quarters" For Missionaries

Dear Bro. Moser:

I am writing to ask you to relay the information about our "Prophets Quarters" here at Parkview Baptist Church in Childress, Texas. We have furnished our parsonage for the use of any unaffiliated Baptist missionary who needs it. This is a very large house with plenty of room for any size family.

Childress is mid-way between Amarillo and Wichita Falls, on highway 287 in north-west Texas. From Childress a missionary would be able to work the north and western parts of Texas as well as much of Oklahoma and New Mexico.

The church phone number is (817)937-3005.

Don McFarland, Pastor

MEXICO...

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guillo, Tabasco.

Jan. 2 — We began classes and went out to the field over the weekend.

Jan. 6-8 — In charge of the work in my church; I preached Friday evening.

Sat. we met in the church also.

Sun., Sunday School with the teens and preached in evening service. Monday I returned to the seminary.

Jan. 13-15 — Friday visited the church in Martínez Escobar. Saturday back in my own church.

Jan 27-29 — Friday busy in the church; Saturday, Sermon preparation for Sunday.

Sun. — Sunday School with teens and preached in the evening.

Monday returned to seminary.

**Your purchase of
Challenge Press Books
Helps The Baptist
Challenge**

Book Review: A World "Church" Is Planned 2000 A.D.

By Edgar C. Carlisle, Carlisle Books BC, 2413 Zion Park, Yukon, OK 73099. \$7.50 plus \$1.25 shipping. Five or more copies \$5 each plus 50¢ shipping.

A Nazarene university professor said, "This book is an eye opener." A Baptist university professor said, "Most pastors and members don't know the information that is in this book and they need it.

Edgar C. Carlisle, Baptist pastor and prophecy lecturer, has recently published a highly informative book that explains the Bible prophecies concerning the Babylonian movement that will soon produce a world "church." The book shows the origin of this movement, how it spawned the foreign religions and then spread into all Christian denominations.

Carlisle's book reveals how several powerful religious organizations over the world are now feverishly pushing for world union. In 1993 Pastor Carlisle visited one such meeting in Chicago with 7000 attending and representing 250 religions, including foreign faiths, Jewish, Catholic, Protestant and Baptists. While there he heard their plans to unite all religions into a United Nations of Religion by 2,000 A.D. This book contains their charter for world union. It reveals that another such international meeting was held last October 8-10 in Khartoum, Sudan, Africa. This meeting also called for a union of the world's religions and world government.

Carlisle's book exposes the catalyst that has been breaking down the separation between the world's religions and Christian denominations. This factor has thus enabled Babylonianism to spark the urge to merge.

This powerful, documented

book exposes how this rapidly approaching world "church" will actually work with the antichrist. It then reveals how this entire system will come to a startling, sudden destruction.

Millions, including some of your friends, are being deceived and led into this religious trap. In view of this, Carlisle's book will provide you with reliable conversational, teaching and preaching information. It will be excellent for class study.

[Book Review furnished by Bro. Edgar Carlisle.]•

The Saboteur

He has been a member of the church for years, and always a generous contributor. He is in his place in the house of worship regularly, and lives a life of unquestioned moral quality. he can always be relied upon to be at a meeting of the board, and in matters of doctrine and belief he is altogether orthodox. He will lead in public prayer when called upon to do so, and no man surpasses him in private helpfulness to the widow and the orphan. he puts his church ahead of his lodge, his committee duties ahead of his own personal business, and his missionary pledge ahead of his club dues. But he is guilty of sabotage!

Among his business friends who are not churchmen, he complains about "the way the church is run" -- and thus alienates them further. He criticizes the preacher and the Sunday School teacher in the presence of his children -- and thus incites them to rebellion against the church. He stirs up strife and spreads discontent among the people if he can not have his own way at the board meeting -- thus sinning against the fellowship. He complains about the apportionments, declaring that, "The overhead is too high." He becomes the center of a little

group of malcontents and "fights for a principle" until the life of the entire congregation is disrupted.

His generosity, his dependability and his moral character entitle him to a place of honor in the life of the church.

His spirit of criticism, his disposition to peddle gossip, and his derisive attitude, combine to make him a dangerous saboteur. -- Copied•

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