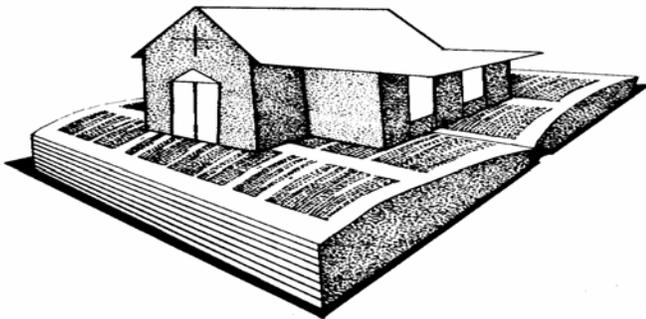


The Sword AND Staff

“Preach the Word” (II Timothy 4:2) • “Feed the Flock” (I Peter 5:2)

— PRINCIPLES — *Governing the Public Assembly of the Church*

● By JAMES E. GIBBONS—1535 W. Fairfield Drive
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(This article appeared in *The Sword and Staff* about ten years ago, but we feel it is timely that we reprint this version of it again at this time—*Editor*)

THE CHURCH is called “the church” in an assembled sense in the New Testament (I Corinthians 14:34; Colossians 4:16; etc.), as well as in other ways. In fact, “assembly” would be a good translation of *ecclesia* (the Greek word commonly rendered “church”).

It is the Lord’s plan that the community of believers come together for worship and edification. In the early days of the church, they came together on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; etc.), as well as more frequently some times (Acts 2:46; Acts 11:26). In fact, they were (and we are) commanded, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25, NKJV).

There are certain principles that can be gleaned from the New Testament Scriptures that should govern the public assembly of the church. The public assembly of the church should be carried on in keeping with the high and holy purpose of the church as taught throughout the New Testament.

This article will not have to do with the particulars of what is to be done in the public assembly, but principles that should govern what is done.

I. The Primary Purpose of The Public Assembly Is for the Believers

It is good to keep in mind that the public assembly of the church is for believers, the saints, not for the world. This statement may sound very elementary, and yet strange to some, but it seems many do not have this understanding today (and what is implied). In too many places the assembly has become the primary (if not the only) tool of evangelism. The gospel is not personally taken into the community. Then, forgetting the assembly is for Christians, some have non-Christian singing groups “perform” religiously before the church (as well as having denominational speakers). We could go on.

Acts 20:7 states that “the disciples came together to break bread” upon the first day of the week. Disciples, we remind you, are Christians (Acts 11:26). Is this hard to understand? The admonition in Hebrews 10:25, “not forsaking the assembling” of themselves together, was for Christians, not non-Christians. Likewise, the admonition in Colossians 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord,” was (is) to Christians. Certainly we would not prohibit non-Christians from informally taking part in the congregational singing (that is between them and the Lord), but to have them stand before the church “teaching and admonishing” in “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” is another thing. Christians are the teachers in the church, and how can a sinner admonish

(Continued on Page 4)

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—THANK YOU—

Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

THE LORD delights in those who delight in Him.

Grace does not blur the difference between right and wrong; it forgives the wrong and helps us do the right.

Jesus died on the cross because of the difference between right and wrong.

When we are justified, God looks upon us as being just (righteous), "For he [God] hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

God's name is hallowed (Matthew 6:9) when we are holy (Romans 2:21-24).

God is holy (1 Peter 1:16) and everything about our worship should be holy, starting with "lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1 Timothy 2:8).

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour" (Romans 13:10), only good.

If we walk in the light, we are not as likely to stumble (and if we do, it is easier to see how to get up).

Why worry when you can pray (Philippians 4:6, 7; 1 Peter 5:6,7)?

When you "give out," don't "give in" and "give up" (Galatians 6:9).

EDITORIAL COMMENTS



A STATEMENT ABOUT "PURE RELIGION"

● *"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).*

JAMES 1:27 is one of the great verses of Scripture that stands out and grabs our attention as we read it. Here we have a statement about "pure religion" expressed in very clear and concise terms. To narrow it down even further, we could say that "pure religion" is about benevolence and holiness. Let us spend a little time with this verse. It deserves our attention.

From our study, we find that the word translated "religion" basically means worship as publicly displayed in ritual and ceremony. James, in keeping with the Old Testament prophets (Micah 6:6-8; Isaiah 1:11-17), points his readers (who have a Jewish background, 1:1) away from this concept to a more spiritual and genuine meaning of the word. In saying "pure" and "undefiled," he is saying the same thing from a positive and a negative viewpoint for sake of emphasis. "Before God" tells us that God sees, and that this is the way He looks upon it. God is spoken of as "the God and Father" (one article, "the," and the order of these words in the original language). "Father" is added to define the character of God. He is "Father" in reference to the fatherless and widows (Psalms 68:5) who are mentioned next.

Now the essence of "pure religion" is laid out before us: *"To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself [oneself] unspotted from the world."* The word for "fatherless" is found one other place in the New Testament where it is translated "comfortless" (John 14:18, KJV). We get our word orphan from this word. It means to be deprived of one or both parents. The word "widows" indicates a gap, a deficiency or the lack or loss of one's husband. Not cushioned by government sponsored social security as in our modern world, to be fatherless and widows in ancient times, indeed, for the most part, was to be in "affliction." Being vulnerable, they became the objects of mistreatment and abuse. The Old Testament was ever mindful of their lot (Deuteronomy 10:18; 14:28, 29; 24:17; Psalms 82:3), and the New Testament was careful to continue this legacy (Acts 6:1; 1 Timothy 5:3-16). To "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" meant not only to personally visit them, but, as the word "visit" in the original language implies, to look over their situation with the view to helping them and actually doing it. "And to keep himself [oneself] unspotted from the world" rounds out the two pronged emphasis of "pure religion." The word "keep" means to guard by keeping an eye on. "Unspotted" means unstained, not blemished.

Consider 2 Corinthians 7:1. The “world” means the present order of things, as controlled and motivated by the flesh. John gives us a little more information on this (John 2:15-17). Other Scriptures further instruct us about this (Romans 12:1,2; James 4:4; etc.). Yes, we must be holy, for God is holy (1 Peter 1:14-17). This is a struggle in the kind of world in which we live today.

So, as we said, “pure religion” is about benevolence and holiness. The lot of the “fatherless and widows” represents a more acute need of the practice of benevolence, but such deeds are not to be limited to them. Galatians 6:10 reads, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Jesus “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38), and this should characterize our lives as Christians. (Consider Matthew 25:31-46). And in a world that is increasingly becoming more ungodly every day, the world needs to see a difference in the way we live, the way that we talk, and even in the way that we dress (modestly). Let us be “unspotted from the world.” Such is the practice of “pure and undefiled religion.” So be it. Amen. □

☞

“Praise Him! Praise Him!”

TO SAY, “Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!” (regardless how many times we may say it, pray it, or even sing it) is not praising the Lord. It may be an admonition to praise the Lord, but it does not praise the Lord. When we praise, we express good and commendable things about someone or something. So, to really praise the Lord is to extol Him with fitting eulogy, plainly saying (or singing) great and wonderful things about Him. To not do this may be to reduce what we are struggling to vocalize into no more than a mumbo jumbo of repetitious sounds that really say nothing (and the Lord is not thereby praised, or exalted).

But, if we would consider that old standard gospel hymn, “Praise Him! Praise Him!”, we get the whole picture. Not only is this song a hearty admonition to praise the Lord, but in the same breath it is intelligently interlaced with praise and reasons for praising the Lord.

Yes, let us really praise the Lord! Amen! □

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Is Covetousness Making You a Thief?

COVETOUSNESS can lead to stealing. This can come about if a person does not have the monetary means of coming into possession of that which is so strongly desired (and if the moral strength is not exercised to bring this compulsion under control). A person may steal to get what is wanted. And this is

true in more ways than one. By coveting things beyond our needs (and means), and spending our money in advance, there is none (or very little) left for the Lord. In his day, the prophet Malachi asked this question of the Jews: “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings” (Malachi 3:8). Likewise, we are stealing from God when we covet that beyond our needs (and many times, means), and thereby committing and spending all of our income before getting around to giving to the cause of the Lord. The apostle Paul wrote, “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him...” (1 Corinthians 16:2). The Lord Jesus said, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [what we need to eat and wear] shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). Are we covetous and selfish? Is covetousness making us a thief? God is God, and He must come first. Let us not let covetousness make us a thief. □

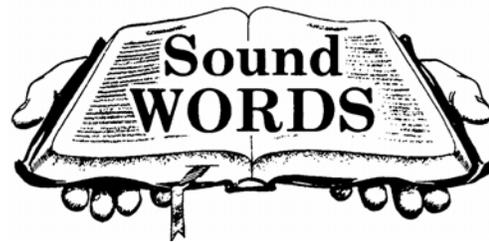
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Jesus Is the One

JESUS IS the one who often wept, yet He dries our tears. The one who was sold for the price of a common slave, yet He redeemed man from his sins. The one who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, yet He is our Good Shepherd. The one who died and gave His life, and by His dying made it possible for us to be saved [and live forever more].—*V. P. Black* □

☞

“Hold fast the form of sound words...”



“...Sound speech, that cannot be condemned”
(2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 2:8).

IT IS this writer’s conviction that we should use a Scriptural vocabulary when talking about religious things. And this Scriptural vocabulary should be spoken in the sense that it is used in the Scriptures. A departure from the language of the Scriptures, and an abuse of this terminology, although being used, may indicate a departure from the teachings of the Scriptures themselves. Words convey definite meaning and should be used in accordance to their meaning.

“Joining” the Church

People commonly talk about “joining” the church, but is this the language of the Scriptures and what the Scriptures actually teach? In the book of Acts, we find that “the Lord *added* to the church” such as were

(Continued on Next Page)

Sound WORDS

(Continued from Previous Page)

being saved (Acts 2:47). This took place when they repented and were baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38-41). A person may join a club, or even join a religious denomination, but he cannot join the church found in the New Testament. He must be added by the Lord. Furthermore, we are “born” into the family of God (John 3:3-5; 1 Peter 1:22,23). That has a different meaning and connotation than “joining” something. We must be born again to get into the kingdom and the Lord does the adding.

Church “Membership”

Along this same line of expression, people talk about being “members” of the church and church “membership,” but is this using the language of the Scriptures in a Scriptural way? The apostle Paul repeatedly writes about Christians being “members” of the body of Christ (Romans 12:4,5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; etc.). He even expressly said, “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (1 Cor. 12:27). This is being a member, like a hand or a foot. We are members in the sense of being part of a living organism, not members in an organizational sense. It is not “membership,” like being a part of a club or some other man-made organization. That conveys a different meaning than being “members” of the living body of Christ. As faithful Christians, we are members of this one body wherever we may find ourselves.

As we keep this lofty concept and spiritual emphasis in the forefront, perhaps it would be good to think in terms of fellowship in connection with the local church, rather than “membership.” Fellowship suggests more of a vital and ongoing relationship that is being experienced and, as such, is being kept alive. In the organizational sense, many times people claim “membership” in the local church, who seldom darken the doors of the assembly. But, in the strictest sense, there are no “inactive members” in the body of Christ, which is very much alive. Let us think of “members” and “membership” in the Scriptural sense when we make use of these terms. □

The Unforgettable Testimony of Polycarp

WHEN Christians refused to burn incense to the Roman emperor as a god, they were accused of treason and sentenced to die. Polycarp, an elder in the church at Smyrna, was martyred for this very reason. Eusebius, an early church historian, tells that Polycarp suffered much for Christ’s sake. The Roman Proconsul commanded him to swear allegiance to Caesar: “Swear and I will set you at liberty. Reproach Christ.” Polycarp’s courageous and unhesitating reply

reportedly was, “If you imagine that I will swear by Caesar, you do not know who I am. Let me tell you plainly, I am a Christian.” Then the unforgettable words follow, “Eighty and six years have I served Him and He hath done me no wrong. How can I revile my Lord and Savior?” Further efforts to make him deny his Lord failed, and Polycarp was condemned to be burned at the stake. When the day came for him to be burned alive, those responsible for the burning wanted to nail him to the stake, but Polycarp is said to have protested, saying: “Let me alone as I am: for He who has given me strength to endure the fire will also enable me, without your securing me by nails, to stand without moving in the pile [of burning wood].” He was then not nailed to the stake, but only tied to it with his hands behind his back. The Jews then joined with the heathen in crying out for his death.—*Adapted* □

PRINCIPLES *Governing* the Public Assembly of the Church

(Continued from Page 1)



us spiritually? That which should be worship is reduced to entertainment.

Other things could be said. But let us remember the simple truth that the assembly is for the saints, and let us hold fast to the high level of spirituality that should be there. Too many times today, in more ways than one, there is no boundary line between the church and the world. Forgetting its distinctive role, the church becomes little more than a civic and community center, an entertainment and recreational center, or a place for interdenominational activity with no true doctrinal (1 Timothy 3:15) and spiritual identity (1 Peter 2:5).

II. Men Are to Take The Lead in the Public Assembly

Paul wrote his younger associate, Timothy, “These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:14, 15, NKJV). The epistle of 1 Timothy is really a handbook for preachers, having to do with how the public life of the church should be conducted (as well as other related matters).

In 1 Timothy, chapter 2, Paul deals with praying and teaching in the church. Having given instructions about praying, he sums it up by saying, “I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting”

(I Timothy 2:8, NKJV). The word “men” has the Greek word *aner* behind it. *Aner* means a male as a male in contrast with a female. The next verse, I Timothy 2:9, puts the woman in contrast with the male. Men are to take the lead in prayer everywhere, including the public assembly, which women are not to do. Men as men are to do this, to pray, leading out in the public assembly.

Having said, “in like manner,” focusing in on their responsibility in relationship and contrast to the man, Paul gives instructions about the woman’s modest adornment in the assembly (which we will notice in the next point) and the woman not teaching or usurping authority over the man. Paul wrote, “Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence [the reasons for this follow]. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression” (I Timothy 2:11-14). This teaching is further verified in I Corinthians 14:34 when Paul said, “Let your women keep silent in the churches [assemblies], for they are not permitted to speak [teach over men]; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says” (NKJV).

In this day with practicing homosexuals overtly and unashamedly asserting themselves, and with the breaking down of the distinctive roles of male and female in our society, what Paul said is not very popular. Few believe and accept it, let alone practice it. But God has placed the responsibility on man to take the leadership in the public assembly (as well as in the home).

III. Modesty of Dress Should Prevail in the Public Assembly

It is rather interesting after saying that men as men are to take the leadership in praying, Paul writes, “In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works” (I Timothy 2:9, 10, NKJV). Then he continues about women not teaching or having authority over man. Although modest apparel is appropriate everywhere (I Peter 3:1-6), it is especially desirable in the public assembly. There should be no detraction and distraction from true worship and God receiving the glory.

This problem is somewhat dealt with in James chapter 2. Here apparently a non-Christian visitor comes to their assembly. He gets all of the attention, with his gold rings and fancy clothes very

much in evidence. The poor are slighted. The chapter starts out by saying, “My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord of glory*, with partiality” (NKJV). Notice it calls Christ, “the Lord of glory.” This is in contrast with the dude in the fancy clothes. Christ should be the one getting the attention (he is “the Lord of glory”), and the poor should not be neglected and discriminated against.

And while we are at it, let us add another needed thought. We are living in casual times when men are not dressing up; they are dressing down. This is not all bad, but the assembling of the church should be looked upon as a very special and sacred occasion. How revolting to see people even wearing shorts to church today in some places! Modest apparel is needed any way that you look at it.

IV. “Let All Things Be Done for Edification” in the Public Assembly

Paul wrote in I Corinthians 14:26, “How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let *all things be done for edification*” (NKJV). This section of Scripture involves the exercise of charismatic gifts in the early church. Although these spiritual gifts as such are not available to us today, the principle of what he said here solidly holds true: “*Let all things be done for edification.*” The words edification, edify, and edifice all carry the same idea—that of building, building up. Of course he is talking about spiritual edification. Everything in connection with the public assembly should be toward that end.

The “pulpit” is no place for carnal levity. Singing, while joyful and jubilant, should really be spiritual, Scriptural and conducted in an atmosphere of respect. Non-Christian and professional singing groups do not fit into the context of true spiritual edification. Entertainment and edification are not necessarily the same thing. Then, do the teaching programs and literature used really teach? Or, are they just entertainment and baby sitting devices? Are the activities with the young people just play programs void of emphasis on that which is spiritual with edification being *nil* for all practical purposes? Are they taught to be any different from the world? Are they different?

Paul wanted edification accomplished in the exercise of their spiritual gifts at Corinth. And the Word of God must be gotten across to really bring about spiritual edification. Paul admonished the Ephesian elders, “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified” (Acts 20:32, NKJV). Let us be satisfied with nothing less than true spiritual edification.

(Continued on Next Page)

PRINCIPLES *Governing* the Public Assembly of the Church

(From Previous Page)



V. "Let All Things Be Done Decently And In Order" In The Public Assembly

That is what Paul said in I Corinthians 14:40, "**Let all things be done decently and in order.**" This is at the climax of the chapter dealing with the abuse of spiritual gifts (and worship). They are given guidelines about people speaking another language and then someone interpreting it. Without an interpreter, they were to keep quiet. They are told about how to pray. The prophets were to speak orderly in sequence by two or three and then sit down. God is a God of order and he wants it in the church. Paul asserts, "For God is not the author of confusion [disorder] but of peace, as in all the churches [assemblies] of the saints" (I Corinthians 14:33).

Today we have a generation brought up on "Rock 'n' Roll" music. In many places, they seem to have brought it over into that which is supposed to be the church. The loud and blustery sounds drown out what Paul has to say here. Older people in these churches have been seen to cringe at such blustery, rude and irreligious noise. Then certain denominations are characterized by excessive noise making in their worship. One would think that they thought the Lord was hard of hearing. And they all pray aloud (and loud) at the same time. This seems to be in violation and contradiction with what Paul teaches in I Corinthians 14:16. Paul asks, "How will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say 'Amen' at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?" (NKJV). If a man was praying in a language foreign to those who heard it, they could not intelligently say "Amen." They would not know what the man said. It seems to have been their practice back then for one to lead out in prayer and others to say "Amen" at the end of the prayer. And today how can people say "Amen" at the end of prayer when everyone is praying aloud at the same time? No one can understand what is being said, and it is not "done decently and in order."

Yes, let everything be done decently and in order by the hymns being selected and the worship being planned out in advance. Let everything be done in a context and an atmosphere of dignity and respect. We are approaching the great God of eternity in whom we live and move and have our being. We come in awe before Him. But at the same time may our worship not degenerate into lifeless formalism and ritualism. As we direct our worship "decently and in order," let us worship the Lord in spirit and in truth (John 4:24) as it comes from our hearts.

Perhaps there are other principles that could be called to your attention involving the public assembly of the church. However, these are enough for us to seriously ponder upon now, with a view to putting them into practice. Yes, there are definite principles that govern the public assembly of the church. And they are what the Lord wants. □

THE MODEL PRAYER EXAMINED AND EXPOUNDED

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

—Matthew 6:9-13, KJV



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THAT WHICH is commonly called the "Lord's Prayer" is found in Luke 11:1-4 and Matthew 6:9-13. (But it really would be better to call it the "Model Prayer," or the "Disciples' Prayer," as the sinless Christ would not be praying such a prayer, asking forgiveness). The two references to this prayer in the Scriptures were spoken on two different occasions. In the account in Luke, the disciples of Christ were so impressed by the prayer life of Jesus that one of them besought the Lord, saying, "Lord, teach us to pray." In Matthew's account, the prayer is incorporated into the larger context of the Sermon on the Mount. Repetition certainly is a key in effectively getting teachings across, and the Lord used it.

Too many times today we have passed over the words of this prayer, treating them as well-known, but elementary, platitudes, whereas they are anything but this. In all that is said and implied, their depth and scope are greater and more far reaching than we realize. As the giving of the Ten Commandments started with a pronouncement of the reality of God, then was broken down into two tables, the first having to do with God and the second, man (Exodus 20:1-17), the way that we are to approach God in prayer is accordingly presented (Matthew 6:9-13). After recognizing and personally addressing God, petition for the things of God comes first and the things

of man come next, second (last). As in everything else, God comes first (Matthew 6:33), then man. Then the prayer is neatly summed up in its conclusion and doxology.

The Lord said, "After this manner therefore pray ye." Although there may be nothing wrong in reciting this prayer as a group, we believe it is not meant that the form of the words be used ritualistically. Rather, the wording seems simply to be suggestive guidelines of how we should approach God, what our petitions should be about, and the priorities in the order of presentation to God. In this study, in a concise manner, we will try to understand the original meaning as intended here, and a more extended and expanded meaning in the light of the rest of the New Testament Scriptures. Like the impressed and inquisitive disciple who approached Jesus, this writer comes humbly as an inadequate student and practitioner who would like to learn more about prayer.

An outline of the prayer, which seems quite simple, yet basic and inclusive, follows:

GOD ADDRESSED: "Our Father which art in heaven"

1. GOD'S PART OF THE PRAYER:

- (1) "Hallowed be thy name"
- (2) "Thy kingdom come"
- (3) "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"

2. MAN'S PART OF THE PRAYER:

- (1) "Give us this day our daily bread"
- (2) "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors"
- (3) "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

CONCLUDING DOXOLOGY AND AMEN: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

GOD ADDRESSED:

"Our Father Which Art in Heaven"

God is to be addressed as "Our *Father*." This is most meaningful. This implies that we are His children and that He is accordingly approachable as our Father. And from the New Testament perspective, we are children of God through the new birth (John 3:1-5; Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26, 27). "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6). God is a personal God and very approachable, and prayer is uniquely a privilege of a Christian.

This prayer cannot be prayed selfishly. Notice we are to pray "Our Father." We cannot approach God, and pray this prayer, without acknowledging and including others. This truth is to be kept before us throughout all of the prayer in the different parts of the petitions.

The One to whom we pray is not bound by earthly limitations and imperfections. This is implied when we address Him as "our Father which art *in heaven*." He is above all and knows all in reference to His earthly creatures.

GOD'S PART OF THE PRAYER:

Genesis 1:1 reads, "In the beginning God..." He is before all things, and the cause of all things. He is the "Father of spirits" (Hebrews 12:9). "In Him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28). He is the great "I AM" (Exodus 3:14), the "high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity" (Isaiah 57:15)—"from everlasting to everlasting," He is God (Psalms 90:2). Anyway that you choose to look at it, it is always fitting and proper that God and the things of God be considered and dealt with first. Although we are made in His likeness and image (Genesis 1:26), we are fallen creatures and must always come humbly to the "throne of grace."

The three petitions that we see making up God's part of the prayer seem to be almost parallel and overlapping in their meaning, as they unfold before us, and then they are descending in their application. We see God's high and holy purpose in reference to Himself and man. His name is to be hallowed, His kingdom is to come, and His will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

"Hallowed Be Thy Name"

The name of God is revealed in His character. His name is hallowed when his character is made known (by word of mouth, and especially as it is seen embodied in our lives). Subsequently, the Lord Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). As creatures of God, or His supposed people, by not displaying God's attributes in our lives in the way we live, "the name of God is blasphemed" (Romans 2:21-24); we make His name become a curse word. And, we are sorry to say, the sad situation now is that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). We are a fallen race of people. So, uppermost, above all things, it is God's desire that His name again be hallowed as it should be, and in His attributes being made known, He be glorified (which mankind has not been accomplishing). And thus, in Him being glorified, His overall purpose for man will be accomplished.

"Thy Kingdom Come"

The Old Testament had repeatedly foretold of a coming kingdom, unique and everlasting in nature (Psalms 89:3, 4; Isaiah 9:6, 7; 11:1-10; Daniel 2:44; etc.). With their appearance upon the scene, John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus preached that this kingdom was at hand (Matthew 3:1, 2; 4:17). Later this is

(Continued on Next Page)

THE MODEL PRAYER EXAMINED AND EXPOUNDED

(Continued from Previous Page)

defined as the church (Matthew 16:18, 19), a spiritual kingdom (Matthew 18:3; Colossians 1:13; 1 Peter 2:9). In anticipation of its coming, the disciples were instructed to pray, "Thy kingdom come." Then it became a reality in its coming and inception on the day of Pentecost in the second chapter of Acts (in connection with this, notice Mark 9:1). But, in an extended and expanded sense, we can still pray this prayer today. We can pray, "Thy kingdom come" in reference to evangelism, extending the boundaries of the kingdom. We also can pray, looking forward to the coming of its eternal phase in heaven, even as John the Revelator noted and prayed, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).

"Thy Will Be Done in Earth, As It Is in Heaven"

We said that these three petitions, making up God's part of the prayer, seem almost to be parallel and overlapping. God's name is to be hallowed as He is glorified. Man has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). But with the coming of the kingdom, and man's spiritual restoration to God through Christ Jesus, man is in a better position to accomplish God's glory again. Now parallel with this in meaning is His will being done on earth as it is in heaven. His will is accomplished in His attributes being made manifest in redeemed mankind, and thus His name being hallowed and glorified. And, consequently, including all three aspects of God's part of the model prayer being realized, Paul writes from this panoramic view, "Unto him [God] be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Ephesians 3:21).

Perhaps more needs to be said in particular about God's will being done "in earth, as it is in heaven." How is God's will done in heaven? Perhaps we are to think in terms of angels rendering obedience, and man's need of accordingly being in harmony with the heavenly Father. Perhaps we are to think in terms of God's plan for errant mankind, which was in His mind from eternity, now being unfolded and taking place on earth. Many thoughts can and may be thought, and they all will point back to His glory being accomplished.

MAN'S PART OF THE PRAYER:

Having summarized the things of God as seen in the first part of the prayer, we now approach man's part. Specifically in man's part, the first two petitions are for daily bread and forgiveness. However, these two requests may be representative of all of man's

physical and spiritual needs (since man is body and spirit, 1 Corinthians 6:20). And expressive of this, Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Then as an outcropping of this, a third request enters the picture, "lead us not into temptation..." The temptations, or trials, come in connection

(Continued on Page 12)

BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. What descendants of Abraham (Jewish people) in the Old Testament held positions of importance in Gentile governments?
2. What were the names of the sons of Joseph?
3. What is the only book in the Bible where the country of India is mentioned?
4. In what book of the Old Testament is the word "hypocrite(s)" found more than any other Old Testament book?
5. The writer of Proverbs says that "a word fitly spoken is like" what?
6. Which is the shortest book in the Old Testament?
7. Why did Jonah get on a ship going to Tarshish instead of going to Nineveh to preach, according to what he said later?
8. What city in the Bible, noted for its commerce in the ancient world, is called a "mart of nations"?
9. What are the dynasty names of rulers of different countries (or peoples) found in the Bible (and what do these names seem to mean)?
10. What are two other names the Sea of Galilee is called in the New Testament (and what was the "sea" called during the Old Testament period)?
11. What was the name of the angel who made the announcement to Zacharias and to Mary of the coming birth of John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus?
12. What two men were partners with Simon Peter in their fishing enterprise, who likewise became disciples of Christ?
13. Were the instructions of Christ to "shake off the dust of your feet" as a witness against a city that would not receive his disciples ever literally carried out in the book of Acts?
14. When Jesus miraculously fed the 5000, what seating arrangement was used as the disciples distributed the food among the people?
15. What occasions are Peter and John found doing things together, which shows their close affinity to one another?
16. What does the nick-name "Barnabas," given by the apostles to this brother in Christ, mean (and what was his original name)?
17. In early New Testament times, of what religious sect did the high priest belong?
18. Was Saul (Paul) involved in the death of other Christians besides Stephen before his conversion to Christ?
19. Where were the followers of Christ first called Christians?
20. Who was the first apostle to be put to death and how did he die?

(NOTE: Answers found elsewhere in this issue of the paper)

READERS'

...Response

APOLOGY: Please accept our humble apology for slowness in getting correspondence answered. "We" have no staff of secretaries, etc. to handle such, and this is done by the "editor" as time allows. Be it known that you are sincerely appreciated. ☐

GEORGIA:

■ "Your *SWORD AND STAFF* has been a lighthouse to me and I appreciate its light..."

SOUTH CAROLINA:

■ "Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ... Just to let you know, much good has been done with the study of *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND* in and outside the church!

"If you will, send us 10 (ten) of each of the tracts for study. We thank you in advance..."

"Thank you and God bless and keep you."

NORTH CAROLINA:

■ "I read volume 44 [number 3] of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* with great interest as I do each one that comes. Thank you for a tremendous publication..."

"I appreciated the song, 'His Church is Marching On' and would like to have 200 copies. You stated that there is no charge but we will be happy to pay for them if you will include an invoice. It is a beautiful song with great meaning, in my opinion..." (E-mail)

TENNESSEE:

■ "Don't mail me this paper anymore. Thank you."

■ "I love to receive your paper! It is always so uplifting to me. Please don't ever stop."

"I would like for you to please send it to some other devoted Christians I know..."

"Thank you. Also, please send the copies of booklets, etc. requested. I have enclosed a check to help on the cost."

KENTUCKY:

■ "Please send me 110 copies of the song 'His Church Is Marching On.' I think it is a very beautiful song and

I'm sure our congregation will enjoy singing it.

"Many thanks for all you do for the Lord and your stand for the true gospel. We have very few left that preach and teach the truth as written in God's Word." (E-mail)

PENNSYLVANIA:

■ "Please send 3 *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND* and 50 'After Baptism, What?'. Enclosed is a check to be used in your work. Keep it up."

OHIO:

■ "I am writing to order 60 of the song, 'His Church Is Marching On; also, a few of your tracts..."

"Sorry to be so long in writing. I am sending a check and trust it is more than enough to cover the cost of this order. Anything over, use for your good work."

"I appreciate your faithfulness over the years."

■ "In reading the "Readers' Response" section in Volume 44, Number Two, the question of why you use the KJV caught my eye."

"I read both it and your reply, sensed the tone of both items and appreciated your explanation. However, I have questions concerning the KJV and the scholars involved, as to why they chose to transliterate key words instead translating them."

"The two that I think have caused the greatest confusion in the church since the arrival of the KJV are "baptize" and "deacon"..."

"I've been told that King James himself did not believe in immersion so he ordered the scholars to find a way around **baptizo**, and of course no one wanted to be considered a "servant" in the social strata of the day..."

"A careful study of all of God's Word, regardless of translation or version, will reveal to us the truth contained within, if we are honestly seeking His will and His way..." (E-mail)

Transliteration of "Deacon" and "Baptize" in the KJV

Perhaps the reason for the use of the words "deacon" and "baptize" (the transliterated words, instead of an explicit translation) in the King James Version of the Bible is to be found in the Bishop's Bible. This version came out in 1568 (KJV in 1611). The Bishop's Bible was the official base that the King James translators were directed to use in making their newer version. They were instructed to follow the Bishop's Bible whenever possible. The Bishop's Bible made use of the transliterated words "deacon" (when referring to an "office" in the church), and "baptize" extensively for immerse.

For example, notice the Bishop's Bible rendering of the following Scriptures:

Philippians 1:1, "Paul and Timotheus the servants of Iesus Christ: To all the saintes in Christ Iesus, which are at Philippos, with the bishops and **deacons**." (Continued on Next Page)

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

1 Timothy 3:12, "Let the **deacons** be the husbands of one wife, and such as can rule the children well, and their own householdes."

The word "deacon" (KJV) is used only in reference to the "office" of a deacon, and in all of the other places **diakonos** is translated with the words "servant" or "minister" (almost 30 in all, I believe). So, it would seem the KJV scholars did not think of the word in a demeaning way, but appropriately used it to show a difference when speaking of an "office" in the church, and the other terms when the word was used generically. Check my web site for information on this:

<http://jgibbons.8m.com/DIAKONOS-deacon.htm>

In reference to transliterated "baptize," we would need to find out why the Bishop's Bible made use of this instead of actually translating the word immerse (since the KJV simply followed their model). But, like you said, if we study the Scriptures without bias (even without the word being fully translated) we will understand that "baptism" is immersion. Since this word "baptize" has been embedded into the English language for several hundred years, it is very much a part of our religious vocabulary. In the light of the Scriptures on this subject, and its Greek definition, there should be no problem or question about its meaning. Therefore, we continue to use the word.

INDIANA:

■ "Here is a little donation. I hope it helps you in some way to spread the Word as it is in the Bible. I enjoy **THE SWORD AND STAFF**. I read it all every time."

MICHIGAN:

■ "I would like to receive **THE SWORD AND STAFF** ...Also, would you help me know the proper way to have elders chosen?"

ELDERS IN THE CHURCH

Because of limited space, we will simply highlight some Scriptures to study. These Scriptures have a bearing upon men becoming elders, being set aside, and being elders. It would seem that elders become elders more by selection than election. A study of the key words like "ordain" in the original language will prove helpful in understanding what is meant. We must use Scriptural reasoning in the light of these references to know how to go about setting elders aside to their work.

Position Set in the Church by the Lord

● "And **he gave** some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and **some, pastors and teachers** [refers to elders]" (Ephesians 4:11).

● "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which **the Holy Ghost [Spirit] hath made you overseers**, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

The Position is to Be Desired

● "This is a true saying, If a man **desire the office** of a bishop [overseer, elder], he desireth a good work" (1 Timothy 3:1).

"Must" Qualifications to Be Met

● "A bishop [overseer, elder] then **must be...**" (1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9)

● "Moreover he **must have a good report** of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (1 Timothy 3:7).

● "And let these **also** [like the elders being "proved"] **first be proved**; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless" (1 Timothy 3:10).

Faithful N.T. Preachers to Set Them Aside to Their Work

● "And when **they** [Paul and Barnabas] **had ordained them elders** in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23).

● "For this cause left I thee [Titus] in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and **ordain elders** in every city, as I had appointed thee" (Titus 1:5).

● "**Lay hands** suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure" (1 Timothy 5:22).

MISSOURI:

■ "I appreciate **THE SWORD AND STAFF** very much. Helps me in my Bible studies.

"May God continue to bless your work and keeping it coming from the press.

"Enclosed is a small check for the tracts."

MISSISSIPPI:

■ "Thank you for the tracts and the book. **NOBODY LEFT BEHIND** is great. Please send me 6 copies. I want to share that message with others.

"God bless you as you continue to publish the gospel through your publications."

■ "God bless you for another issue of **THE SWORD AND STAFF**. Keep up the good, gospel work!...

"Please send me the book and tracts marked on enclosed paper. The balance of the check is for helping with your good work.

"God bless us every one!"

Editor's Note: Check out the back page. The marker (►) indicates new materials that we have added to our growing arsenal. They are: (1) "**Advice I Would Give a New Christian**" and (2) "**Random Thoughts and Suggestions on LOVE and MARRIAGE.**" We believe that both titles contain practical and helpful information on these subjects. See all that are available. Order a supply. There is no charge, but any help with the expense of printing and mailing would be much appreciated.

TEXAS:

■ *"Please send me 100 copies of 'The Church is Marching On'—How true! I also would like to have 25 copies of (tracts)..."*

"I am sending a donation to help pay for expenses of printing and mailing.

"I love your paper. God bless all of your efforts to continue to preach the Word of God."

NEBRASKA:

■ *"Please do not send any more literature to [address]...I live here now and absolutely do not want to receive any literature from you!!!"*

■ *"We have received THE SWORD AND STAFF for many years and enjoy it so very much. We apologize for our lack of payment for such a long time, but thank you for continuing to send it to us..."*

■ *"I would like...tracts listed in THE SWORD AND STAFF. We have been enjoying every issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF, many articles that aren't preached upon any more.*

"Enclosed find check...to help with mailing of THE SWORD AND STAFF. Thank you."

CALIFORNIA:

■ *"Please discontinue sending THE SWORD AND STAFF paper. I don't know who instigated my name on the mailing list, but I can't have you sending any more copies."*

■ *"Please send 10 of each of the tracts which I have marked. I would also like the publication of NOBODY LEFT BEHIND: INSIGHT INTO 'END-TIME' PROPHECIES..."*

OREGON:

■ *"Thank you for your labor in reaching as many people as possible with the truth published in THE SWORD AND STAFF.*

"I am in sorrow for what I see in too many congregations of the Lord's church regarding the use of the Old Testament which, I believe, is half the foundation of the church...I just don't know how congregations can survive without giving equal attention to the Old Testament with the New. Without the Old Testament background, I see so much truth being missed and twisted by the untaught and unstable. It has been (the number of faithful congregations are becoming fewer and fewer) and is and always will be destructive to the Lord's church. Why is this happening? If you see this as a problem in the church, can you put something in your future SWORD AND STAFF publications to warn and encourage people in this matter?..."

The Value of the Old Testament

I think I understand what you are saying. Really, the Old Testament is a foundation that under girds the entire New Testament. It is repeatedly quoted in the New Testament. It has been said that all of the Old Testament books are quoted in some way in the New Testament Scriptures except Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon.

Without a knowledge of the Old Testament, and without being acquainted with its many personalities, much of the meaning of the New Testament would be lost to us. Anyway that you look at it, the Old Testament was a "schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Galatians 3:24). It shows our inability of being saved by law, and highlights our need of a Savior. It had a "shadow of good things to come" (Hebrews 10:1). We still ponder its great prophecies. Its lessons for us are always timely, and almost endless (1 Corinthians 10:6, 11). Consider all the heroes of faith listed in Hebrews 11. Looking back to the Old Testament, Paul said, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). Therefore, let us never cease to study the 39 books of the Old Testament, as well as the 27 of the New Testament.

UNITED STATES:

■ *"How do you go about ordering these books? [NOBODY LEFT BEHIND]...Please let me know. I have heard a lot about this book and would like to read it. Please, and thank you..." (E-mail)*

■ *"After hearing about THE SWORD AND STAFF from my grandfather, I decided to check it out for myself. I must say that I am quite impressed with your writings and Biblical knowledge. I found your newsletter very informative and I'd like to read more..." (E-mail)*

■ *"What would you say to a person who has not come to the knowledge of truth, but wants to know how to pray and what to pray for. I am trying to guide this person to the truth but how do I tell her that her prayers are not heard because she is not yet a Christian? Do you know what verses in the N.T. I can show her to make her see?" (E-mail)*

A Non-Christian Praying

I would tell the person that they need to understand just where they are in relation to the Lord, and then go from there.

Prayer, as a way of life, is uniquely a privilege of a Christian. Our Lord taught his disciples to pray, "Our father who art in heaven" (Matthew 6:9). To call God "Father," in the New Testament sense, a person must be a Christian, a child of God. This comes about when a person is born of water and the Spirit (John 3:5; Acts 2:38). Galatians 3, verses 26 and 27, read, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Then we read, "And because ye are sons [children], God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6). Ephesians 2:18 tells us, "For through him [Christ] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." The non-Christian does not have the Spirit. He or she cannot come as a child of God.

(Continued on Next Page)

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

Basically, the only prayer open to a sinner outside of Christ is one of seeking God. Cornelius was such a man seeking God, and it is said that his prayer was heard (Acts 10:1-6, 31). He was to be told what he must do to be saved (Acts 10:6; 11:14). He was not heard in the sense that his prayer made him a Christian, but that someone would come to him and tell him what to do to become a Christian. Saul of Tarsus, not yet a Christian, was involved in prayer and fasting three days and nights (Acts 9:1-18), and was yet still in his sins. When Ananias finally came to him, he said, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized [immersed], and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

Having accepted Christ, a person is a "born again" child of God and is in a position to come boldly (freely) to the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:14-16). □



THE MODEL PRAYER EXAMINED AND EXPOUNDED

(Continued from Page 8)

with the categories of the first two petitions, involving the physical and the spiritual.

"Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread"

The thought behind how God is to be addressed as "*our Father*" is brought before us again here. We are to pray, "Give *us* this day *our* daily bread." Notice the emphasis on "us" and "our." We cannot pray this prayer selfishly. We must always have an eye to, and be sensitive of, the needs of others as well as our own. To pray otherwise is unacceptable.

Explicit trust and reliance on God are implied here. Reference to "daily bread" calls to remembrance the manna supplied by God to the children of Israel on a daily basis in the wilderness. The beautiful and reassuring words spoken further by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount ring out again (Matthew 6:25-34). Then his summary statement gets our attention, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness: and *all these things shall be added to you*" (Matthew 6:33). "All these things" refer to the basics, food and clothing. The apostle Paul wrote, "And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content" (1 Timothy 6:8). As we daily trust God for sustaining sustenance, let us not forget our part of the equation (Genesis 3:19; 2 Thessalonians 3:10). Someone has said, "God gives every bird its food, but he doesn't throw it into its nest." However, God blesses in many ways (Matthew 5:45; Acts 14:17), even blessing unbelievers. Then from his personal experience, even in the Old Testament, David wrote, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not

seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Psalms 37:25).

"And Forgive Us Our Debts, As We Forgive Our Debtors"

Here, yet again, in this petition the collective "us," "we," and "our" are held before us. This readily reminds us that "*all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). When "we" pray this part of the prayer in reference to debts and forgiveness, "we" cannot pray it without being reminded that "we" are all in the "same boat." The need is universal. And that for which we pray, we must be willing to extend to others to receive ourselves. Then, from a more extended view, we cannot pray this prayer without having evangelistic feelings toward a world lost in sin.

Like in the first part of man's part of the model prayer, praying for "daily bread," the word "daily" lingers with us. The possibility of sin is still there. We cannot pray self-righteously like the Pharisee in the parable of the Pharisee and publican praying in the temple (Luke 18:9-14). With the publican, we must pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (18:13). The apostle John wrote, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8), but reassuringly he continues, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1:9). In repentance we confess our sins (Acts 8:22), not to go right back to sinning, but to get the victory as we cease and desist committing them.

Sin is an awful thing in the sight of a sinless God who says, "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16). And the person who has been forgiven by God, and realizes the magnitude of what has taken place, will have no problem in forgiving others. In fact, this is actually tied in with his own forgiveness.

"And Lead Us Not into Temptation, But Deliver Us from Evil"

The words "temptation" and "evil" stand out here. Each can have one of two meanings and applications in the Scriptures. The word commonly translated "temptation" in the New Testament means to prove, to try. (1) One may be tried through hardships and tribulations that come his way, or (2) the trials may take the form of outright temptations to sin. Likewise, the word "evil" can refer to (1) non-moral, bad situations (like the coming of old age with its physical infirmities being called "evil days," Ecclesiastes 12:1-7). And, obviously, (2) "evil" basically refers to sin and that which is morally wrong. Looking back, in an expanded consideration of this, we can think of a direct tie-in of not being led into temptations (or trials) in connection with the physical and the spiritual (the

(Continued on Page 14)

Today is the Day

Today is the day to begin to do the best I can,
For I may never have this moment or pass this way
again.
Today is the day to begin to be all that I should por-
tray,
For the rest of my life is shaped and molded by the
action I take today.
Today is the day of beginning of eternity for me,
In the Book of Life is my record—how does it look,
my God, to Thee?—*Selected*



BARBS

...with a POINT

IF YOU doubt, don't (Romans 14:23).

Converted does not mean that we are perfect, but that we are committed.

A person may be immersed in water, but to many people it amounts to no more than "pouring water on a duck's back" as far as New Testament baptism is concerned, if they have not really surrendered themselves to the Lord.

If you don't live right, when you die you will be dead wrong.

If "everybody is doing it," that is no reason for us to "do it," but it is a good reason for us to question whether we should be "doing it" (Matthew 7:13,14; 1 John 5:19).

True religion is not play—it is for "real"—and we should not play around with our religion.

The person who thinks he must do his "own thing" come hell or high waters will probably wish he had some water when it comes to hell.

Christianity "lite" won't give much light to a world lost in the darkness of sin.

There is something worse than not becoming a Christian; that is, becoming one then going back on the Lord (2 Peter 2:20-22).

It is probably harder to be honest with yourself than with anyone else.

If you find the study of the Bible and the simple worship of the New Testament boring, then you are a "sitting duck" for the devil.

Too much of modern worship is man-centered and entertainment-oriented.

We need to forget about religious *movements*, with our denominational allegiance to them, and *move* on back to the church of the New Testament in all of its purity.

Freedom without defined laws and set boundaries is anarchy (and, morally speaking, lasciviousness).

It is strange, but we live in a society where if you speak against people being mean, some would say you are "mean-spirited."

The "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2) largely controls the airwaves today.

To accent the negative without emphasizing the positive (and to accent the positive without emphasizing the negative) is to have an imbalanced and unhealthy approach to religion.

Christianity and patriotism are not synonymous, although many people seem to think so.

Does God like listening to rock 'n' roll music? Evidently some churches think that He does, as they have a concert for Him every Sunday and call it worship (but this is more like catering to man and his carnal taste for worldly music than to God).

Emotional and impetuous people can get things done faster (and things undone faster).

We can't expect some people to go the "second mile" when they won't even go the first and come to church.

It is always nice to be nice, and if you are not kind, you are the wrong kind.

Girlie boys (and men) with their long hair and jewelry (and sissy demeanor) are an affront to real manhood, as they make a glaring exhibit of our mixed up modern world.

Church problems when they are not dealt with become bigger problems.

Man-made denominational fences keep the goats in, while sheep unfenced are free to graze in the wide open, green pastures of God's Word. □

He Understands

He understands what you're going through,
He understands, for, He's been there, too.
He'll help you make it—give Him a try.
He will dry the tears that you now cry,
He will soothe your sore and aching heart
He will mend what death has torn apart
He will be there for you all the way
He will turn the night to endless day
He will help you to face tomorrow
He'll help you overcome the sorrow
He understands what you're going through,
He understands, for, He's been there, too.

—H. L. Gradowith

THE MODEL PRAYER EXAMINED AND EXPOUNDED

(Continued from Page 12)

petitions for bread and forgiveness of sin, being representative of these two categories of man's being and needs). Trials and the overt temptation to sin confront us in these areas. We wish to be spared from this.

God allowed the devil to put Job to the test involving calamities that came his way, which could have been turned into temptation in the moral sense. His wife suggested that he curse God and die. But he passed both tests. He came out approved. After his baptism, the Lord Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness where he was tempted of the devil to sin (Luke 4:1-13). We know that he did not succumb to sin. James writes, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (James 1:13). However, although God does not directly tempt us, He may allow temptation. But we have these reassuring words spoken by the apostle Paul, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Yes, Lord, you know our limitations. Lead us not into temptation, whether it be physical or spiritual, (that which we cannot handle), but give us grace whereby we may come through all of this victoriously. May deliverance be ours.

"For Thine Is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory. Amen"

This doxology and concluding "amen" fittingly brings these guidelines for prayer to a close, the basic concerns of God and man having been dealt with. Everything begins and ends with God. The "amen" puts an affirmative exclamation and agreement on all that has been prayed. Yes, verily, verily; so be it. We should never pray anything that we cannot in confidence and full assurance say "amen" about. □

"And He Died"

HENRY Goodyear, a merchant in London, was very much inclined to scoff at the Bible and its teaching. One day his niece persuaded him to go to church "just to please her." Greatly to her grief, the lesson was from the fifth chapter of Genesis. As these verses were read, she could only shrink back in her place. "Why had God permitted such an uninteresting list to be read this day, of all days?"

Mr. Goodyear made no comment as they walked home. The only difference was that he was a little quieter and more thoughtful. And yet, with every

passing footstep, every tread of his own feet, every throb of his heart, came the refrain, "*And he died.*" Up in his room that night, Mr. Goodyear seemed to hear the clock strike the words, "And he died."

The next morning, busy at his ledger as usual, his pen seemed to trace the words from the Bible, "And he died." Finally, he could stand it no longer, and he reached for his half-forgotten family Bible, and read the words from the Bible lesson again. "All the days of Adam were nine hundred and thirty years; *and he died.*" "All the days of Seth were nine hundred years; *and he died.*" "All the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years; *and he died.*" Right to the end of the chapter he read. Wicked or good, the same simple story was told of each, "He lived...*and he died.*"

By this uninteresting list of facts, Mr. Goodyear's life was entirely changed. He was living—but he would have to die, and what then?

The truth is, you are not ready to live—until you are ready to die! As the song asks, "Are you ready for that day to come?" Be assured that it is coming and will come! Really, are you ready? —**Selected** □

The Will of God

The will of God will never take you,
Where the grace of God cannot keep you,
Where the arms of God cannot support you,
Where the riches of God cannot supply your needs,
Where the power of God cannot endow you.

The will of God will never take you,
Where the Spirit of God cannot work through you,
Where the wisdom of God cannot teach you,
Where the army of God cannot protect you,
Where the hands of God cannot mold you.

The will of God will never take you
Where the love of God cannot enfold you,
Where the mercies of God cannot sustain you,
Where the peace of God cannot calm your fears,
Where the authority of God cannot overrule for you.

The will of God will never take you,
Where the comfort of God cannot dry your tears,
Where the Word of God cannot feed you,
Where the miracles of God cannot be done for you,
Where the omnipresence of God cannot find you.

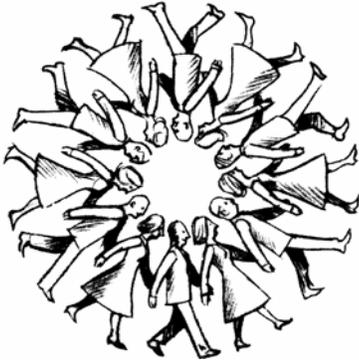
"Everything happens for a purpose. We may not see the wisdom of it all now but trust and believe in the Lord that everything is for the best."

"The way to be anxious about nothing is to be prayerful about everything."

—**Author Unknown**

"Pray Without Ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17).

Confused About Which Way to Go?



Go back to the local, autonomous, independent, and undenominational church of the New Testament and you will be right on course.

The Palm Tree

THE SCRIPTURE says: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree" (Ps. 92:12). Let us see what this comparison means: "The palm grows not in the depths of the forest or in a fertile loam, but in the desert. Its verdure often springs apparently from the scorching dust. It is a friendly lighthouse, guiding the traveler to the spot where water is to be found." The tree is remarkable for its beauty, its erect aspiring growth, its leafy canopy, its waving plumes, the emblem of praise in all ages. Its very foliage is the symbol of joy and exultation. It never fades, and the dust never settles upon it. It was, therefore, twisted into the booths of the feasts of tabernacles, was borne aloft by the multitude that accompanied the Messiah to Jerusalem, and it is represented as in the hands of the redeemed in Heaven. For usefulness, the tree is unrivalled. Gibbon says that the natives of Syria speak of 360 uses to which the palm is applied. Its shade refreshes the traveler. Its fruit restores his strength. When his soul fails for thirst, it announces water. Its stones are ground for his camels. Its leaves are made into couches, its boughs into fences and walls, and its fibers into ropes or rigging. Its best fruit, moreover, is borne in old age; the finest dates being often gathered when the tree reaches a hundred years. It sends, too, from the same root a large number of suckers, which in time, form a forest by their growth. What an emblem of the righteous in the desert of a guilty world! —*Joseph Angus* □

Why I, Personally, Do Not Observe Christmas

1. We don't know when Christ was born, and if God had wanted this day observed in a special way the Holy Spirit would have let us know about it (John 14:26; 16:13; II Timothy 3:16,17).

2. We haven't been commanded to observe Christmas, and we are only commanded to teach men "to observe all things" that Christ has commanded (Matthew 28:18-20).

3. There are many false, irreligious, and pagan things tied in with the observance of Christmas which are incompatible and antagonistic to Christianity (Psalms 119:104; Eph. 5:9, 10; Philip. 4:8).—*J.E.G.* □

Don't Let the Ice Sink Your Boat

TONY was a professional salt-water fisherman. He explained how he cruised out to sea each morning, coming back each evening with his catch.

"Is there a part of the year you can't go out?" I asked.

"The winter—too risky. Below freezing, the spray starts forming ice on the bow. The added weight makes the boat lie lower in the water. Inexperienced guys fishing in winter have allowed so much ice to build up on the bow that in heavy seas the bow starts to dip beneath the waves. One dip too deep and she goes down. Only thing to do for it is to grab an ax and knock the ice off every once in a while. If you forget and let it build up, you're dead."

Think of that bow-ice as representing sin. Little by little it builds up until you can't stay spiritually afloat a moment longer. We modern believers face a similar challenge.

Little by little, day by day, let's keep the "ice" off our bows. Let's not wait until its too late, until our "bow" dips too deep to recover.—*Pulpit Helps* □

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Answers to: BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. (1) Genesis 41:38-46; (2) Acts 7:22 (possibly); (3) Daniel 2:47-49; 6:1-3; (4) Esther 2:16,17; (5) Esther 8:1,2,15; 10:2,3; 2. Genesis 41:50-52; 3. Esther 1:1; 8:9; 4. Job (7 times: Job 13:16; 15:34; 17:8; 20:5; 27:8; 34:30; 36:13); 5. Proverbs 25:11; 6. Obadiah; 7. Jonah 3:4-4:3; 8. Isaiah 23:1-3,8; Ezekiel 27:3; 9. (1) Egypt (Genesis 41:46): Pharaoh (meaning, big house); (2) Canaanite tribe (Genesis 20:2,15): Abimelech (thought to be dynasty name; meaning, father of the king); (3) Kingdoms in Palestine in N.T. times (Matthew 2:3): Herod (meaning, a hero, heroic); (4) Roman Empire (John 19:15): Caesar (meaning, proper name of Julius and Augustus, later used as imperial title); (5) Ethiopia (Acts 8:27): Candace (queens in Ethiopia; meaning, ruler of children); 10. Matthew 4:18 = Luke 5:1 and John 6:1; Numbers 34:11; 11. Luke 1:11-38; 12. Luke 5:10,11; 13. Luke 9:5; Acts 13:49 (14) - 52; 14. Mark 6:32-44 (Luke 9:10-17); 15. Luke 22:7,8; John 18:15; John 20:1-10; John 21:1-7; John 21:18-22; Acts 3:1-11; Acts 8:14-18; 16. Acts 4:36; 17. Acts 5:17; 18. Acts 7:58-8:1; Acts 26:10; 19. Acts 11:26; 20. Acts 12:1,2. □

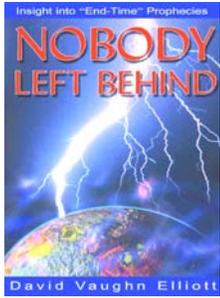
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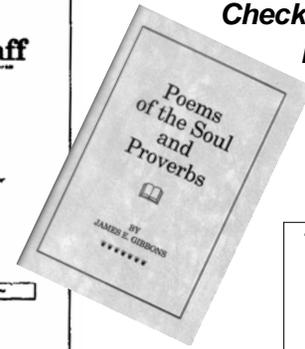
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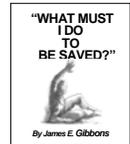
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