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ASK DOCTOR CHAPMAN
By James Blaine Chapman

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INTRODUCTION TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

This publication consists of 306 questions to J. B. Chapman and his 306 answers to those questions. There was no numbering in the printed edition of either the main divisions of the book, 27 in number, or of the 306 sets of questions and answers. In this digital edition, I have numbered the XXVII main divisions with Roman Numerals, and I have numbered the sets of questions and answers in numerical order across all book divisions throughout the book, assigning the same number to each question and its corresponding answer. Also, I have shown in the Index below the range of Question-Answer numbers under each main division. This numbering was done to make it

easier for the user to refer to any question in the book with its corresponding answer. A user who makes note of the assigned number for a set can do a "find" or "search" for that number and move directly to it in this document. -- DVM

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I
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON THE BIBLE

QUESTION #1 -- I have sometimes been troubled over questions arising regarding our English Bible. As a child I thought our English Bible was inspired word by word by the Spirit of the Lord. When I found that the Bible was originally written in Hebrew and Greek and translated into English by mere men, I was puzzled. Then when I found scholars claim some translations are more or less inaccurate, and that some passages, like John 8:1-11, do not have authority in the original at all, and that there are a good many English translations, I was still very much troubled. Finally, I have come to the place where I think I may state my faith as follows: I believe that the Holy Scriptures as found in the original languages were verbally and literally inspired by the Spirit of God, and that although there are some minor errors and uncertainties in our English translation, yet no vital history, doctrine or duty is affected thereby, and that therefore our English Bible is dependable and trustworthy. Do you think this statement a sound and proper one?

ANSWER #1 -- Yes, I think that is a very good way to state it The strictest sense of inspiration must apply alone to the original words in which the Holy Scriptures appeared. Providentially, the languages in which the Scriptures originally appeared became "dead languages" soon after the Bible was completed, and have remained stationary ever since, so that the original sources are dependable, as would not have been the case if Hebrew and Greek had

continued as growing languages among men. Translations into the living languages of men, to be accurate, must, first of all, be based upon the original languages, and in the second place must be correct in the current languages in which the translations appear. This is obviously a task for scholars from both considerations. In the first place, none of the original manuscripts (for you know the printing press is relatively a modern invention) are in existence -- not even any of the books of the New Testament. The very earliest date from the fourth century after the birth of Christ. So that as time passes new sources are discovered in the matter of manuscripts and quotations in literature other than the Scriptures themselves. All these must be considered in the endeavor to find just precisely what word the Holy Spirit used in the revelation of God's will to man. Then the living language into which the translation is made must be considered, for translation has regard for the accuracy of the current, as well as of the "dead language." When the committee on revision did its work in the last century, bringing out what is now called, "The Revised Version," and a little later, "The American Revised Version," it was claimed they discovered more than two thousand errors in our Authorized Version which was translated in 1611. But many of these "errors" were occasioned by changes in the English language since the former translation appeared. In 1611, for example, which was used for persons as well as for things, prevent meant precede, ear meant plow, let meant hinder, and Ghost meant Spirit. But in the nearly three hundred years these words became obsolete and translation required the use of words which English speaking people understood. This was no fault of the original languages, and no fault of the translators of 1611. And if the world stands, the English language will change some more and other words will become obsolete. And it is like this with all living and growing languages. Only a very few changes were based upon newly discovered manuscripts. And, as you suggest, no vital history, doctrine, or practice of the Christian religion was affected. The majority of us do not understand our own language fully. And of course the ancients had the same difficulties with their languages -- they were not all scholars by any means. So I think we may confidently affirm that we have in the English a Bible that is every bit as clear and accurate for us as the original Scriptures were to the people to whom they were given, and there is not the slightest occasion for us to question or debate the full inspiration of its words. There is not a vital question of any kind that is not made clear enough in our English to enable the sincere to find the way of salvation and the road to heaven. As originally found, the Scriptures were not divided into chapters and verses. Some of the books were written in capital letters without spacing between the words. We may therefore say that even these conveniences are not inspired. And yet we appreciate them as helping us to read more easily and to locate climactic statements amidst t he whole body of sacred truth. Perhaps I might add my own testimony which is that my study of the original and of other languages has served rather to increase my regard for our English Bible, and to compel me to feel that the translators were guided by a light of higher origin than their mere human understanding. I think, also, that this is the common experience of others. Therefore, having somewhat examined the originals, we come back more assured than ever and hold up the English Bible and say, "This is the Word of God." Not simply that it "contains the Word of God," but that it is the Word of God in very truth.

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QUESTION #2 -- At the Sunday school this morning there was a question on the authenticity of the Bible. Suppose I am an atheist, and ask you for external proof that the Bible is the Word of God, how would you answer?

ANSWER #2 -- I think I would start with the probability of a revelation of God's will to men, and would argue that the wisdom of God and man's need and capacity to know all speak of the probability of such a revelation. Then I would go on to say that nature does not reveal the principal things we need to know, as, the moral character of God and man's origin, duty and destiny; that left to themselves men invariably drift into uncertainty and all around deterioration. I would meet all claims that science or art can be God's method of revelation by showing that these are insufficient because they do not speak a language that common people can understand. Thus I would shut the problem up to the fact that either the Bible is God's revelation to man or else there is no such revelation. Either God has spoken through His written Word or He has not spoken at all. It is either the Bible and Christianity or darkness and death, and men intuitively draw back from darkness and death, so the probability and desirability are both in favor of the Bible. That is to say it is not the Bible or something better, rather it is the Bible or nothing at all. Then I would present the Bible and show that it does reveal the moral character of God. It does reveal to man what he needs to know about his origin, his duty and his destiny. Wherever it has been received the hopes of men individually have become bright and the economic, intellectual, social and moral life of the people has reached its highest and best form. I would contrast this with the state of men in lands where the Bible is unknown or disregarded. Then I would show how persistent the Bible has been to be able to outlive all its persecutors. I would show how its prophecies have been verified, its history has been substantiated by spade and stone, its science has never been outgrown, and its morality has gone in advance of every code of ethics that has yet appeared among men. And finally, I would conclude, as Paul so often did, by presenting the results of my own test tube experience in the laboratory of personal religion. This is as valid as the exhibits of the geologist or the psychologist. I would be fair and rational, but I would be firm and unwavering in declaring that I have met God in just the way the Bible says one may meet Him, and that I have proved the Bible to be the Word of God and true just as the mathematician has proved his answers and as the scientist has proved the theories of philosophy, and I would pray God to give you spiritual understanding Do you think I would be able to convince you?

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QUESTION #3 -- How many versions of the Bible are there? Why so many? What is the limit or end?

ANSWER #3 -- I suppose your question has reference only to the English Bible, and I answer it with this understanding. There is the Douay version used by the Roman Catholics, so-called from the town in which the Committee held its principal sessions. This version is based upon the Vulgate or Latin translation of the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament. Then there is the Authorized Version, translated out of the original Hebrew and Greek by a committee raised by King James of England, and made available in 1611. The Revised Version, and twenty years later, the American Revised Version, came out in the latter half of the last century. The need for this new version (for there can scarcely be said to be two -- the differences are too slight) was said to rest upon the fact that earlier and more dependable manuscripts had been found since 1611, and the further fact that the English language has passed through some radical changes, making the language current in 1611 scarcely understandable, in some important instances, to present day readers. These are all the versions commonly accepted among church

scholars, although others, like Moffatt, have published the results of their researches in more or less popular forms. As to the limit on the number of versions, that of course cannot be determined. There has been talk of another version being useful, but there is no general demand for it, and it seems likely now that there will be no movement in that direction for some generations to come. In fact, the trend, as I think, is rather toward the discarding of later versions in favor of the Authorized, which, after all, is a very fine translation, and the instances in which scholars suggest changes are in such incidentals that not a single fundamental doctrine or serious practice is affected. Perhaps no people in the history of the world ever had so fine, clear, dependable translation of the Scriptures into the language "wherein they were born" as is the heritage of the English speaking nations of the world.

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QUESTION #4 -- Why were the books of the Apocrypha once included in the King James Version of the Bible, and why are they now rejected?

ANSWER #4 -- These books were never included "in the King James Version of the Bible," although they have sometimes been bound under the same cover with the Bible; for always there was a clear distinction in the character of the books. The canon of the Holy Scriptures was settled a long time before the Scriptures were translated into English. The reason the Apocrypha is not usually included in the same cover with the Bible is that people, as a rule, do not take interest in these writings and do not care to have their Bibles cluttered up with them. These writings have some value, just as religious and semi-religious writings of any period have value, but they are so far beneath the plane of our inspired Bible that they do not deserve to be bound with it or mentioned in the same sentence with it.

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QUESTION #5 -- Please read Joshua 10:12, 13; Psalm 19:6, and then tell us does the Bible teach that the sun moves and not the earth?

ANSWER #5 -- The Bible is written in popular language not in technical language. And in popular language the sun rises and sets, for popular language describes the experience of the speaker and not the cause of his experience. There is nothing in the Bible inconsistent with the idea of a round world and of revolving planets. In fact there is not a proved fact of science that is at variance with the Bible. It is only the ideas that men read into the Bible and the presumptions of science that are contradictory.

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QUESTION #6 -- What does the word Amen signify? Where is it first used in the Bible? Do we sanction or obligate when we say Amen? At the close of the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6:13, what is the meaning of the word there? What is the relation of "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" to the Amen in Revelation?

ANSWER #6 -- The word Amen appears for the first time in the Bible in Numbers 5:22 where the woman in the trial for jealousy is instructed to use it in repeated form in connection with the curse which is to come if she is guilty. Here, in most solemn form, the meaning evidently is, "Let it be so." The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia has this to say on the subject: "This word is strictly an adjective, signifying firm, and metaphorically, faithful. Thus in Revelation 3:14; our Lord is called the Amen, the faithful and true witness. In Isaiah 65:16 the Hebrew has 'the God of Amen,' which our version renders 'the God of truth,' that is, of fidelity. In its adverbial sense Amen means certainly, truly, surely. It is used in beginning of a sentence by way of emphasis -- rarely in the Old Testament (Jeremiah 28:6), but often by our Savior in the New, where it is commonly translated verily. In John's Gospel alone it is often used by Him in this way double, that is, verily, verily. In the end of a sentence it often occurs singly or repeatedly, especially at the end of hymns or prayers, as 'amen and amen' (Psalm 41:13; 72:19; 89:53). The proper significance of it in this position is to confirm the words which have preceded, and invoke the fulfillment of them, 'so be it,' fiat; Septuagint genoito. Hence in oaths, after the priest has repeated the words of the covenant or imprecation, all those who pronounce the 'amen' bind themselves by the oath (Numbers 5:22; Deut. 22:15-17; Neh. 5:13; 8:6; I Chronicles 16:36; compare Psalm 106:48).

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QUESTION #7 -- Does the number forty in the Bible have any special significance? If 80, what is it?

ANSWER #7 -- Terry says, "The number forty designates in so many places the duration of a penal judgment, either forty days or forty years, that it may be regarded as symbolic of a period of judgment The forty days of the flood (Genesis 7:4, 12, 17), the forty years of Israel's wandering in the wilderness (Numbers 14:34), the forty stripes with which a convicted criminal was to be beaten (Deuteronomy 25:3), the forty days and nights during which Moses, Elijah and Jesus fasted (Exodus 24:28; I Kings 19:8; Matthew 4: 2), all favor this idea. But there is no reason to suppose that in these cases the number forty is not also used in its proper and literal sense. The symbolism, if any, arises from the association of the number with a period of punishment or trial."

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II
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ABOUT CHRIST

QUESTION #8 -- How long was it after the shepherds came to see Jesus in the manger until the visit of the Wise Men?

ANSWER #8 -- The indications are that it was long enough that in the meantime the holy family had moved from the stable to more fitting surroundings, and yet that the forty days leading up to the presentation in the temple had not expired. That is as close as we can come to the exact time.

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QUESTION #9 -- Some are puzzled over the genealogy of Christ as it is carried out by Matthew and Luke. Is it not possible that Luke follows the genealogy of Mary and Matthew that of Joseph?

ANSWER #9 -- This is the supposition of many and the old Bagster Bibles gave the marginal reading "son-in-law" for Joseph in Luke. The other explanation is that Matthew follows the kingly line and Luke the natural line and that both give the genealogy of Joseph, although Mary was also of the tribe of Judah.

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QUESTION #10 -- Please explain Matthew 23:8-11, "But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master even Christ; and all ye be brethren. And call no man your father upon earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he. that is greatest among you shall be your servant."

ANSWER #10 -- The explanation is found, I think, in the more exact translation of the terms, and the text would then read, "Be ye not called teachers, for one is your Teacher even Christ" -- on your own part, call no man upon earth your authoritative teacher, for one is your authoritative teacher -- the Father in heaven. "Neither be ye called leaders in the full sense, for your Leader is Christ." The whole thought is that even great men are yet just men and are not entitled to honor as sources of truth. This high place belongs only to God. Leaders on the earth are at best only secondary leaders. Christ alone is the supreme exemplar and guide.

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QUESTION #11 -- Since Christ was human as well as divine, would it have been possible for Him to sin? Some in our Sunday school class believe He could have sinned, others think He could not.

ANSWER #11 -- I class with those who believe He could not have sinned. This conclusion arises from the fact that He was a unique person -- the God-man, and not God and man as is sometimes said. He was a person in whom were combined the two whole and perfect natures, and His pedigree was that of deity, as He himself said, "Before Abraham was I am." If it be asked, How then could He be tempted? The answer is that the temptations were no less real on account of the facts involved, any more than our temptations are real in spite of the fact that "We know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

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QUESTION #12 -- What was the nature of the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness? Were they temptations or challenges? In what form do you think the devil appeared to Jesus?

ANSWER #12 -- The three temptations cover the whole field of temptations possible to men. The first was to the body, the second to the intellect, and the third to the spiritual nature. This

was the same order on which the devil set out in the Garden of Eden, but he used only the first, because under it man fell. But on Jesus the devil exhausted his ammunition and still the Savior stood. The first temptation was to satisfy a demand of the body by the selfish use of miraculous power -- temptation to self-indulgence. The second (I follow the order given in Luke, which I think is the logical order) was to gain the end for which He was born without paying the price for it -- temptation to gain the right end in the wrong way. The third was an attack upon faith, the very citadel of the spiritual nature -- temptation to substitute presumption for faith. Presumption is faith, wanting only the meeting of required conditions. Temptation is of two kinds or degrees, and if I understand your second question, I would say the temptations of the Master were challenges -- that is, there was no response in Him, even though the actual end to be accomplished in each case was proper and right. He was hungry and needed food. But He would do without food rather than use His power in a wrong way. He came to be King over the world. But He would not accept a divided crown to avoid suffering and death. He would call upon men to believe on Him. But He would not impose upon their credulity by a meaningless miracle to gain their homage. And since the devil is capable of assuming the appearance of "an angel of light," I doubt not that this was the form he took when approaching our Master in the wilderness.

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QUESTION #13 -- The message was, "Peace on earth, good will toward men." And yet in Matthew 10:34 Jesus says, "I came not to send peace, but a sword." How do you explain these two scriptures?

ANSWER #13 -- I think I could not do better than to use the words of Richard Watson. He says, "The end of Christ's coming was unquestionably to establish peace on earth: but because sharp dissensions and the alienation of friends and families have often been the result, through the violent enmity of the carnal mind to truth and holiness, He represents Himself, according to the oriental mode of speaking, as having sent not peace, but a sword, and as setting "a man at variance with his father," etc.

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QUESTION #14 -- Our Sunday school class has been discussing the forty days that Jesus fasted after His baptism. Some think the "forty days" is just a type of an extended period, and say it is physically impossible for one to actually fast for so long a period. I know that numbers are sometimes used typically in the Bible, and I am not sure about this. What do you think?

ANSWER #14 -- I think the forty days and forty nights are literal, and that Jesus went that long without food, although the record does not say He went without water. This feat is not impossible. There are instances, one very notable one m the records of the past century, in which healthy persons have gone forty days without food, but not without water. And if there is any difficulty in accepting the record, please notice that Mark says (Mark 1:13), "The angels ministered unto him." This may mean that He was assisted in His resultant weakness by direct supernatural strength.

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QUESTION #15 -- Please explain John 21:25, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

ANSWER #15 -- This is something of an apology for the fragmentary character of the gospel story. I think I might venture a paraphrase of the thought as follows: "The miracles of Jesus were so many and of such amazing character that if they were all written the world would be unable to receive them favorably. The material would be too abundant and the story would be too remarkable. But what has been written is sufficient to inspire faith, and once you believe you will have life through His name, and thus the same purpose would be served as though the fuller account should be given."

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QUESTION #16 -- In Luke 12:50, Jesus says, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" What does this scripture mean? especially what does the word straitened mean in this connection?

ANSWER #16 -- He speaks of His suffering and death as a "baptism," and He is straitened -- that is strained, pressed, anxious -- until this inevitable tragedy shall take place.

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QUESTION #17 -- Why was it said of Jesus in John 4:4, "He must needs go through Samaria"?

ANSWER #17 -- Look at your map and you will see that it was a geographical necessity, unless He would take the circuit around through Perea on the east side of the Jordan. Some Pharisaical Jews, it is said, often took this longer way m their determination to have no dealings with the Samaritans, but our Lord would not follow such a lead. And there may be something to the suggestion that Jesus must "needs" go that way because He knew there was a thirsty woman waiting for him at the well. This would be an "evangelistic necessity."

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QUESTION #18 -- Our minister tells us that Jesus loved John better than the other disciples. Do you think this is true?

ANSWER #18 -- Five times in the Book of John appears such expressions as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and every time it seems to apply to John himself. If the idea seems to smack of spiritual pride, let us remember that such a description really implied, "That disciple who was the youngest and weakest and for whom the Master on that account showed special pity and love."

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QUESTION #19 -- Why did Jesus depart into Galilee after John was cast into prison (Matthew 4:12)?

ANSWER #19 -- He could carry on His work in Galilee with less interference than in Judea where persecution was now already beginning. The Scriptures show that Jesus used ordinary precautions to lengthen His life and enable Him to carry on until His day should come. In the fourth chapter of John it is evident that Jesus at another time went into Galilee to escape fame and to find the place where He would be least honored.

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QUESTION #20 -- Does John 20:22, where Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," signify the conversion of all the disciples as taking place at that time, or does it show forth the relation of Christ to Pentecost?

ANSWER #20 -- Adam Clarke, and I think Wesleyan commentators in general, thought this was in the nature of the linking together of the epochs of conversion and Pentecost. It was something more than conversion and something less than Pentecost. Rather in the nature of an assurance of the one and a prophecy of the other. It is as though the Master would bring the past to a clear epoch and settle for the disciples all doubt which they might have developed in the process of the dark days surrounding the trial and crucifixion -- squaring all accounts up to that date, and also making vital the promise that they should shortly receive the Pentecostal fullness.

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QUESTION #21 -- What did Christ mean by the words, "If they do 'these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke 23:31).

ANSWER #21 -- The meaning is, if they would persecute and crucify the sinless Christ, how much more will they persecute His followers? It was a warning that the disciples were not to expect immunity from trouble at the hands of wicked men.

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QUESTION #22 -- Please explain Matthew 16:27, 28, where Jesus spoke as if the coming of His kingdom and the rewards as they shall be at the end of the world were to come to pass within the lifetime of those to whom He spoke.

ANSWER #22 -- It is unfortunate that there is a chapter division (and you know the division of the Bible into chapters and verses is a somewhat modern invention) at the end of verse 28. This has, I think, caused many to wonder about the meaning of the Master's words as mentioned in your question. But if you ignore this chapter division and read right on into chapter 17, it will be clear, I think, that He was speaking of the occurrences on the Mount of Transfiguration which were to take place within the week. The Transfiguration was the Second Coming of Christ in miniature, and three of those who heard Him on the occasion mentioned were present to see Him in His glory. Thus the prophecy you mention was at that time fulfilled.

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QUESTION #23 -- Please explain Acts 2:31, "He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see. corruption." And where is the soul between the time of death and the resurrection?

ANSWER #23 -- The explanation of the scripture in question of course centers about the meaning of the word Hades (Sheol in the Hebrew of the Old Testament) which is here translated hell. This same word occurs in Matthew 11:23; Matthew 16:18; Luke 10:15; Acts 2:27; and in Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14, and all these should be studied in this connection. The simple definition of this word is "the unseen world," and the text in question means that God would not leave the spirit of Jesus disembodied nor His body in the tomb. This was just a strong way of affirming His determination that His Son should be resurrected from the dead. According to Josephus and Talmudic authorities the Jews believe that "the unseen world" -- that is the world of disembodied spirits -- had two divisions: one for the saved and another for the lost The abode of the saved was called "paradise" and "Abraham's bosom." And in His story of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke 16 our Lord adopted this view of the unseen world. But from such New Testament passages as 2 Corinthians 12:1-2 and Ephesians 4:8-10 it is clear that Paradise is now in the immediate presence of the Lord, although there is no indication that any change has taken place with reference to the place or condition of the unsaved dead. Answering your direct question, therefore, the wicked dead in Hades, and the righteous dead "at home with the Lord" await the resurrection which shall increase the sorrow of the one and multiply the joys of the other. And perhaps I should add, lest this discussion bring up the question that there are other words for describing the final abode of the unsaved, which words are also sometimes translated "hell," and for which reason in everyday language hell means the final abode of the lost. The word in Mark 9:43 and other such places is the Greek word gehenna, and the equivalent in the Book of Revelation is "lake of fire" and "bottomless pit."

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QUESTION #24 -- It is evident in both the Old and New Testaments that the Savior stayed in the earth three days and three nights. It is recorded in Luke 15:42 that the Savior was crucified and buried on the evening of the preparation day; yet He was in the heart of the earth three days and nights, and yet arose on the first day of the week. Please explain this.

ANSWER #24 -- I cannot explain it -- it is impossible. I personally believe that Jesus was crucified on Friday, and was in the tomb part of Friday, all day Saturday, and part of Sunday -- until the dawn of the day. In other words he was in the tomb two whole nights, one whole day and two fractions of days. To me this is consistent with all the Scriptures say about it, but it does not make three whole days and three whole nights. I know what others say who think there must be space allowed for the three whole days and three whole nights, but I still believe what I have already said. I think you will find in Esther 4: 1-5: I a parallel expression and an exactly corresponding length of time implied.

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QUESTION #25 -- When did Jesus become glorified? There is some difference of opinion among us here.

ANSWER #25 -- On the instant of His resurrection from the dead. He is the firstfruit of the resurrection in that He was the first to arise in glorified form (Enoch and Elijah constituting exceptional instances which we cannot explain here) . He did not come back to mortal life at all, but went on into the glorified life. This is evidenced by the fact that He did not live, after the resurrection, by the flow of His blood -- His wounds being left open.

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QUESTION #26 -- In John 20:17 Jesus said, "Touch me not; for I have not yet ascended to my Father." Did He mean to see the Father before His ascension?

ANSWER #26 -- Three views of the matter have been presented: (1) that in His office as High Priest, Jesus was now on His way to present the blood of His sacrifice in heaven, and that He did so ascend and return again between this meeting with Mary and the meeting mentioned in Matthew 28:9. (2) That it was His purpose to teach Mary that she was henceforth to know Him in spirit and be a messenger of the new joy and that she should not seek to know Him any more in the flesh. (3) That He merely meant that she was not to detain Him now, but rather was to run with the message to the disciples, and that His words were meant to assure Mary that there would yet be ample time for her to see Him before His ascension to heaven. Personally, I am inclined to the view last stated.

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QUESTION #27 -- Yesterday in the Sunday school class there was a discussion of Luke 22:45, "He found them sleeping for sorrow," and we could not determine just what is meant. Can you help us out?

ANSWER #27 -- Van Oosterzee, commenting on this verse, says, "Sorrow induces sleeplessness in its first stages, but when very great (and long continued) it may so wear down the whole outer and inner man that one, as it were, sinks into a stupor." From this we may gather that the disciples were crushed and worn by the sorrow occasioned by the shadow of the cross that had fallen across their Master's pathway until they succumbed to stupor and not to natural, refreshing sleep. And the use of the expression here is for the purpose of emphasizing their sorrow and not to bring reflection of reproach upon them.

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QUESTION #28 -- Please explain 2 Corinthians 5:21. How and when was Christ made sin for us?

ANSWER #28 -- The term sin in this and in some other such cases in the New Testament means "sin offering." Jesus was made a sin offering for us when He died upon the cross. No doubt

there is a close relation between the birth and life of Jesus Christ and His crucifixion at last, but the Scriptures warrant our saying that it was the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross that made the atonement which enabled God to be just and yet to be the Justifier of the ungodly, and attempts to enlarge the scope of the redemptive act result in confusion rather than clarity.

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QUESTION #29 -- In Mark 10:45 it is said that our Lord gave His life a ransom for many: in I Timothy 2:6 it is said He gave Himself a ransom for all. Why this distinction in terms?

ANSWER #29 -- I understand that the term many was used as a comparative word to show the value of His atoning work -- His sacrifice was for others and not for Himself. As to how many were actually covered by His redemptive death, Paul tells us that there are no exceptions. Jesus died for all.

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III
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ABOUT CHRISTIANS

QUESTION #30 -- When a person is called of the Lord to some special kind of service, how does he know he is thus called? In what way does God make His will known?

ANSWER #30 -- The method varies in individual cases, but the principle remains the same in all cases. God's method of speaking to His children takes three distinct forms:

(1) He speaks to them through His Word, the Bible.

(2) He speaks to them through His Holy Spirit in the way of inward impressions.

(3) He speaks to them by means of His providences which include human agencies. One may think himself designated for a particular task through the testimony of one of these voices. He should be fairly well convinced when there is agreement between two of these voices. But the perfect agreement of all three of these voices should be evidence enough to produce certain conviction. Take for example the call to the work of the ministry: we know that this call is authorized by the Bible, as to its general phases. A person who is endeavoring to follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit may find an inner conviction in his own heart that this is his calling. Then if other spiritual people begin to say voluntarily that they believe this is his calling, and especially when there begin to open to him opportunities for such service, he should be convinced enough to give the challenge a test. If this is God's way for him, the conviction that it is so will grow, and the blessings of God and the fruitfulness of the service will give continual proof that he is in the right course. Under certain circumstances one of these voices may be silent and another especially insistent, as though to compensate for the other's lack. This was the case with Bud Robinson, for instance. He had little or no encouragement from the providential and human element point of approach, but his own inner conviction made up for this, so that he was able to go ahead in the conviction that he had found God's way. Bishop Baskom, Pickett, on the other hand (I knew him

in the days of his beginnings) did not feel the inner constraint so forcibly, but he was a devout and consecrated Christian, and it was normal for people to call on him to hold services, and it seemed that the preacher failed to come in more cases than usual, and before he or others scarcely saw where the matter was going, he was preaching almost regularly. The chief qualification for hearing the voice of God is the spirit of ready obedience.

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QUESTION #31 -- What is the meaning of Matthew 5:25, "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison."

ANSWER #31 -- This verse is a portion of a paragraph, beginning with verse 21, dealing with the duty of forgiveness. The verse in question is in the way of a practical observation of the poor place in which people come out who persevere in bearing an unforgiving spirit and in attempting to settle their affairs in the civil courts. The Christian way is the way of arbitration and forgiveness -- suffer wrong rather than do wrong.

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QUESTION #32 -- What is the meaning of James 4:4 regarding friendship with the world? What is worldliness?

ANSWER #32 -- The original word in this passage means literally world-system, and it is evident that anyone who is friendly to the prevailing system or reign of evil which is characteristic of this age and of which the devil himself is head cannot at the same time love and serve God.

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QUESTION #33 -- What is the meaning of "Abstain from all appearance of evil"? (1 Thessalonians 5:22) Is it not sometimes impossible to do that?

ANSWER #33 -- I think scholars generally are agreed that appearance is not the best translation of the Greek word eidos which appears in this text. In Luke 3:22 the same word is rendered form, "bodily form." In Luke 9:29 it is translated fashion, "fashion of His countenance." In John 5:37 it is translated shape (last word in the verse) . In 2 Corinthians 5:7 it is translated sight, "We walk by faith, not by sight." In I Thessalonians 5, verses 19-22 should be read as a paragraph and when so read it will be seen that verse 22 is the complement of verse 21. You are to abstain from the things to which you do not hold. That is, in doctrine and in practice you are to prove by the Word and Spirit of God and your own sincere experience the things that are good and the things that are not good. Then you are to hold fast to what you have found to be good, and abstain from what you have found is not good. The text, then, should read, simply: "Abstain from every form of evil." And I believe it is better to read the text this way and interpret it as it was evidently intended by St. Paul. To "add to" the Word of God by even a too strenuous interpretation is to expose oneself to Satan's advantage.

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QUESTION #34 -- Please explain I Peter 4:18, "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

ANSWER #34 -- Well, since the man who is every bit as good as he knows how to be is no better than it takes to get one to heaven, what shall become of those who ignore the call to salvation and continue in known disobedience until they die? This is still a question, but it is a question which is its own answer. Let us take no chances.

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QUESTION #35 -- I am a mother who is trying earnestly to guide my children in the right way. But there are so many questions about things the children can do and can't do that I am often at my wits' end. Can't you give us a list of things that our children, especially our children in the public schools, can do? They complain that we just want them to sit around and twiddle their thumbs.

ANSWER #35 -- I do not think I could give you a list that would be dependable or useful. Conditions vary in different communities. But I think in the interest of the positive and the practical that parents should be careful about drawing lines and forbidding too many things. You can bring on a "conscience" about things that other . wise might have remained innocent and you can become guilty of just what your children accuse you. I had a neighbor who listened to the impractical people about him and forbade his children's playing croquet and just about every other game, and forbade their taking part in just about everything that appealed to them. The result was that home became a bore to the children and "society" held an appeal like "stolen waters" that was abnormal. When my neighbor was a grandfather, he said to me one day, "If I had it to do over I would be different. I don't care what the impractical people say, I would make home enjoyable to my children and I would just draw the line on what is actually wicked, not on the innocent things that have no moral character unless you ascribe one to them." But the sad part is that neighbor lost his children to Christ and the church and he thinks it is because he made the Christian life appear to be both barren and impractical. I think about the worst possible attitude for parents is that which holds that everything adults have lost desire for is wrong for children and the young, and that "When the young find salvation they will lose their love for these things too." And in the meantime they compel their children to be abnormal either by enforcing rules which have no meaning to the young or by making outlaws of their children by condemning what they do and yet suffering them to do it. I would say, make the list of prohibitions as short as possible, and make it on the line of what is actually wicked. As to the rest, trust for a spiritual, rather than for a legalistic solution, and you will save your children from many temptations to outlawry and hypocrisy, and in the end they will most likely turn out to be good citizens and worthy Christians.

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QUESTION #36 -- Were the disciples Christians before Pentecost, or were they sinner"? Please explain.

ANSWER #36 -- They were Christians. The evidence is conclusive. Jesus mentions them as having their names written in heaven, and it is unthinkable that Jesus would call and commission men to preach His gospel who were themselves unsaved. Then in the prayer in John 17 there are expressions concerning the disciples that clearly indicate that they were truly regenerated people.

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QUESTION #37 -- Ephesians 4:26 says, "Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Do you think that a saved and sanctified Christian will show no temper in any of its forms, no matter what happens? Will he always be sweet? Was not Christ angry with the money changers in the temple?

ANSWER #37 -- A Christian with a clean heart will not have carnal anger or vindictive wrath, no matter what happens. But anger is an emotion, like elation or any other, which is capable of degrees, and within certain limits is not only permissible, but commendable. Yes, Jesus "looked round about upon them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts," but He was not vindictive. His anger was the anger of pity and mercy, not of wrath and judgment The meaning of the text you quote is, I think, quite clear and much needed. It is an exhortation to keep anger always within the limits of pity and mercy, as our Master did. God is "angry with the wicked every day" (Psalm 7:11), but He yet waits in mercy to save the penitent, and even delays .judgment upon the impenitent beyond any reasonable expectation. Let Christ be our example, and may we all be possessed of the temper of God which enables Him to hate sin and yet love the sinner.

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QUESTION #38 -- Is it the privilege of saints to live free from physical afflictions in this world? What is the Bible teaching regarding divine healing?

ANSWER #38 -- There are no doubt privileges regarding physical health and blessing which the great majority of God's people do not receive on account of their want of prayer and faith. And yet there are instances enough to prove that the basis of God's dealing with His people is moral and spiritual, rather than physical, and that on that account there are some very saintly people who are yet great sufferers. We may not be able to see how it could be the will of God for them to suffer and be sick, but the answer must be in the fact that He has higher purpose than could be served by their healing. And if this principle is admitted, it then becomes necessary for us to pray, "Thy will be done," when asking for physical healing, as when asking for other temporal blessing. However, the Bible teaches that it is the privilege of His people to pray for physical healing, and that when they are enabled to exercise faith for it, God will grant it with or without the use of means. But there comes a time when one is no longer able to pray the prayer of faith, the old house becomes dilapidated, and there is nothing for the Christian to do but to move out into the house not made with hands, eternal and in the heavens.

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QUESTION #39 -- When a Christian gets discouraged or does a little something he should not do, is it necessary for him to go back to the public altar or should he pray such matters out at home?

ANSWER #39 -- He should pray such things through by himself. It is not either wise or best to become an addict of the public mourner's bench.

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QUESTION #40 -- During a discussion in the Sunday school class some held the idea that if we are not persecuted it is a sign we have backslidden. Do you think this is true? If so, what is persecution? Is it persecution when people laugh at us? or must we be persecuted like the apostles were?

ANSWER #40 -- The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia says, "Persecution is threefold. (1) Mental, when the spirit of a man rises up and opposes another. (2) Verbal, when men give hard words and deal in uncharitable censures. (3) Actual or open, by the hand, such as the dragging of innocent persons. before the tribunal of justice (Matt. 10:18). On the basis of this definition there is no exception to that statement in 2 Timothy 3:12, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." But the type of persecution will depend much upon the type of people with whom one is associated, and persecution may be no less painful when it is mental only than when it is verbal or actual. But a Christian should not worry about the question of persecution. Above all, he should not do anything to bring it on. Just let him do his best to live right and bring .men to God and then let him take the consequence in blame and praise, and things will even up about right.

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QUESTION #41 -- In the light of such scriptures as James 2:10, Philippians 3:15; 4:6, and Psalm 32:8, 9, can you define a happy medium between carelessness and a state of morbid introspection?

ANSWER #41 -- I think I can illustrate such a state as you mention better, perhaps, than I can define it: twenty years ago I developed symptoms of a physical ailment that is .believed to be either chronic or mortal or both. The matter gave me considerable concern. But finally I appealed to a physician in whom I had great confidence. He gave me a thorough examination and told me my symptoms were "false," and that I had not a trace of the ailment which I feared. I believed the physician and have lived in peace all these years, even though at times I have felt the symptoms. For whenever I have had occasion to note these symptoms at all, I have fallen back upon the physician in whose skill and integrity I still believe, and I have dubbed my symptoms "false" and continued to rest in peace. This, I think, is the way we are to do regarding our spiritual health. First make sure we are in good health and that we . have the witness of the divine Physician that we are so. Then, after that, . disregard all contrary symptoms as false and reckon ourselves to be dead unto sin and alive unto God, and God will make it and keep it so.

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QUESTION #42 -- Please explain Galatians 6:10. In what ways are we to do good to the household of faith in which we could not do good to the world in the same measure?

ANSWER #42 -- The fellowship of the church involves responsibilities as well as privileges, and those responsibilities contain all the ordinary human kindness in intensified form. For example: it is quite proper for Christian people to co-operate in every possible way in providing for the needs of the sick, aged and poor in the whole community, but it is especially required that they look after the needy in their own group. Why? Well, for one reason, these needy ones have, presumably, contributed to the Christian program when they were able, and in their times of distress they have an especial claim. Then, besides this, the Christian fellowship properly takes the place of such benevolent societies as non-Christian people so often support and promote. The scriptural commandment is really just as clear as I can make it, "Let us do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith."

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QUESTION #43 -- Please explain how Cornelius (Acts 10) could be counted good and righteous when he was a soldier in the armies of a heathen nation which supported a pagan religion as the state religion. And after his baptism with the Holy Ghost we have no account of any change in his occupation. History says these were not policemen, but the select soldiers of the regular army. If his occupation was contrary to the Christian life, how was it that God made him an example of holiness?

ANSWER #43 -- You are making an assumption that I do not make, therefore you encounter a difficulty that I do not experience. I do not think that the soldier life is necessarily unchristian, and that the individual in the army of a pagan nation shares any greater responsibility for the faith of that nation than a citizen of that nation in civilian life. John the Baptist was a fearless and enlightened preacher of repentance and righteous living. Read what he says in Luke 3:14: "And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages." And Paul made Christians in Caesar's household, called them saints" (Philippians 4:22) but there was no demand, so far as we know that they quit their positions, which must have thrown them into situations of special temptation every day. If men have theories of the "social gospel" that they feel impelled to enforce, well and good. But let them know that they cannot write the Bible and the history of Christianity all over to make them fit their new-fangled theories -- the Bible and Christian history are already written.

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QUESTION #44 -- Should a Christian write an unkind letter? Is it not better to just accept the criticism and consider it a trial over which we are commanded to rejoice?

ANSWER #44 -- F. W. Boreham went out to Australia, from his ancestral home in England, when he was a young preacher. In those days it took a letter about six weeks to go from England to Australia, and soon a letter came from a man who was dead in England before his letter

reached Boreham in Australia. This gave the young preacher an idea, and for forty years he made the habit of filing letters from persons who subsequently were discovered to have died before their letters reached their destination. And finally the young preacher, then grown old, wrote an essay on "Letters from the Dead," in which he speculated on how few would have written what they did if they had known they would be dead when their correspondent received the letter. And, finally, he suggested that none of us should write letters that we would not wish to have read after we are dead. And perhaps this should be brought on down to our words. Yes, by all means, let us receive the criticism (for often it is more just than we at first are willing to admit), and leave the vindication of our case to God.

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QUESTION #45 -- Is it possible for the child of God to drift and leak out in his soul and not be aware of it? If not, please explain Judges 16:20: "He wist not that the Lord had departed from him."

ANSWER #45 -- It is scarcely possible for one to commit any outbroken sin without being aware of it, but it certainly is possible for one to make a gradual drift toward indifference and prayerlessness until he finally awakens to the fact that his grace and spiritual power are gone. I do not think it possible for one to continue indefinitely in this depleted state without being aware. God will bring us, like he did Samson, to face a situation demanding spiritual reality, and in that test we will discover ourselves. The very mercy of God forbids that He should allow us to continue in a deceived state. His Holy Spirit is faithful to arouse and convict. The real question of responsibility is to keep one's self ready and willing at all times to listen to the voice of the Spirit -- otherwise one will become self-deceived.

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QUESTION #46 -- Please explain Hebrews 6:4-7. Does this refer to ordinary backsliding from justification and sanctification?

ANSWER #46 -- It refers to any who fall away from Christ and think to find some other way of salvation. Primarily the thought was of Hebrews who were thus warned against the danger of thinking they could go back from Christ to their Hebrew sacrifices of animals and birds. But the scope includes all who attempt to turn from Christ to any other sacrifice for sin. Simple backsliding from grace is not the full intent, although, of course, from other scriptures we know that Christians are always in danger of backsliding, and that it is possible for any to backslide so completely as to become entirely apostatized and hopeless. But any backslider who will truly repent and turn back to Christ need have no fear but that Christ will receive and pardon and fully restore him to divine favor and standing.

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QUESTION #47 -- I was converted when a child. Later I wandered away from God. Then I came back as best I knew how. Took Christ by faith. Joined the church and have held offices in the church and been respected as a Christian. But these twenty years I have been unable to find peace.

Others pray through easily, but I am tempted to think I crossed the dead line during those years of wandering. I am not hard-hearted. I spend many hours on my knees and I rejoice to see others find God. Do souls that are completely cast away have a desire for God?

ANSWER #47 -- Your case is indeed pitiable, but it is not hopeless and is not as unusual as perhaps the devil has tried to make you think it is. Always remember that the devil accuses and the Holy Spirit convicts. The difference is that accusation offers no road to amendment, while conviction applies to sin, righteousness and judgment That is, the Holy Spirit shows you what to do to get away from your trouble. And this makes me clear to say you are suffering at the hands of the accuser, not at the hand of a merciful God. Therefore you must resist the devil. If it were God, then you should yield to Him and do what He shows you to do. I doubt that you will obtain victory as a crisis. You will learn to stand by standing. You must take the promise of God for your foundation and stand on it regardless of every onslaught of the devil. But it is encouraging to know that "each victory will help us some other to win." You will find rest and peace as you follow on in faith. Resist the devil. Discount your doubts. Believe God more and more. Light will yet break in and deliverance will come, and when it does, Please drop me a line. I shall be praying for you.

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QUESTION #48 -- Some of my friends belong to a church that does not allow eating of meat or fish and frowns on all bright colors, even for children. I seem to need meat and also love colors. These people are fine Christians and believe in the same sound doctrine as the Nazarenes. What is your opinion of these matters? Also please explain I Timothy 4:3 -- the last clause, about meats.

ANSWER #48 -- Personally, I stand firm on the doctrine Paul presents in the 14th chapter of Romans. I trust you will read that chapter carefully. The doctrine there is summarized in the 17th verse, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And in keeping with this, the apostle bids us not to judge one another in such matters as meat and drink. If one wants to avoid meats altogether and eat only herbs (he must stand the odium of being considered weak, but that is his affair), let him do it, but let him not think he is better on that account or that another is worse because he eats. And let not the one who eats despise the other. In other words, there is nothing to it either way. It is only when one makes an issue of it -- for or against -- that evil arises. And as to colors, I thank God that He made other colors besides white and black. If one thinks God does not love colors and beauty, let him look at nature in the summer time. This is just more of the meat subject. Just wear colors or don't wear them -- there is nothing to it either way, just so you don't try to foist your notions on someone else. As to the scripture you mention: I would have to begin with the second verse, where the apostle begins, "Speaking lies in hypocrisy," and right on down to the clause you mention,. Hypocrite is the old Greek word for an actor on the stage, and people who put the content of their religion into externals are called hypocrites, with varying degrees of culpability attached. Then if you will follow Paul right on through the sixth verse you will see that he says, in substance, just as he did in Romans thirteen, "This is all nonsense. All nourishing food which God has made for man is good, and if you like it (can give thanks for it), eat it; it can do you no moral harm, and abstaining from it can do you no spiritual good." You would have to go a long way to find more uncommon common sense than you find in the Bible, and this Pauline treatment of the meat question is a case in point.

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QUESTION #49 -- What is meant by the phrase, "To doubt is sin." If an individual doubts his sanctification, does he thereby lose his justification? Must he repent and be forgiven or is it necessary only to reaffirm his faith for sanctification?

ANSWER #49 -- I am not familiar with the phrase, "To doubt is sin." I wonder if it is a version of "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23)? If it is that, then of course the meaning is that when you do anything concerning which you are in doubt it is Sin. If you do not think a thing is right and pleasing to God, do not do it. If the phrase is "home made," then I presume the meaning is that doubting God or the promise of God is sin, since we know that faith is simply believing God or believing what God has said. And on this we have the plain words of Jesus, "He that believeth and is baptized .shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Faith is the link which joins us on to God, and when it is broken we are separated from God. But this is faith in its most fundamental function, and I do not think we should deduce from this that all who ask for further evidence or who hesitate to accept a given promise for the moment is separated from God. On the second part of the question: salvation does come in epochs -- the first and second blessings. But there is no occasion for anyone who has been troubled with doubt to go to the bottom and cast away his whole confidence. Rather let him hold fast to what he has, reaffirm his consecration, reassert his faith and come out immediately into the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ

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QUESTION #50 -- I am troubled because some people who testify to a high state of grace, even to being sanctified wholly, do not live. what they profess. What can we do about this? Also, Jesus gave parables, could you not give us a material representation of the human and the divine parts in this question of salvation from all sin?

ANSWER #50 -- Thinking of it as a personal responsibility, you and I should acknowledge our obligation to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called." But speaking with reference to others, we have God's Word, God's Spirit and the example of at least some who live worthy lives, so we cannot expect to be excused because the example is not universal among religious professors. The fact that I have known one who lived a holy life makes me rich as to examples, and all the unworthy persons in the world cannot nullify the one good example I have known. As to parables: I have heard that an arrogant skeptic who claimed the Bible is a human book was effectively silenced by the challenge that he write one parable that would compare with the parables of Jesus. The art of expressing spiritual realities in material symbols is an art indeed, and I think the symbols of the Bible, the journeys of the Children of Israel, the ancient temple, etc., are the best of such pictures that could possibly be drawn.

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QUESTION #51 -- About six years ago I was brightly converted and a little later sanctified wholly. From that time on I loved God and His work, and cared nothing for sin and the world. But

about nine months ago I had a serious operation, and since that time have been nervous and tempted to doubt. The devil has even tempted me to kill my two children and myself. But I guard myself by refusing to be, alone. Still the devil tells me I have committed the unpardonable sin. When I go to church I feel like going to the altar, and have gone several times. Please pray for me and if you can help me, please give me any word of advice.

ANSWER #51 -- I am sure you are troubled on account of your physical and nervous condition. Your duty now is to take the best care possible of yourself until you are stronger. Read your Bible and good literature, but do not attend and take part in "high pressure" meetings. Going to the altar will not likely help you. Keep your faith in God firm, eat carefully, sleep and rest all you can, and with your returning health and strength your nerves and your faith will improve also. Some careless preacher is likely to come along and preach on the unpardonable sin and you will have a decided mental break. Resist the devil, stand on the promise of God, believe in His goodness and mercy, rest in confidence. And may God bring you out into a wide and peaceful place.

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QUESTION #52 -- Do you believe it is possible for a person to lose much of his joy and power through failure to testify without being entirely backslidden? And how can he regain his lost joy and power?

ANSWER #52 -- Yes, I do believe one may lose much of his joy and power through failure to testify and yet not be entirely backslidden. In fact I do not account one entirely backslidden until he gives up the fight and ceases to try to do right and to please God. I think the same principle holds here as in business life, where men are advised, "Go back to where you lost your money, and there you will find it." Go back to where you lost your joy and there you will find it But it must not be taken for granted that you will find it immediately and on account of just one act of witnessing. Set in to be obedient to God in all things, and keep it up, regardless of everything it involves. Keep it up regardless of how you feel, and in time God will take care that your feelings are adjusted.

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QUESTION #53 -- Please explain James 5:19, 20: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he. which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

ANSWER #53 -- Of course we know that none can forgive sins but God only, and that every essential change in the state or standing of a man before God is a work of divine grace. But the apostle is simply showing how great the task accomplished when one becomes the instrument in turning another to God by whom these blessed and vital changes are made. It is in this accommodated sense that we speak of one as "a soul winner," and even the wise man said, "He that winneth souls is wise."

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QUESTION #54 -- The Bible tells us to have confidence in our fellowmen, but how can you have confidence in one when you know he is lying even while he is yet talking?

ANSWER #54 -- I do not know of any requirement for believing in one when you know he is wrong. The scriptural warning is against prejudging. That is, against suspecting and misjudging.

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QUESTION #55 -- Please explain Romans 14:23, especially the last clause, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

ANSWER #55 -- The whole section along here deals with the subject of "Charitable Living," and the application is to oneself, as well as to his neighbor. Toward the neighbor the attitude is, "I am not so concerned about the length of my menu as I am about my brother's soul. Therefore, if my eating of certain things offends my brother, I will just not eat these things. For after all, the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and if I find myself restricted by the conscience of others, I accept it for the kingdom's sake." Toward myself the attitude is, "I will give God and righteousness the benefit of the doubt, and will live in all good conscience. If I am perfectly clear, then I will go ahead. If I am uncertain, then I will stay on the safe side. For even though a thing might not be wrong within itself, yet if to me there is doubt, I shall be condemned if I go ahead; for in that case I at least show that pleasing God is not a serious matter with me. So that whatever is not clearly right or at least harmless is sin if I do it."

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QUESTION #56 -- Please harmonize the following two texts: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (John 2:17), "Let your moderation be known unto all men" (Philippians 4:5).

ANSWER #56 -- The word "moderation" is just a synonym of "gentleness." And the root idea of gentleness is "pliability" or ability to yield. Our own blessed Lord is the best example of what this gentleness is in combination with a zeal that brooks every hindrance and stops not for even death itself. The idea that zeal implies coarseness and the disposition to "rule or ruin" arose from some other source, not from the example or teachings of Jesus of Nazareth or the holy apostles who followed on after Him.

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QUESTION #57 -- I am troubled about evil thoughts. Can you help me?

ANSWER #57 -- There is a difference between evil thoughts and thoughts of evil. Take an illustration: I am here on this camp ground. My neighbor's cabin is only a few feet away. He has in his cabin a number of things which I could use very conveniently. He scatters his property about and goes away for an hour to the post office. I think how it would be possible for one to step in there and steal while the owner is away. That is a thought of evil. But in my heart I know I would not do it, even if I knew I would never be even suspected, so the thought is not evil. But if this

should be changed and I should decide that I would steal except for the danger of being suspected, that is an evil thought and is sin. There is an old saying, "I cannot keep the birds from flying over my head, but I can keep them from making nests in my hair." Likewise, thoughts of evil come unsolicited, for this is a sinful world. But I can refuse lodging to any of these intruders, and can make sure that my affections are set always on things above, and that my will is always to do the will of God. And while certain of these two things, remember that nothing outside of us can get in to do us harm and mar our standing with God without our consent.

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QUESTION #58 -- In Matthew 22:39 Jesus says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." To whom does the word "neighbour" refer in this case?

ANSWER #58 -- This is the question they asked Jesus (Luke 10:29), and in answering it He gave the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 30-37), and according to this parable, my neighbor is any man who has need of me, and who is brought by divine Providence into the place where I can serve him. Ordinarily we call those who live near us "neighbors," and so they are and should be, but even those who live at a distance are my neighbors to the limit of their need of me and to my limit to meet and supply that need.

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QUESTION #59 -- Some people think that people who really walk with God will not be compelled to accept relief (government or other such relief as is provided for those in distress), and they quote Psalm 37:25, "I have been young, and now am old; and yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Do you think this is a fair and proper interpretation?

ANSWER #59 -- I do not think the interpretation is fair or correct, or that the application is necessary or kind. Of course we would all prefer to get through without appealing to the government or other relief agencies. But to make such an appeal is not begging. If one has been a loyal citizen, has paid his taxes and done his duty, he is as much entitled to the relief provided for his time of stress and need as one is entitled to his insurance when he has a fire (and he is so entitled, if he has kept his premiums paid up) . I have been a week now right in the midst of a drought stricken community in the West, and a large per cent of these people must have help or they will suffer and the state and the nation will be made poorer by their suffering. Relief is provided for them, they are entitled to it, and it is their duty, as well as their privilege, to receive it; for if they do not receive it their poverty makes others poorer. But the case of the industrial worker who is left stranded and without work is exactly parallel, and he is no beggar when he applies for relief. He owes it to the community and to the nation to make the application and to receive the relief and thus to be ready to render his share in the nation's recovery. It is just as religious to take this emergency relief as it is to accept help when your family is ill or when your automobile is stuck in the mud. Some of the best people I know are receiving relief today, and are grateful for it, and they will come out of the time of emergency with their faith in God and in humanity. When I was a child they used to correct me for mimicking a neighbor boy who was lame by saying, "You better not mock him; you might get crippled sure enough." So I would not say an unkind thing about

anyone who has found it necessary to apply for emergency relief, lest I find myself in need, and then it would be difficult indeed to make such application. Let our people who find it necessary to get help from the relief agencies do it all in good faith and with good heart. Let them serve God through it all, keep their faith in Him and in humanity, and go on unabashed to the day when they will be able to return to the community and the nation their contribution in kind. In the meantime, let them not forget to pray and to make the moral and spiritual contributions which are, after all, our country's greatest need just now and all the time.

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QUESTION #60 -- What do you think of Christians listening to barn dances and shows over the radio?

ANSWER #60 -- I think this is poor occupation for followers of the pure, devoted Christ. I do not believe He would do it Rather, I believe He would pray, engage in worthy conversation, read worthy literature, and go about doing good.

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QUESTION #61 -- Some of my friends think it is wrong to call a doctor or take medicine. They are good people. What do you think of doctors and medicine? Does the Bible anywhere forbid medicine?

ANSWER #61 -- I know there are those who will be offended by anything I might say on such a question as this, and I don't like to offend anyone. And yet I think the question is pertinent, and ought to be answered. And about all readers of this book have Bibles and concordances, and if they are interested, they probably know all the proof texts on their own side of the matter quite as well as I do. So instead of quoting Scripture, I am going to tell you what I think all the way through. And I do this in the full confidence that I am in agreement with the teachings of the Scriptures, not as to certain proof texts only, but as to the whole tenor of the blessed Book. In the first place, the Bible does teach that God heals the body in answer to the prayer of faith, and without the use of natural remedies, and that it is the privilege of all God's people to seek to offer such a prayer for themselves and for others, and to invite others to pray for and with them that this prayer of faith may be offered. This is the important part of the subject, and the point upon which we should lay the principal emphasis. Let us seek to offer the prayer of faith for healing, and let us encourage others to do likewise. On the other hand, I believe the Bible nowhere teaches that it is wrong to have doctors and to take medicine, and that the almost universal judgment of sane people is that doctors and medicine are helpful, and at times indispensable. And it is foolish and hurtful to the influence of Christianity for one to place himself in position where to avail himself of such help would be, to him, compromise. Our chance for doing good depends upon our ability to stay in our bodies for a while. And very largely our usefulness depends upon our keeping these bodies reasonably healthy. Therefore take enough thought about meat and drink to know what you can use and what you should avoid. Be temperate in eating, sleeping, working and recreation. Dress for comfort and health as well as for decency. Then if you get a cavity in your tooth, have the dentist to fill it If your teeth become a menace to your health, have them extracted and use plates. If you catch cold, do whatever you can to break it up. If you fall and break a limb, have it set and splinted. If

you don't know what to do, see a doctor and do what he advises. Pray for healing and for health. And by all means, in spite of dirt and the devil and automobiles and disease germs, you may live a while. And while you are at it make your years and months and days and hours and minutes count for the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom. On such a road as this you can be holy and happy and useful, and you can go to heaven when you die or meet Jesus in glory when He comes. And what better could you do by putting yourself in a strain where you are likely to break your nerves and the nerves of others by claiming all sorts of privileges and immunities which the rank and file of
God's holy people wonder if you really possess?

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QUESTION #62 -- I have a neighbor who is a good Christian. Her husband has recently been reclaimed from a period of backsliding that lasted a number of years. While in his backslidden state he, took their children to picture shows and other places of worldly amusement. Now the little boy says he would rather go to the show than to church. Will any amount of praying undo the damage that has been done? and are not parents responsible. if they let their children do things they themselves condemn?

ANSWER #62 -- One of the most pathetic pictures I have seen is that of an old man coming to God and then trying to undo the evil he did while living a life of sin before his children. God does overrule in many such cases, but moral damage can never be assured of a complete cure. If a man suffers the loss of a limb as a consequence of sin, getting saved will not give him his limb back again. Likewise no one can ever gather up the effects of a bad example. But it is one's cross to always work to undo what he has done and to pray God to forgive and restore and save. Yes, up to a certain point, a parent is guilty of whatever he consents to let his child do, and it is during this period that most thought and deed habits are established. As a rule, the "twig is bent" by the age of twelve, and the tree will grow according to that bent. Only the miraculous grace and goodness of God enables us to pray and hope for the salvation of a sinner on up until he is a hundred years old.

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QUESTION #63 -- In Deuteronomy 14:21 it says, "Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien." Please explain what this scripture means.

ANSWER #63 -- As a precept for the ancient Hebrews, I judge there is no question as to the meaning. The Hebrews were forbidden to eat blood, and when an animal died "of itself," even though it were killed by choking or other such means, not involving disease, they could not eat the flesh, seeing the blood had not been drained away before the flesh was set. But restrictions like this were not forced upon Gentiles, and so such flesh might be given or sold to non-Hebrew people. One of the purposes of the Hebrew prohibition of certain meats was to emphasize the fact that they were a peculiar people in the earth -- a people for God's own special possession. There is quite a general aversion to eating the flesh of animals that have not been bled even yet, so that the bill of rights sent by the Jerusalem church to Gentile converts, found in the 5th chapter of Acts, contained a prohibition of "things strangled, and from blood." I believe the New Testament bill of

fare for Gentile Christians is very broad and very long, and that "nothing is to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving." And yet, the aversion to eating blood and "things that die of themselves" has some basis in refined feelings, and I believe it is well for all people to observe the sense of mercy involved. As a lad, I was taught not to kill doves because they assisted Noah in finding the time to leave the ark. And to this day, I think I should feel half like a cannibal if I ate a dove. Yet I do not think even this is a crime within itself. Only it is just a good thing to cater to any sense of refinement and pity that may influence us to be gentle in a world so largely governed by force.

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QUESTION #64 -- What is gossip, and is it a sin?

ANSWER #64 -- The simplest idea in the word gossip is chatter, light, harmless, meaningless talk. I would say that a moderate amount of talk is not only not wrong, but is quite right It is boorish to sit about and say nothing. Better remark on the weather, on matters of health, and any other question of minor importance and seek a common interest for more useful conversation. I often use such a method to "get started" so I can talk to a man about his soul. But like eating and work and play, talk must be governed. Solomon said, "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin," and John Wesley thought one could not profitably continue conversation, even on religious subjects, for more than one hour at a time. And we all have experienced a sense of leanness after a talk feast, even when we could not actually recall any harmful thing we have said. And then it is so easy for one to drift into news spreading without due regard for truth, necessity and kindness. So I think it better to lean toward too little than toward too much talk.

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QUESTION #65 -- Is it right for a person to ask the preacher to have prayer in the home or should the preacher ask for the privilege?

ANSWER #65 -- Either way is right, but as in all things pertaining to the rules of host and guest, the head of the house should ask the minister to offer prayer. On the other hand, if the head of the house is slow about making the suggestion, then the minister should be free to do so.

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QUESTION #66 -- Please explain Luke 3:14, "And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages."

ANSWER #66 -- Well, all I can say is that John advised soldiers to be good soldiers. They were not to take advantage of anyone on account of their being armed and the others not. They were not to bring false testimony against any, and they were to take the pay that was due them and not seek to supplement it by asking subsidies for doing their duty. And I think this is the same advice that would be given a soldier, a sailor, a merchant, a farmer or anyone else today. Be good in the sphere where you serve, and do not violate the rules of your calling.

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QUESTION #67 -- What is the difference between zeal and fanaticism?

ANSWER #67 -- The difference is in the love quality. Proper zeal is a correct admixture of light and love. Fanaticism is "loveless light"

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QUESTION #68 -- Please explain Matthew 12:25, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand."

ANSWER #68 -- The statement is of universal application -- every kingdom, every city, every house. Division will kill even the individual who is divided within himself, so that no one can serve both God and the world. If it is suggested that in the world of evil there is much confusion, war and strife, and yet evil lives and goes on, just remember that this world of evil is united in that it is all evil In the end every unit of intelligent life must be entirely good or entirely bad. Wheat and tares may grow together in the field for a while, but in the end the field must yield up wheat or be given over to tares.

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QUESTION #69 -- Please explain Matthew 5:33-37. If I should be subpoenaed into court what should I do about taking oath?

ANSWER #69 -- Personally, I do not believe this text or any other forbids the taking of the legal oath. But such as do so interpret it need not be worried in America, for here you are allowed to affirm if you have scruples against taking oath. The reason I do not like to affirm is that I do not like to suggest that I am in a class with the atheists who can do nothing but affirm, seeing they do not believe in God.

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IV
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ABOUT CONFESSION

QUESTION #70 -- Proverbs 28:13 says, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Does this mean we must go to all whom we have wronged and confess to them? Suppose some of them are dead, or if living, we do not know where they are? Please give the meaning of this and other scriptures having to do with confession.

ANSWER #70 -- Well to begin with, this particular scripture but emphasizes the negative side of the matter. That is to say, If any man denies that he is a sinner or denies that he has committed certain sins of which he is guilty, his denying does not change the facts. That is not the

way to get rid of sin The way to get rid of sin is to acknowledge it, repent of it, and believe God for pardon. This particular scripture, according to my judgment, does not deal with making confessions to other people. It deals with making confession to God against whom all sins are committed. On the other question, relating to confession to our fellowmen, the limits here are set at those against whom we have sinned. Public confession of private sins is usually hurtful to the cause of God. And again, God never requires the impossible of us. If those against whom we have sinned are dead or have moved away so that we do not know where they are, willingness to confess and make right will answer, and we should not trouble ourselves about the impossible. Confession to our fellowmen is of little profit unless it be accompanied by restitution. To merely tell another you have wronged him has little merit If you have told things about him that are not true, for example, it is more important that you should go to those to whom you have talked and explain and take the blame and clear the good name of the person slandered. than that you should approach him and make acknowledgment and let the old story stand. And if you have taken property, either by theft or unfair barter, it is of little use to confess, unless you are ready and willing to restore. But restitution also is measured by our ability, as well as by our will, and let no lost man be afraid that God will not take him when he comes the best way he can. And let no one think he can be saved by good and necessary works. In the end we must trust the blood of Jesus to cover, and we must evermore acknowledge that it was mercy and grace that saved -- we can never merit salvation.

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QUESTION #71 -- Jesus said to His disciples, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." This passage is the basis of the claim of Roman Catholics that we must confess our sins to the priests in order to obtain forgiveness. Just what is the meaning of this scripture?

ANSWER #71 -- "The Bible is its own best commentary," and Paul says, God "Hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:19), and the whole passage (read 2 Corinthians chapters 5 and 6) in which these words appear sets forth the responsibility of Christians, in general and of ministers in particular, to show that the salvation of men depends upon them in the sense that they have the gospel, and as men cannot be saved without the gospel, they cannot be saved unless Christians and ministers give them the gospel. If Christians cease to pray and witness and ministers cease to pray and witness and minister the Word of God, men's sins will be retained. If they witness and preach and pray and do their part, souls will find pardon of their sins through their labors -- in this sense and in this sense only, Christians and ministers and priests and prophets and all who know God and the power of the gospel can remit the sins of men.

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QUESTION #72 -- I am troubled about a matter of confession. I am willing to bear anything myself. But my confession would cause heartaches to others and might even break up my home. Everything is in the past except the matter of confession, and I am convinced it could do no good and might do much harm -- would do much harm. But I am troubled and disturbed. What shall I do?

ANSWER #72 -- I think confession may sometimes be based upon a selfish desire to get rid of one's own sorrow, not heeding the fact that it adds unnecessary sorrow to others. And yet it is an exceedingly delicate matter and one upon which it is practically impossible to give general advice. Seems to me it would be better, if you cannot find out by prayer just what course to pursue, that you would take into confidence some trustworthy saint -- who can be trusted not to talk -- and lay the full case before him and get him to pray for and advise you. If you are convinced no good but much harm would come from confession, it seems God is even now showing you what to do.

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QUESTION #73 -- A crime of my past for which I am unable to make amends seems to keep me from obtaining the experience of entire sanctification, and I am in distress.

ANSWER #73 -- The Bible teaches that it is the duty of penitent sinners to make restitution for past offenses, but the standard always is "to the measure of your ability," and if you are sincere in saying it is not possible for you to make amends in the matter that troubles you, you should place the entire matter under the atoning blood of Jesus and should look right up to God for His sanctifying power and then you should stubbornly refuse to allow the devil to trouble you with the subject any more. If you cannot fix it, God will fix it Himself. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

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V
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON FAITH

QUESTION #74 -- Why base your salvation on good works? "Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:9). "O foolish Galatians,... Are ye. so foolish? having 'begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:1-3). "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).

ANSWER #74 -- There is only one merit for salvation and that is the blood of Jesus Christ There is only one prime condition for salvation, and that is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is just another way of saying we are not saved by works. We are saved by faith only as the condition. But faith has prerequisites; that is, there are certain things that must be done before faith can and does function. Repentance, for example. Does anyone teach that an impenitent sinner can have faith for salvation? I trow not. But that is not saying we are saved by repentance. We are saved by faith, but we must repent of our sins before we can have faith for salvation. We are sanctified by faith, and by faith only, as a condition. But faith for sanctification has the prerequisite of consecration. Does anyone hold that he can be saved from all sin and yet not be fully consecrated to the will and service of God? I trow not. And yet this is not saying we are sanctified by consecration. We are sanctified by faith. But faith for sanctification will not function until we fully consecrate. We overcome continually and finally reach heaven by faith. But faith for continual victory and for final perseverance is conditioned upon obedience. Does anyone believe that he is victor over sin if he daily yields to the temptation to sin? Does anyone think he will find a home in heaven with God while he still sins against God and refuses to obey His Word and His Spirit? Well, if he does think

this, he thinks it without sanction from the Bible. That is not saying we are saved by obedience. We are saved by faith, but we prove our faith by our works and we condition our faith by obedience. This is in strict harmony with the texts you give in connection with your question, and in strict harmony with the whole tenor of the Holy Scriptures. It is also in strict harmony with what has been believed by orthodox Christians in all the ages. If you hold that one can be saved without repentance, sanctified without consecration, and glorified without obedience, then you belong to that class of dangerous people that Martin Luther, and John Wesley after him, called "Antinomians," that is "people who are against the law."

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QUESTION #75 -- I can see faith in the instance of the woman who came up and touched the hem of Christ's garment. But I am unable to see faith in Abraham's offering up of Isaac. Where does faith come in in this act? The Holy Spirit came to me in such tenderness and sweetness and asked me to go all the way with God, and I was not conscious of exercising faith; I just obeyed. Consequently I have often doubted whether I was sanctified. Please clarify this matter for me.

ANSWER #75 -- Remember that God had promised a good many things which were to be fulfilled through Isaac. Then He commanded Abraham to make an offering of Isaac. Abraham's faith was in the fact that he believed God and would do all He had said, and would do it through Isaac, as He had said He would do. This involved the resurrection (Hebrews 11:19) of Isaac, but even this Abraham believed. But you should not be worried because you were not conscious of exercising faith. That is, you were not conscious of an effort in believing. But the best grade of faith is effortless, anyway, and obedience is the basis of faith. And if you will read Acts 5:32, you will see that God has especially promised the Holy Spirit to them that obey Him. Why should not one obey gladly and believe without pain and effort, seeing God is "too wise to err and too good to do wrong"?

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QUESTION #76 -- We are saved by grace through faith, but rewarded according to our works, how then can we explain Matthew 20:12 where all laborers received the same pay whether they wrought one hour or twelve?

ANSWER #76 -- This Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard should be read in close connection with the 19th chapter, where there was just the barest peeping out of a commercial spirit in the words of Peter who was anxious to know what they who were first both in time and in the duration of service should receive. And the parable shows that one may be a Christian for a long time and then, because of a mercenary spirit or a murmuring temper, fail to qualify for more than just the minimum which the latest coming Christian will receive. But in the 19th chapter the Master makes it clear that all who deserve will be fittingly rewarded.

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QUESTION #77 -- In Psalm 56:3 we read, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." Would you infer from this that the psalmist trusted in God only when he was afraid?

ANSWER #77 -- No, I do not make that inference. Rather, the psalmist picked out the most difficult time there is and says, even then I will trust. And that is in keeping with my experience. In the times when my fears are strongest, when death has threatened and then actually has taken my loved ones, and my heart is crushed with fear and anguish, I have yet trusted in God. And having trusted in such times, I find it but proper that I shall trust Him at all other times. Having escaped the ravages of the mighty ocean I refuse to be drowned in a ditch.

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VI
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON FASTING

QUESTION #78 -- I would like to ask a few questions on the subject of fasting: Should one fast even when to do so is to jeopardize the health? Does fasting involve complete abstinence from food and drink (I have been told that the Jews sometimes counted it fasting when they yet used water and simple food to keep up their strength)? What is the teaching of Isaiah 58 on fasting (does it teach that blessings are to be received on the condition of fasting, or does it teach that all forms are useless if the heart is sinful)?

ANSWER #78 -- No, I think one should not fast to the detriment of his health. Take a mother of children whose daily toll taxes her strength and her nerves: in my judgment such a one should confine herself to partial abstinence, and not undertake extended fasts. While people who have no children and no great drain upon the nervous system can assume a standard of fasting much more rigorous. Fasting was and is of both kinds: full and partial, and either kind is good, and one or the other is adapted to everyone. I would not take Isaiah 58 for a stronghold on fasting; for as you suggest in your alternatives, the thought there is that fasting and all outward forms and practices are mockery in the absence of true holiness of heart and righteousness of conduct.

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QUESTION #79 -- Please explain Matthew 6:17: "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face."

ANSWER #79 -- You should read the following verse in connection with this one. It says, "That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." I judge you are not troubled about the literal side of this commandment, for that part of it was local and current, referring only to the customary way of indicating that you are prepared for the usual duties of the day. To us that would mean -- Well, this is fast day with me. Yet I got up this morning and shaved, put on a clean collar, and have made no appeal to anyone today -- not even to the mentioning that I am fasting. For I am not fasting unto men but unto God. That is what the text means to me.

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QUESTION #80 -- Please give some suggestions regarding fasting. How often should one fast, and for how long?

ANSWER #80 -- A thoughtful minister said, "Fasting is to the soul what sleep is to the body." And if there is any truth at all in this comparison, then it seems that every Christian should fast at least once a week or oftener. There is only one limit I would place on the practice of fasting, and that is that one should not carry it far enough to jeopardize his health. I have found fasting a very great means of grace and an assistant to my efforts to pray.

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QUESTION #81 -- Is any good accomplished by fasting one or more meals a week or should we wait until the Lord puts a fast on us?

ANSWER #81 -- There is advantage in the regular and systematic practice of fasting, just as there is advantage in regular and systematic Bible reading and prayer. The fact that the voluntary faster gets hungry in no wise detracts from the spiritual advantage of the practice, and, like prayer, one is much more likely to be trusted with a fast from the Lord if he is faithful in observing fasting as a rule than if he goes on without any regularity in the matter.

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VII
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON FORGIVENESS

QUESTION #82 -- Hebrews 6:4-6 says, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were. made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Does this mean that if one backslides it is impossible for him to be restored, and that he is hopelessly lost?

ANSWER #82 -- This passage and the one in Hebrews 10:26-29 both refer to the Jew who after having been enlightened to the meaning of Christ's sacrifice for sins attempts to turn back again to the symbols which he formerly followed in his Jewish faith. Though such were once covered by their sincerity, they now find no such covering, and with them, as with us all, it is Christ or damnation. But any backslider, even a backsliding Jew, can come back to God and be restored, if he comes back through faith in Christ, which is the only way for anyone. I think immense harm has come from the careless habit of religious teachers of making a general application of this specialized scripture and so holding that a person who has drifted from fellowship and obedience is hopeless. I would rather hold out hope to one whom God has refused than to withhold it from one whom God encourages, and I am sure that our good God never makes a person's hell more intolerable by convicting one whom He is unwilling to save. Therefore, I do not believe these stories about desperate penitents who in spite of their genuine contrition are refused by the Lord. Undoubtedly people who "cross the dead line" are either physically dead or spiritually indifferent. Any other view is inconsistent with the holy character of God.

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QUESTION #83 -- When a Christian backslides and goes clear back to the world, and comes to God again for restoration, is he "born again" upon this return or did he remain a child of God while he was wandering away? Some say one thing and some another.

ANSWER #83 -- I think this is just a play on words, and a too decided leaning toward literalism. The spiritual change which one passes through when he becomes a Christian is so radical and real that it is comparable to a birth. But to throw the figure down on its all-fours and try to make all the details apply is entirely unwarranted. In reality there is no particular difference in what takes place when an alien sinner comes to God the first time for pardon and regeneration and that which takes place when a wandering backslider comes back to God. But by way of distinguishing the history of the individual case the first coming is called conversion or the new birth, and the second and subsequent comings are called reclamation. No, a backslider is no more a child of God than an alien sinner of the same degree of doubt and indifference.

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QUESTION #84 -- In a recent discussion some. contended that we should ask other Christians to forgive us when they think we have done them wrong, but that there is no scripture requiring us to ask forgiveness of sinners. What do you think about this?

ANSWER #84 -- I think this is "cornering" on Christian morality in about the most reprehensible manner imaginable. Christianity is not such a legalistic system as that would indicate. If you injure anyone, be he ever so undeserving, scruple not to beg his forgiveness. This may not be the law, but it certainly is the gospel.

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VIII
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ABOUT GOD

QUESTION #85 -- How can God have form and place if He is in every place in just the same sense He is in any place?

ANSWER #85 -- God is not in every place in just the same sense He is in a certain place. He is everywhere in the perfection of His attributes, but He is in a certain place in the essence of His being. This may not be a very clear statement, and illustrations do not help a great deal in a theme so profound. But this illustration might at least suggest the distinction. I sit here in this room working at the typewriter. In essence I am right here, within the form and qualities of my body, mind and spirit, and I am nowhere else in this sense at all. But just now two boys met on the street a hundred feet away and I was "present" and saw them play at boxing. An insect on the window sill was in essence nearer to the boys than I. But its attributes are so limited that it was not "present" at the meeting of the boys at all. But now if you expand my attributes (intellect, sensibility and will) sufficiently, you could make me "present" a mile away, and on indefinitely,

until as in the case of God, He is everywhere present in that He knows and feels and exercises His power without any limit. Still He is in a certain place in essence, and it is there the angels and redeemed saints see His face and worship Him day and night forever and forever.

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QUESTION #86 -- If the Lord is omnipresent, as the Scriptures seem to teach, how could Cain, Jonah and others get away from the presence of the Lord? (Genesis 4:16; Jonah 1:3).

ANSWER #86 -- The term "presence of the Lord" is used in the Scriptures with at least three different meanings. But the meaning is always clear from the consideration of the context. (1) God is in heaven in personal essence. (2) God is everywhere in the perfection of His attributes. (3) God is present in His favor where two or three are met in His name and wherever anyone's life is pleasing in His sight The men you mention and others in their class went away from the favor of the Lord only.

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QUESTION #87 -- When is it, in life or in death, that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"?

ANSWER #87 -- It is any time, in this life or in the one to come, when mercy gives way to judgment, the offender having neglected the refuge offered by the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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QUESTION #88 -- How do you explain the apparent contradiction in the following scriptures: John 1:18; Exodus 33:11; Exodus 24:10, 11; I Samuel 31:4-6, and 2 Samuel 1:6-10. Some of these scriptures, as you see, say that no man has seen God, and the others give instances where they did see Him.

ANSWER #88 -- Dr. Scofield's explanation is, I think, quite well stated. He says, "The divine essence, God, in His own triune Person, no human being in the flesh has seen. But God, veiled in angelic form, and especially as incarnate in Jesus Christ, has been seen of men." (See Genesis 18:2, 22 and John 14:8, 9.)

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QUESTION #89 -- What are the two "immutable things" mentioned in Hebrews 6:18?

ANSWER #89 -- The promise of God and the oath by which He confirmed it.

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QUESTION #90 -- Our Sunday school class wants to ask who it is we are to fear, as mentioned in Matthew 10:28: is it God or the devil?

ANSWER #90 -- It is God.

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QUESTION #91 -- Is God's program so rigidly planned that the disciples, for example, had to tarry in the upper room for the Holy Ghost? or could they have failed to carry out the divine plan, and thus have left the world without salvation?

ANSWER #91 -- Compulsion, even divine compulsion, can apply only to inanimate objects, like stocks and stones, and to creatures not endowed with the power of moral choice. I would not say that God could not and would not have found some other way, even if that one hundred and twenty had failed to tarry in the upper room for the coming of the Holy Spirit, but the only compulsion that these men and women had, according to my judgment, was their love for Christ. If they could not have done other than they did, then they are not to be thanked for doing what they did, and they were not, after all, made holy by the Spirit, but were simply made His tools. Even heaven itself, you know, does not close its gates either day or night, for it is blessed improbability that holds saints and angels in, and not sordid impossibility.

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QUESTION #92 -- Do you believe there is a time when sickness will be unto death and that our days are numbered and will end at a given time, except it be by special divine interposition, or does just exposure or wrong treatment of disease lead to death? Please explain John 11:4.

ANSWER #92 -- We may not be able to explain it, but there seems to me to be no doubt that God's choices for us are contingent upon secondary considerations. For instance, I would say it was God's will that the poet, Edgar Allan Poe, should live to bless the world. But Poe gave himself to dissipation and died an untimely death. Only this much is essential in my creed about the length of life: I believe that the life of anyone who is fully obedient to God is immortal until his work is done. This affects me in the pursuit of my calling sometimes in the midst of "dangers seen and unseen." I do not believe disease or accident will lay me low until God is through with me here. But I am not arrogant I do not know at what time God may get through with me. So if you hear that I have died of lingering disease or of sudden accident do not account it a calamity; for my faith is that that can come to me only by the will of God, and that it is notice to the world that my work was finished.

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QUESTION #93 -- Does God know how each human will will decide concerning salvation? If you answer, No, do you not then limit God's omniscience? If you answer, Yes, then are not some by this foreknowledge predestined to be lost?

ANSWER #93 -- Well, the answer is yes, so that gets us by without reflection upon God's omniscience. God knows all things, past, present and future. But He knows past as past, present as present and future as future. He also knows things that are decreed as being decreed and things that are contingent as being contingent. And His foreknowledge of contingent future things does not predestinate those future things. It is difficult for us to discuss absolute qualities, since we know only relative and limited qualities. But it might help some for us to recall that our knowledge of the past -- say of the death of a precious loved one -- may have nothing whatever to do with the occurrence which we know. Likewise, if we could know the future, as we may in some limited instances, we are not necessarily exercising any influence or power to bring it about. May we not, therefore, conceive of God's knowing that a given sinner will reject all the agencies engaged for his salvation without His willing that it shall be so? For remember that God does not bind the will of man, but allows the power and will to choose as a heritage to the weakest responsible soul on earth.

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QUESTION #94 -- Why does God call a man home when he is far from being old, and is being used to win thousands to the Lord each year?

ANSWER #94 -- God knows the future as we cannot know it, and some time in the future we shall doubtless see that "all His ways are best." For the present we must trust where we cannot trace, and rest on the confidence that there is a reason, although we cannot see it yet.

* * *

QUESTION #95 -- Is God in the wind and the storm? We have just had a terrible storm. Do you think this a special judgment? Does God still send judgments on people for their wickedness?

ANSWER #95 -- The moral and spiritual ends of God's government are not always discernible, and we should be slow to pass judgment upon the meaning of His general and particular providences. The Scriptures ask us to consider that when the righteous die they escape many evils that would otherwise come upon them. One of the best men I ever knew perished in the California earthquake, while thousands of wicked people in the quake area suffered not at all. But, come to think of it, we should not want it otherwise; for if the righteous were immune to all the physical ills of the present life, commendable motive would be all but impossible. It is better that our immunities and principal joys shall await the close of our probationary period and state. In the meantime, let us look for the revelation of God's love and mercy in His written Word and in His vital grace, rather than in His book of nature. People who claim they can see God in nature and do not need the Bible usually really mean that they think of God in the springtime; for nature worshippers do not know what to do when winter comes, as it will come to us all.

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QUESTION #96 -- I have been told that God sometimes turns His face away from the sanctified Christian, as He turned His face from Christ upon the cross. If this is true, what is the meaning of the promise that He will be with us always?

ANSWER #96 -- I do not think the comparison between the experience of Christ on the cross and our experience in times of trial is altogether valid. The forsaking of Christ by the Father was a symbol of the Father's acceptance of the soul of the Son as an offering for sin, and it has no full analogy in all the universe. But there are times in the Christian experience when we must walk by faith and not by feeling, and when we must stand on confidence in lieu of the consciousness which we would very much love to have. Take a time of deep bereavement: there is much there that speaks of temporary withdrawal of divine favor, so deep and so real is the sense of aloneness. But in such times God is not really gone and we are challenged to trust when we cannot trace, and to rest when we cannot see, so that in the real sense God does not turn away His face from us -- only the clouds arise to hide His face and we must rise above the clouds in faith to be assured that "He abideth faithful."

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QUESTION #97 -- God says He is no respecter of persons, how then can He make the difference mentioned in Luke. 12:47, 48, and what is the meaning of stripes in connection with the judgment of the last day?

ANSWER #97 -- God is no respecter of persons in that He will do for one what He will do for anyone who meets the same conditions. But God does respect conditions -- otherwise He would have to respect persons. You no doubt know that the lord in the parable before us is but an earthly householder, and not the Lord Jesus. This is as far as the idea of stripes should be taken as to the literal application. But in the final awards of God to men, ability and opportunity will be taken into consideration, and it will be easier for the man who comes from a life of small opportunity than for one who had large ability and opportunity, for the latter has the larger responsibility. It is impossible in this world or at the judgment bar of God to separate privilege and duty, or opportunity and responsibility.

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IX
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON HEAVEN

QUESTION #98 -- Is the city which John saw in Revelation 21 the eternal abiding place of the saints or is that just a type of the Church?

ANSWER #98 -- It was a vision of heaven the abiding place of the saints. There are of course analogies between the various points in this description of the eternal city and the completed Church, but "the city which hath foundations" is a reality just the same. There are those who lightly say that heaven is a condition and not a place, and that hell is a condition and not a place. And of course a condition is involved in both cases. But condition involves place also. It is a lot like the ancient philosophers who used to seek for "pure beauty" disconnected from beautiful

things -- there is no such thing. Likewise a condition without a place is a figment of the imagination.

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QUESTION #99 -- Revelation 22:2 says the tree of life will have fruit. Now if we have glorified bodies what will we need of fruit?

ANSWER #99 -- The most of what we know about the glorified state we gather from the days Jesus remained on earth after His resurrection. And you know that more than once during those days He ate with His disciples. We cannot think that His glorified body demanded food as a necessity, but we find that He could take food when He so desired. It may be like that in heaven. Anyway, I know that however it is in heaven, it is right.

* * *

QUESTION #100 -- Did Jesus descend into hell before He ascended into heaven? Where does the soul go after death and until the judgment day? Where in the Bible can references be found OIL these questions?

ANSWER #100 -- After His death Jesus descended into the abode of spirits -- hades -- and made proclamation of His high priestly work in redemption (Read I Peter 3:18-22 and Ephesians 4:7-11), and then ascended into heaven. Now, since the resurrection of Christ, the spirits of the saints who die go immediately into the presence of God (2 Corinthians 5:1-9). Judgment is to determine reward and punishment, not destiny, for destiny is settled by the choices made here in this life.

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QUESTION #101 -- How will the people of different earthly languages understand one another in heaven?

ANSWER #101 -- I do not have any particular idea about the method, but I believe the confusion of tongues is part of the effects of the sinful state of man, and that in heaven all the effects of sin will be removed. Perhaps we will understand thought there without even the necessity of words. Anyway I feel confident heaven has a common language for holy angels and redeemed and glorified men.

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QUESTION #102 -- Do you believe that those who die in the Lord go straight to heaven as soon as they die? Please explain I Thessalonians 4:13-16. Do you believe the holy dead sleep until the Second Coming of Jesus? Paul speaks of being absent from the body and present with the Lord. If they are already in heaven in new bodies, why will they be raised from the dead?

ANSWER #102 -- Yes, I believe those who die in Christ go immediately into the presence of the Lord in heaven, and I believe the scripture you mention is proof of it. To be absent from the body, for the saint, is to be present with the Lord. There cannot in the very nature of things be any such thing as a sleep of the soul until the resurrection of the body. The body sleeps, but not the soul. The body sleeps because the soul is absent, but the soul could sleep only if it were separated from the Lord, and to be absent from the body and absent from the Lord would be to be lost. I Thessalonians 4:13-16 means just that. That is, it means that when the saints die their bodies sleep, their souls go on into the presence of God in heaven. Then when Jesus comes the second time, their bodies shall arise from the grave glorified and deathless, and their spirits will be reunited with their glorified bodies and both soul and body shall be glorified and deathless. Those who are dead and in heaven now are not in their glorified bodies, but are disembodied spirits in His presence. That is why they will have part in the resurrection, as mentioned above. All this, I believe, is the clear teaching of the Word of God, and as over against them, the guesses and speculations of cultists do not interest me. The teachings of the Bible, and the orthodox faith of the Church completely satisfy my mind and heart, and for those who have gone on before, I "sorrow not as those who have no hope." I do not even sorrow as those must do who think their loved ones are asleep and inactive and are missing something while we yet go along. I believe our loved ones in heaven are living more fully than ever they did before -- much more fully than we ourselves are living. We are lonely here without them, but they await our coming in gladness; not in sorrow. It is well with our sainted loved ones. It is even better than we think or can imagine. May God grant us grace to be always prepared to meet them there!

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QUESTION #103 -- What is the eternal value of culture? I know Solomon said, "Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom," and Paul said, "Whatsoever things are true . . . lovely . . of good report," etc., but shall we not feel when we get to heaven, that much of the time we spent here studying things which pertain only to this world (secular literature, music, history, travel, etiquette, etc.) is time wasted? Or shall we enjoy heaven more for having developed our minds here? Our young people are interested in this question, please answer soon.

ANSWER #103 -- Well, I am interested in this question too, but I don't know anything more about it than you have suggested. Personally, I believe that we shall enjoy heaven better if we develop our minds here, and I have heard of a man who was refused admission to heaven because he had shown no interest in the world God gave him here. So I plan to learn all I can about every legitimate subject, and I believe I shall be glad forever that I did so. H any should say, "God has no use for our education," the answer is, "He has still less use for our ignorance." And I think there is evidence that my thought is correct in this matter in the fact that the development of the mind increases capacity for enjoyment in this world. Education has suffered much from being secularized and commercialized. But the true idea of education is the building of a life, not preparation for making money or securing position. But if anyone calls for absolute proof that there is eternal value in culture, I shall have to pass the question on to someone else. My creed is strong enough to keep me stirred up to study and think, but it is not strong enough to make me dogmatic as to what others shall do. I know that eternal salvation is by grace.

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QUESTION #104 -- In the Sunday school lesson for January 10, we find this scripture, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (John 3:13). How would you harmonize this statement with the fact that Enoch and Elijah were translated and went up to heaven?

ANSWER #104 -- I understand that Jesus was speaking of the authority of His message, and that He was showing that no one has ever gone up to heaven and come back again with the message of God. But He himself had come down from heaven with the message, and yet continued His standing and authority in heaven. This was the supreme claim of Christ as the "teacher come from God."

* * *

QUESTION #105 -- I heard a prominent minister say, "My happiness in heaven will not be complete. unless I find my wife and child there." Do you think this represents a proper view of heaven?

ANSWER #105 -- I think this represents a very human and earthly view of heaven. It is impossible for us to form any adequate idea of what heaven will be like, but one thing the Bible makes plain, and that is that all who dwell there will be supremely happy and blessed. And this must be regardless of those who fail to get there, else no one could qualify, for all have loved ones who fail to take the way.

* * *

QUESTION #106 -- Please explain the meaning of "third heaven in 2 Corinthians 12:2.

ANSWER #106 -- According to the Hebrew method of calculating, the first heaven is the heaven where the clouds are. The second is the heaven where the stars are. The third is the true heaven, the dwelling place of God.

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QUESTION #107 -- An evangelist expressed the opinion that we will carry the recollection of sin to heaven, but will see it only through the blood of Jesus. I believe even the memory of sin will be eradicated, since the remembrance of sin would mar the enjoyment of heaven. What do you think?

ANSWER #107 -- Well, the "new song" is a song of redemption (Revelation 5:9), and it seems to me the recollection of our former state will rather add to the joy of heaven than detract from it. Yes, I think I must agree with the evangelist whom you quote.

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QUESTION #108 -- Are there degrees of reward in heaven? Will a young convert share the same glory as a faithful minister and soul winner?

ANSWER #108 -- I am sure we shall all know more about heaven when we have been there five minutes than we have been able to find out during a whole lifetime here. But I think it is clearly taught in the Scriptures that there are, in a sense, "degrees of reward in heaven" -- like the stars differ from one another in glory, as Paul mentions in I Corinthians 15. But I cannot think this distinction can very well be described in terms of attached possession or geographical position. Rather, the riches of heaven like the true riches of earth, are in mind and spirit, and not in the abundance of the things which any possess. Undoubtedly everyone in heaven will be sublimely satisfied, and in that sense none will share any less than others, and there will be absolutely no sorrow and no occasion for envy there. Perhaps the illustration is not fitting, but I think of it as being like the satisfaction of a small child and a profound philosopher. Both may be equally happy and satisfied, but who would say that their contentment is of equal rank? And so with the saved maniac from Gadara and Paul of Nero's judgment hall. Or of the penitent thief from the cross and John Wesley from Oxford University. And so with any one "saved as by fire" and another who has been long in the Master's school.

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QUESTION #109 -- Did John Calvin send soldiers to bring back a man who had preached contrary to what Calvin believed? and did Calvin have this man burned at the stake? If so, where can we find proof that he took such action?

ANSWER #109 -- Michael Servetus, an opponent of Calvin, was burned at the stake in Geneva on October 27, 1553, for the crime of heresy, and there can be no doubt that Calvin was chiefly instrumental in bringing the tragedy about But it is a little alleviating to find that when Servetus intimated his intention to visit Geneva, Calvin gave him fair warning that if he did so he would "prosecute him to the death"; and, further, Calvin did not approve the method of execution and insisted on beheading. But the incident must ever remain as a blot upon the character of Calvin, and we can only mourn the error and take whatever consolation we can from the fact that Calvin's was a persecuting age. Any biography of Calvin will give you at least a brief account of this sad affair, for it has never been the plan of even the friends of Calvin to ignore the matter, and any Encyclopedia, especially the New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, will give something on the subject under the name of Calvin.

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QUESTION #110 -- How much is the fourth part of a shekel (1 Samuel 9:8)?

ANSWER #110 -- The shekel was originally a certain weight, and later a coin of the same weight It is difficult to compute values in modern terms, but some authorities think the shekel of gold was about $5.50 and the shekel of silver about seventy-five cents, although some think this too high for the silver shekel and would make it nearly fifty cents. Sometimes the smaller coins were of copper, but of sufficient weight to compare with the silver. So I would say the fourth

shekel mentioned was likely a copper or silver portion in value somewhere between twelve and twenty cents.

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QUESTION #111 -- Did the Dead Sea make its appearance after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah?

ANSWER #111 -- I think it has been conclusively shown by Dr. Robinson and others that there was a basin in the region of the Dead Sea which received the waters of the Jordan before the destruction of the Cities of the Plain. But the sea was in those days of less extent than now. And from all indications the vale in which Sodom and Gomorrah were located was in the place now occupied by the southern part of the Dead Sea. The volcanic action which took place in connection with the destruction of the wicked cities of Lot's time lifted the bottom of the former basin and caused the waters to extend over a larger surface than formerly.

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X
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

QUESTION #112 -- Please explain "not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord" (Zechariah 4:6).

ANSWER #112 -- The subject was the rebuilding of the temple, and for such a task there seemed to be insufficient resources. But the Lord assured the prophet that the real force was not that of armies or worldly influence, but the Spirit of God. And we know the parallel today. The greatest miracle in the world is the changing of a sinner into a saint, and this cannot be done by armies or navies, but only by the Spirit of God. And it is thus also with the greatest accomplishments in the Christian service -- not equipment and popularity, but the presence of the Holy Spirit will answer to our needs.

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QUESTION #113 -- Some Christians at this place want to know what it means to grieve away the Holy Spirit. Some contend that one would not realize that the Spirit had departed, but would make light of Christianity, and probably curse and revile God. Others think that when the Spirit departs the person is told the reason. Same think that if one knew he had grieved the Spirit away there would be so much agony of spirit over it that all coming in contact with that person would know what had happened on account of his unhappy condition. So we are submitting the problem to you.

ANSWER #113 -- The evidence from observation is that the effect of the Holy Spirit's withdrawal is not uniform, any more than the effect of conviction is uniform. Some people do know when they made the final decision that drove the Spirit away, and they are so very unhappy that reason itself is threatened. Others sin continuously and become hardened by a gradual process

so that they reach a state of hopelessness without being fully aware of it So I think there is truth in all the opinions expressed above, only the descriptions given are not of universal application. People may sin so as to drive the Spirit away by means of one single act or decision. Or they may grieve Him away by the attitude of neglect which finally becomes an irrevocable attitude of rejection. And the only way to make sure not to sin the sin unto death is to be instant and constant in obeying God in all things great and small.

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QUESTION #114 -- Are we scriptural when we speak of the Holy Ghost as the Holy Spirit? Lately my attention was called to the fact that the Scriptures speak of the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire -- not the baptism with or of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit, it was said is the "Spirit of God," "The Spirit of Christ," the "Spirit of truth," etc. I am anxious to speak scripturally in my public and personal ministry. Will you please help me?

ANSWER #114 -- There is just the one word pneuma for spirit in the original Greek from which our English Bible is translated. And this is the word for wind or air in motion, for the human spirit, for a temper or disposition of soul, for the intelligent, incorporeal human spirit separate from the body, for the undying soul, for angels good and bad, for God (as in John 4:24), and for the third person of the trinity in His relationship to Jesus, to the prophets and apostles, and to the saints in general. What is actually meant by the word must be determined by the adjective with which it is associated or by the context. But Holy Ghost, Holy Spirit, Holy Ghost and fire (and here is found a metaphor which means simply "the fiery Holy Ghost"), Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, Spirit of Truth, and other such terms refer to one and the same person. There is no reason, speaking from the viewpoint of the original word, why you should not read "Spirit" everywhere instead of "Ghost" or "Ghost" everywhere instead of "Spirit." The translators of the 1611 edition, our Authorized Version, probably used the two words just for the sake of avoiding monotony. But in modern English the word "Ghost" has come to be used pretty much in a derogatory sense as in describing apparitions and evil spirits. Therefore the revisers adopted "Spirit" as the uniform translation of the word pneuma whenever the third person of the Trinity or the Godhead is meant And, considering our English usage, this is in the interest of accuracy. But especially in speaking, the old form, "Baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire" is sometimes more emphatic and in well informed Christian circles is not misleading. But by all means there should be no confusion as to the meaning of these words, and there should be no thought of any "unscripturalness" when either form is employed.

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QUESTION #115 -- Please explain (1) Malachi 1:2, 3; and (2) Matthew 12:31.

ANSWER #115 -- The first passage mentioned reads as follows: "I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord; yet I loved Jacob: and I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." I suppose the difficulty is in the statement that God hated Esau, and I think scholars generally are agreed that this and kindred statements, some of them in the New Testament, are to be understood as expressing degrees of regard. As though to say, "I loved Jacob, and Esau I

loved less" -- or "Esau I disregarded." And in the present instance, it is evident that it is the nation which sprang from Esau, and not the man Esau, which is in mind. The purpose of the prophet was to show how unkind Israel had been in the face of such wonderful favor as had been shown them. The second passage says, "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." From the context we learn that persecutors of the Master were accrediting the work of the Holy Ghost to the devil, and this was to warn them that their act was approaching the point where mercy would give way to wrath and they would be hopeless. It is evident that when men accredit the work of the Spirit to the devil they put themselves out of reach of the Spirit; for then the more He strives with them the farther they will be driven away. This is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Another method of sinning against the Holy Ghost is to just persistently and continually reject His call or disregard His reproof. This is perhaps the most common way of passing beyond the line of hope. Let us all be ready and anxious to listen and obey, lest we, too, should grieve Him so that He will go away.

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QUESTION #116 -- What was that perfection which Paul, according to his testimony in Philippians 3:11-13, had not attained?

ANSWER #116 -- Paul had attained Christian perfection, but not resurrection perfection. The one is perfection in love, the other is the perfection of state. The one is received through the ministration of the Holy Spirit on condition of faith here and now, the other is to be attained by the ministration of the Holy Spirit at the second coming of Christ. When Peter and John and the others were mending their nets in preparation for another excursion after fish, the Greek says they were "perfecting their nets" -- that is, they were mending the rends and preparing their nets for catching fish. But the perfection of the resurrection is represented by the draft itself in which 153 fine fish were brought to the land. We are to be sanctified and "prepared unto every good work" (like the nets were prepared for the service they were made to serve), but we are yet to strive that we may come out to the end with the purpose which we were set to serve actually accomplished.

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QUESTION #117 -- In Acts 15:9 Peter says of the people at Jerusalem and Caesarea, "God purified their hearts by faith." Was there a specific promise upon which this faith for cleansing was based?

ANSWER #117 -- The Master Himself called the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit, "The Promise of the Father." There are many promises, but by way of pre-eminence, this one is marked out as though it were the only one. And the coming of the Spirit in dispensational fullness was and still is called, "The baptism with the Holy Ghost." The primary meaning of baptism is cleansing. Hence, in the language of the times, baptism with the Holy Ghost meant the cleansing wrought by the coming of the Holy Spirit. And since this coming was the outstanding promise, I believe the Christians in question based their prayers and their faith upon this outstanding, and best known of the promises of God. The promise, the dispensational promise of this age is that God baptizes His people with the Holy Ghost, and thus purifies their hearts. And since the coming of

the Spirit is conditioned upon faith, their hearts are purified (conditionally) by faith, although they are purified efficiently by the Holy Ghost.

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QUESTION #118 -- Seeing all scripture is inspired by the Holy 'Spirit, how can it be said, "He shall not speak of himself," as in John 16:13?

ANSWER #118 -- The rendering is clearer if you read ("from") instead of ("of") and the statement must be read in connection with the succeeding clause. Thus: "He shall not speak from himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak," etc. That is, the Holy Spirit is not a voice disconnected from the Father and the Son, and He does not speak anything inconsistent with what the Son has said and done. And Jesus commended the disciples to the further revelations that were to come through the Spirit and assured them it would be dependable and in harmony with what He himself had already told them by word of mouth.

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QUESTION #119 -- Are we to understand that when Jesus breathed upon His disciples in the Upper Room and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," that it was an impartation for personal victory, and that the coming of the Holy Ghost upon them at Pentecost was a baptism for service to others?

ANSWER #119 -- I do not so understand the distinction. Adam Clarke thought the experience of His breathing upon them was in the nature of an assurance, a sort of clearing up of all past experiences, making ready for the Pentecostal experience which was for personal purity as well as for power for service to others. The very word baptism means to cleanse, and it is scarcely correct to speak of a "baptism for service," since baptism is for purity.

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QUESTION #120 -- Some people say that regenerated people do not have, the Holy Spirit. That He is just with regenerated people and not actually within until we are sanctified wholly. If this is true, what is the meaning of Romans 8:9, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his"? Is there a difference between "the Spirit of Christ" and the Holy Spirit?

ANSWER #120 -- Regenerated people do have the Holy Spirit both with them and in them. No doubt the error you have noted arises in the minds of good people from an inaccurate reading of John 14:17, and an overemphasis on the with and in, in this instance. The actual tense in both instances is future and the thought has to do with fullness (by your side and within your hearts), rather than with a distinction regarding the Holy Spirit's location in the case of regenerated and sanctified Christians. And there is no difference between "The Spirit of Christ" and the Holy Spirit. In other words, the Spirit of Christ is the Holy Spirit, and if any man have not the Holy Spirit, he is no Christian. This is the statement of the Scriptures, and there is no way around it except by unpalatable evasion. The only "Executive of the Godhead" in this world is the Holy Spirit. He convicts the sinner, regenerates the penitent believer, and sanctifies the devoted,

believing Christian. The distinction is a distinction of offices, not of personalities. The Holy Spirit is a person, and is indivisible. He does not live in temples of stone or other materials, but in the hearts of His disciples. When He comes into the penitent believer's heart in regenerating office, there follows the conflict between the "flesh and Spirit" (carnal nature, not the material body, and the Holy Spirit), and this is ended when the believer makes a full consecration and believes for the full cleansing of his heart from inbred sin. And the actual purging out of inbred sin (on the basis of the blood of Jesus as its merit and by faith as its condition) is by the Holy Spirit. Henceforth the Holy Spirit rules the will and affections completely.

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QUESTION #121 -- Some people say that if we get saved and sanctified and follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit we shall receive light on such things as specific matters of dress, wedding rings, etc., and that then these things pass from the list of nonessentials to that of essentials and that we then either bring our lives to the standard or else we shall lose the Holy Spirit out of our lives. Do you think this is true?

ANSWER #121 -- Well, I believe the Holy Spirit will lead those who receive and obey Him, even in the minute and detailed things of life. But I have not found in my years of observation that this results in uniformity of dress and habit among God's people. There is unity in variety among the people of God, and some things like specific manner of dress remain in the realm of the personal to the end of life. "Regimentation" is not the teaching of the Bible. There is a "rugged individualism" among the best people in the world, and I am glad it is so. Please read Romans 14:2 and 5 and see if these passages do not amply justify my statements. It is not one sanctified person in a thousand that dresses according to my taste. Each one is a little too finely dressed, or else he does not use colors that blend, or else he is a little faddish, or else he is somewhat slouchy. He is too nearly up with the latest styles or else he is too far behind (and by he I mean also the females of the species). Thank God I am not the criterion. "Let every man be persuaded in his own mind." It is never safe to take a specific passage of scripture and make it a rule for ourselves and others until we first consider when it was written and what it meant to the people to whom it was first addressed. One old, eccentric preacher is said to have attacked the style of women's hair dress in his day by the use of the text in Matthew 24. He eliminated the context and just used the words, "Top-knot come down." But such use of the Holy Scriptures is a worse vice than the ones the preachers seek to condemn. Here is the standard: Get saved and sanctified, walk in all the light that comes to you through the Word of God and by the impressions of the Holy Spirit. Do nothing that you yourself believe and feel to be out of harmony with God's will for you, and just let the people, good and bad, have their liberty to talk about you, and do not try to compel others to follow your specific rules, for "the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, a good conscience and faith unfeigned" (1 Timothy 1:5). Evangelist E. A. Fergerson used to paraphrase thus: "Now the sum of all God requires is divine love overflowing a pure heart, a good conscience and faith that is not put on." It must be a disagreeable thing when one feels compelled to set himself up for a standard and expect the neighbors to accept what he says and what he does. My observation is that usually when people get into this they lose their love for saints and sinners and become mossbacks in religion. I believe they will go to heaven all right, and the world will not suffer much loss when they do so. But let us try to keep good standing with God by obeying His Word and Spirit according to the best light we can get. Then let God judge His people and decide

who has light and who does not, and also let Him keep the gates of heaven and let in whomsoever He will. We know some things, like breaches of
the Ten Commandments, are sinful and wrong, but in the instances where God has spoken only in principles, let us not try too hard to make specific rules.

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XI
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON THE INTERPRETATION OF NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

QUESTION #122 -- In Acts 9:7 it is said that the men who were with Paul heard the voice, and in Acts 22:9 it says they "heard not the voice." How do you harmonize this apparent contradiction?

ANSWER #122 -- These fellow travelers heard the sound of the voice, but they did not hear the meaning of the voice. This is a very common distinction, especially in countries where more than one language is in current use. In such instances it is not uncommon for a man to tell you he cannot hear Hebrew or whatever language is being discussed.

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QUESTION #123 -- What did Paul mean by his saying "I die daily"? (1 Corinthians 15:31).

ANSWER #123 -- One of the marvels of human ingenuity is the fact that contenders for the retention of inbred sin through life have tried to apply this saying to sin or to spiritual experiences of any kind. The plain meaning, taken along with the context is simply that the apostle was exposed to danger and death for the gospel every day, and his argument was that he did it because the hope of resurrection was so strong in him. On the subject of inbred sin, that is crucified in us when the Holy Ghost comes in sanctifying fullness and there is no occasion for further deaths or "deeper deaths."

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QUESTION #124 -- Please explain I Peter 3:19, "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison," etc.

ANSWER #124 -- Verses 18, 19 and 20 of the third chapter of I Peter are recognized as constituting one of the most difficult passages in the New Testament. In the verses immediately preceding the apostle has been instructing his brethren as to their manner of conduct when they were being persecuted for righteousness' sake, and holds up the example of Christ and His death for sin Then he proceeds to tell what happened after death. Dr. Godbey used to explain that after His death upon the cross Jesus passed on into the world of spirits and there proclaimed His atoning work and accomplished His resurrection in the sight of the spirits of men who had refused to believe this message in the days of their flesh, and the antediluvians are cited as a specific example of those who heard Him there. And there is no necessity for complicating the passage by

giving full content to the word "preach" in this connection, forcing it to mean that He offered grace to those who refused in the days of their flesh. Rather, the word, as in the classical Greek, can mean simply heralding. And it is rational to believe that the work of Christ was thus heralded among the spirits of Christ rejecters by which means their doubts were the more fully condemned. Incidentally the passage serves to show that the human soul continues immediately after death in conscious existence and enlarged activity, and this is very valuable as respecting the revelation of divine truth.

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QUESTION #125 -- What does Paul mean in Acts 24:16 by "A conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men"?

ANSWER #125 -- He means that state of inner moral approval which one can have only when he is aware of no intention of doing another evil, but is assured within himself of his intention of doing nothing but good to all. This estate is found only by always following the plan of Abraham Lincoln of "doing the right, as God gives me to know the right," in all things both great and small.

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QUESTION #126 -- In the 6th chapter of Luke it says, "Do good and lend, hoping to receive nothing again." What does this mean?

ANSWER #126 -- It means that you are to do good in the hope that you will not require a like favor. There is no thought here that you are to lend hoping that your neighbor will forget or refuse to return what he borrows. But you lend to him hoping that you will not need to borrow from him, and give to others hoping that you will not yourself become needy and require their gifts. This is the only motive that will entitle one to a reward in heaven; for any other motive is born of self-seeking, if not of selfishness.

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QUESTION #127 -- Please explain Deuteronomy 7:7-9; Ephesians 1:4, 5; and 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

ANSWER #127 -- I take it that you are troubled about the suggestion that God chose Israel without respect to their fitness and that He chose sanctification for His people even before they had an existence. In the instance of the choice of Israel it is well to remember that the choice was for a given purpose, and that it did not directly concern the salvation of the soul. God used the heathen King Cyrus, but there is no evidence that Cyrus was ever saved. In the other instances God chose the means for making His people holy before they were ever created and later marred by sin The last text mentioned shows that God, without any conference with man, chose that the way to salvation should be the way of saving from sin, and not saving in sin But remember, also, that this does not indicate that anyone can be saved without his own consent and co-operation. God chose the means and the process without consulting man. But if men are to be saved through the means

and by the process they must come to God of their own consent and take the way He has chosen for them.

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QUESTION #128 -- Luke 15:10 says, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Does that mean that the saints in heaven rejoice when a sinner repents?

ANSWER #128 -- It does seem to include that, although I do not think that is the principal thought. The principal thought is that there is real joy of the highest order over the salvation of a soul that finds his way to God. A joy that can be only just dimly prefigured by the joy of a woman who finds the coin that is necessary to restore her symbol of marital fidelity and her badge of purity and honor.

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QUESTION #129 -- Please explain I Corinthians 3:15, "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire."

ANSWER #129 -- I heard a noted preacher in his "eternal security" argument, say this means that we are saved by grace, no matter what we do. So that once we have been regenerated, we will go to heaven, no matter how many sins of commission and omission we may commit, but that we will lose our reward in heaven if we do not live right and well. This application is, according to my judgment, fallacious and without warrant. The text, as I understand it, is a warning that in addition to taking heed to the saving of our own souls, we should take heed to our life of service as well, lest we spend our time at something that does not count, and thus come to the end of life with no worthwhile accomplishment. Just let us take foreign missionary work for example: like every Christian hearted visitor, when I came to my first missionary field I saw so much physical misery that I wanted to give away everything I possessed and ask my friends to do likewise, and turn the mission into a relief agency. But the seasoned missionaries said, "That will not do. It is not always a good thing to give 'things' to the people. Much of their misery comes of their own sins, and if they could be saved morally and spiritually, they would save themselves mentally and physically. When we give the people too many physical blessings, we make 'rice Christians' out of them -- that is we tempt them to profess to be Christians for the physical benefits derived, and that becomes a snare to them. We must patiently and persistently give them the gospel and work for inner, rather than for outer changes." And I myself have seen programs there and here which were of such a nature that no real good was done, even though the workers were earnest enough. Let us all take heed that we give ourselves to tasks that count Take another example: our preachers are constantly beset with requests to give over their meetings to various reform ideas. And if they did it, there would be little opportunity to preach the gospel and save souls, and so the reforms would fail anyway. It is a strong temptation when some leader says, "Now, the church can put this over, if you will just turn your attention to it." But the church has a ministry, given her by her divine Lord, and whenever she takes up some other, she is in danger of building of hay, wood and stubble, which will in the end come to naught.

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QUESTION #130 -- Please explain what is meant by "dispensation of the gospel" in I Corinthians 9:17.

ANSWER #130 -- The Greek word oykonomeeah primarily means "management of household," and is about the equivalent of our English "economy." But it has several meanings in popular usage. But in the passage mentioned and in Colossians 1:25 Paul uses it to indicate the office which God entrusted to him of proclaiming the gospel.

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QUESTION #131 -- What does it mean in the Scriptures when it speaks of certain ones believing and being saved "and their house"? Some such instances are John 4:53, Acts 16:31, and Acts 16:15.

ANSWER #131 -- Expressions of this sort are nothing like so confusing in the Orient as they are in the individualistic West Of course we think our way is the normal and right way, but we must not forget that the Oriental way is older, and that ours, and not theirs, is the innovation. It seems quite natural in China or India for people to come to Christ by the family, and it is not unusual for them to want to come by the village and even by larger contingencies still. The "mass revival" which some people think is the invention of present-day evangelists is as old as the East Of course coming to Christ is a personal matter, and in discriminating language we might have to say that in these cases of men "and their houses" coming there was an element of formality, and that likely not every one in the group was truly saved. But the remark of their coming is sufficient to show that the impression which brought the head of the house to Christ and true faith was not entirely lost upon the other members of the family, and that the other members at least professed to make the same step the head of the family made. I was just ready to begin the ceremony for the baptizing of a fine group of believers in the camp meeting at Buldana, India, when a commotion was created by a man in the audience. Upon inquiry I found that it was the husband of one of the women in the group of believers, and that he was raising objection to our baptizing his wife unless we would also baptize him, for in a case like this the act would be the equivalent of acknowledging his wife as advanced above him, and that would destroy the order and tranquillity of his home. The missionaries thought this man had not served his probation sufficiently, and advised against admitting him to the group to be baptized. But the man's mother-in-law, a Christian, sustained the man's objections, and upon the advice of the missionaries, we asked the woman to step aside and wait a few months until her husband could prove himself sufficiently to be admitted along with herself. In the West this would have been considered compromise on the part of leaders and undue and unjustifiable interference on the part of the non-approved husband. But India is the East, and the maintenance of the family unit is important And before we judge harshly perhaps we should meditate a little upon the case of the Western man who believes in Christianity and the church and would not have his wife and children left out of their benefits, but who, with all his boasted independence, is such a moral coward that he leaves the leadership in this most difficult of all fields of responsibility to his wife -- an Eastern man could not respect him.

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QUESTION #132 -- What is the meaning of the "second death" (Revelation 21:3).

ANSWER #132 -- The first death is condemnation for sin, the second death is damnation for sin The sinner dies in that he is separated from fellowship with God while in this world. But his separation is final and irreparable when he dies in his sins and goes to "the bottomless pit," and this is the "second death" -- damnation, the execution of the penalty of guilt

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QUESTION #133 -- Please explain Matthew 16:19 about the giving of the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

ANSWER #133 -- It cannot be that Christ gave the keys of eternal destiny for souls to any mortal man. (Read Revelation 1:18.) The explanation could be made lengthy, but I believe it is enough for me to say that Christ left His Word and His work altogether to His disciples when He went back to heaven, and that the gospel is the key which He has given, not to Peter only, nor to the other apostles exclusively, but to all Christians, and He has no other plan for saving men except by publishing the gospel among them through His Church.

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QUESTION #134 -- John 7:7 says, "The world cannot hate you." John 15:19 says, "The world hateth you." How do you harmonize these two statements?

ANSWER #134 -- John 7:7 was addressed to the brethren of Jesus in the flesh who were unbelievers and because of the world unhated by the world. John 15:19 was addressed to Christ's own true disciples who are hated by the world because they are not of the world.

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QUESTION #135 -- Please explain the scripture that says, "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Some say it means we are to enjoy the pleasures of this life regardless of God's cause and those about us who are in need.

ANSWER #135 -- The passage you mention is in I Corinthians 15:32, and this in turn is based upon Isaiah 22:13. The argument is that of a worldly person who does not believe in the resurrection, and for such a person the argument is valid. Paul admits the argument to show how definite the contrast between the worldly person and the Christian whose hope is in the resurrection from the dead, and for such the choice is just the opposite. The formula for the Christian is not given in this study of contrasts, but evidently it would be, "Let us live soberly, righteously and godly, even though this may involve the loss of many fleshly pleasures, for we shall come out of the grave m the resurrection and then shall enter upon joys that will compensate many times over for all we have lost by our way of self-denial and devotion to God."

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QUESTION #136 -- Does the falling away mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 have reference to the Dark Ages?

ANSWER #136 -- Yes. That is, the reference is to the great apostasy which reached its depths in what Protestants call the Dark Ages.

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QUESTION #137 -- Please explain Matthew 5:40-42, "And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke. also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."

ANSWER #137 -- The Christian way of getting rid of an enemy is to forgive him, love him, and do him service without limit, and this is the only way that has ever been found of successfully dealing with an enemy. Every other way of dealing with him gives you the worst of it.

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QUESTION #138 -- If charity (love) is greater than faith (1 Corinthians 13:13), why did not Peter say, "Lord, increase our love," instead of "faith," when the Lord told him to forgive his brother seven times seven times in one day? (Luke 17:5, 6).

ANSWER #138 -- Henry Drummond said love is greater than faith because it is the result, while faith is only the condition. It is greater than hope because it is the only true source of hope. Looking at the question as you present it, it does seem to me that what Peter and the others needed was an increase in love. But since faith is the condition, an increase in faith would result in an increase in love. It is on the very same basis that we are not to seek the witness of the Spirit to our salvation. Rather we are to repent and seek salvation, for we are sure that when we find salvation, God will graciously give us the witness to it. And if the Lord will give us an increase in faith, that will result in an increase of love and of all graces.

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QUESTION #139 -- What does the word Nicolaitanes in Revelation 2:15 mean?

ANSWER #139 -- It is generally admitted that there is no authority for an ancient sect known by this name. So about the best we can do is to define the word. It is from nikao, which means to conquer, and laos which means the people or the laity. It would seem therefore to describe people who held to the distinction between clergy and laity, especially to those who hold that the clergy are to rule the laity. Historically the reference is to the beginning of the hierarchy which eventuated in Roman Catholicism.

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QUESTION #140 -- Why is the word "unknown" printed in italics in the 14th chapter of First Corinthians in the reference to tongues?

ANSWER #140 -- The italics are to indicate that in the judgment of the translators the original word did not fully justify this qualifying word, although they thought the meaning in English was not clear without its insertion. Usually it is just as well to omit the italicized words in reading the Bible.

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QUESTION #141 -- What do you understand to be the meaning of the words of Jesus immediately following "The Golden Rule," "For this is the law and the prophets"?

ANSWER #141 -- I understand that the Master meant, "This is the sum of all that is required by the holy Scriptures as relating to the relationship of man to his fellowmen."

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QUESTION #142 -- What does the phrase "in earth as in heaven," in the Lord's Prayer, mean?

ANSWER #142 -- It means that our prayer is and should be for the coming of God's kingdom into our own hearts and lives and into the hearts and lives of all men. There are, so far as I can see, no limitations whatsoever.

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QUESTION #143 -- Regarding I Corinthians 14:34, 35: do you believe this means women should not talk or vote on matters pertaining to the church?

ANSWER #143 -- I believe this passage is pretty much of local application, as are a number of passages in Corinthians. It forbids the women's asking their husbands about church matters in the services of the church (which practice was noisy and confusing), and permits them to ask their husbands at home. The domestic order set forth in the New Testament is, as I believe, valid for the family and for the home for which it was intended. But the rights and privileges of grace and of the Church are set forth in their essential form, as I believe, in Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." And under this essential order, as I believe, sex is not a consideration, and as General Superintendent Walker used to say, "Some of our very best men and best preachers are women."

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QUESTION #144 -- Please explain Matthew 18:18, "Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," etc.

ANSWER #144 -- This is just another form of saying that the gospel of reconciliation is committed to the Church, and that there is no other agency for bringing God and men together.

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QUESTION #145 -- What is the meaning of Mark 4:12 where Jesus seems to speak with fear that some would be converted and forgiven?

ANSWER #145 -- Moral unwillingness results in moral inability -- they will not and therefore they cannot. The fault is altogether in the people and not in God. But always the means intended to save will harden when rejected, and the language of the present text is that of the declarative future, and not that of effective purpose.

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QUESTION #146 -- Does Romans 11:26 mean that the ten lost tribes of Israel will be restored to divine favor?

ANSWER #146 -- It means that all, Jews, Israel and Gentiles, are restored to divine favor in the sense of having grace and salvation offered to them. But there is nothing in the Bible to warrant anyone in believing that godless men or godless nations will be elected to God's favor and promotion without repentance. Salvation through Christ is by grace and not by race.

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QUESTION #147 -- My mother's preacher referred to that scripture about the man being caught up into the third heaven and seeing things unlawful to utter (2 Corinthians 12:24), and said he thought this man was Paul himself. Mother thinks it could have been John the Baptist or Lazarus. Who do you think it was?

ANSWER #147 -- I agree with your mother's preacher, I believe it was Paul. The subject was so delicate that modesty suggested the use of the third person, just as John sometimes called himself, "that other disciple."

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QUESTION #148 -- What are we to understand by "take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink or what ye shall put on"?

ANSWER #148 -- We must take all the Bible has to say on any subject before we make our deductions. The Bible condemns anxious, tormenting care, but commends care in business and industry in labor. This, I think, indicates the middle ground we are to take. We must be careful to earn our living, and careful to conserve the fruits of our labors to the best of our ability. Then we must not worry, but leave the outcome entirely with the Lord.

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QUESTION #149 -- What does Hebrews 10:29 mean? How can one tread under foot the Son of God, count His blood unholy, and do despite to the Spirit of grace? And if one does all this what is his state before God?

ANSWER #149 -- The book of Hebrews was written to people who were quite familiar with the imagery of the Old Testament and passages like this were doubtless more natural and less strained with them than they usually are with us. But since the warnings of this book were largely addressed to those in danger of apostatizing from Christianity to Judaism, we may make a summary by saying that anyone who leaves Christ for any other hope whatsoever does in the spiritual sense what is implied in this full imagery and is in grave danger always of crossing the line which separates God's goodness from His wrath, although it is not given us to know when special individuals do this, and we should hold on in prayer and faith for the salvation of the most abandoned backslider, for some of such return to God, like John Wesley Redfield, even after they have espoused the cause of infidelity. We cannot measure the mercy of God.

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QUESTION #150 -- Our Bible study class has had difficulty with Matthew 5:19, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven," and James 2:10, which says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. These verses seem to us to contradict each other.

ANSWER #150 -- Perhaps I do not see the point in your difficulty. Let us take the text from James first: It is evident, I think, that the apostle is speaking of the unity of the law as an exponent of the will of God. In this sense any disobedience is disobedience to God, and there cannot be degrees of sin any more than there are degrees in death. To be obedient at all one must be obedient to all the light he has received from God. The text from Matthew simply shows the risk involved in letting down the standards of doctrine and moral conduct which God has set up in His Word. And if you read on into the next verse you will see that acceptable righteousness must take in not the letter of the law only, but also its spirit and design.

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QUESTION #151 -- Referring to Matthew 14:15-21, they were said to be in "a desert place;" and yet Jesus commanded them to sit down "on the grass." How do you harmonize this? Also what were they doing with twelve baskets and only five loaves and two fishes?

ANSWER #151 -- The word desert (Greek eramos and translated wilderness in Matthew 3:1) describes either an uninhabited or an uninhabitable place, and there is nothing inconsistent with the suggestion that in such a territory belonging to the city of Bethsaida there were grass plots sufficient to provide seating for great multitudes. This was the case regarding the desert or wilderness through which the Children of Israel passed on their way to Canaan. It was customary

for transient men, like the apostles of our Lord, to always take along their "haversacks" in which to carry their food supplies, and since there were twelve of the apostles, this accounts for the twelve baskets (Greek kofivos -- hand-basket) which were filled at the close of the feast.

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QUESTION #152 -- In Matthew 5:22 Jesus condemned calling people fools. But in I Corinthians 15:36 Paul says, "Thou foal" to those who questioned the Resurrection. How do you explain?

ANSWER #152 -- The Scriptures acknowledge intellectual fools, i.e., idiots, and spiritual fools, i.e., the willingly blinded. To call one a fool in the first sense is sinful and wrong. To call him a fool in the second sense may sometimes be necessary and useful. The examples you give illustrate the difference.

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QUESTION #153 -- Please explain Luke 7:28, "For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

ANSWER #153 -- As a man and a prophet John was without a superior. But he was dispensationally just at the door of the gospel age. Therefore the least Christian was and is dispensationally greater than John.

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QUESTION #154 -- How do you harmonize the two parables in Matthew 13:24-30 and 13:47-50, where it is indicated that the wheat and tares must be allowed to grow together until the "time of harvest," and the drag net brings in good fish and bad, with Deuteronomy 17:7 and I Corinthians 5:13 in which the duty of purging the church is implied?

ANSWER #154 -- I explain it on the theory that the field where the wheat and tares grow is the world, and that the drag net is all saving forces, including civil government and secular education. In order that the Church shall be a real force for the reformation and regeneration in the world it must be purged, and discipline must be enforced. Always a Christian spirit is to prevail, and always it must be remembered that salvation is the high objective. But still the membership of the church must be selective as to doctrine believed, experience enjoyed, and ethics practiced.

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QUESTION #155 -- In the seventh chapter of I Corinthians we note the following expressions: "But I speak this by permission and not of commandment (verse 6); "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord" (v.12); "I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment" (v.25). And a similar expression in 2 Corinthians 8:8. Does this mean that in these instances Paul gave his individual opinion or judgment, and was not inspired?

ANSWER #155 -- It means that on the questions under consideration Paul did not claim to have a special revelation, but gave what seemed to him to be the necessary deductions. But this does not affect the matter of inspiration for us. The whole Bible is the inspired Word of God, and those words of Paul, even the ones in which he expresses his liberality as to God's revelation, are in the Bible by the will and through the inspiration of God. In other words, God inspired Paul to write the words in which he said he did not claim the highest inspiration for every word he said.

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QUESTION #156 -- John 10:28 says, "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Does this mean that if we are once saved we are always saved?

ANSWER #156 -- It means that if we put our trust in God we shall find Him dependable forevermore, and that no outside force shall be able to separate us from Him. But it certainly does not mean that one who has been converted cannot break his obedience, cast away his faith and fall back into wickedness and die in his sins and be everlastingly lost. It cannot mean that, for the Bible in other instances teaches that we are always in danger of such apostasy as I have mentioned, and the Bible does not contradict itself.

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QUESTION #157 -- Please read Luke 1:15 and tell me, was John the Baptist born without sin?

ANSWER #157 -- Jesus Christ, who was born of a virgin and without a human father, is the only sinless one that has appeared since the creation of our first parents.

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QUESTION #158 -- It seems to me that our Lord, in Matthew 23:23, commends the keeping of at least a part of the law of Moses. But if this is right, how do you harmonize Galatians 5:18, which says, "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye, are not under law."

ANSWER #158 -- Well, to start with, I do not understand that the passage from Galatians says anything about the law of Moses in particular, but rather of the whole question of law as relating to rules of conduct, and that the statement is the equivalent of saying, "If ye follow the Spirit you will live so holily and righteously that the law will have no claims against you." Then as concerning Matthew 23:23, I understand that the Master did commend the observance of tithing, although this, too, was enjoined and practiced, as may be seen by Genesis 14:20, 28:22 and other passages, a long time before Moses' day, and is a regulation ordained for the support of God's work, which existed before the law was given, while the law was in force, and all the time since the Christian dispensation has held sway. This is evident from the fact that no other plan for the financing of God's work in the world is presented to take its place in the New Testament. As a further observation, I think it should be remembered that it was only the ceremonial and certain

administrative phases of the civil law that were "done away in Christ." The moral law as it underlies the Ten Commandments, and as expressed by the Ten Commandments, is in force now as ever, in the sense that no one can break it with immunity. There are a few who think to catch us about the seventh day Sabbath when we make this statement. But the spirit of the Sabbath is transferred and expressed in our Lord's Sabbath, and the fourth commandment is preserved in this memorial day of the new creation. Perhaps I will speak a little more fully on this at another time. Enough here to say that the literalists who preach the seventh day Sabbath have a thesis that is absurd when they attempt to apply it to the people of all the world. It was made for the Hebrews and for the little land of Palestine, but it will not work in the Arctic Circle and is impossible when taken in connection with the International Date Line and the world-wide society of men. And those who ignore and break the Lord's Day Sabbath are voting and laboring to stultify the propagation of the gospel, for the gospel could scarcely survive the utter abolition of its own special day for conservation and preservation.

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QUESTION #159 -- Does Romans 11:32, "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have. mercy upon all" refer to all people or just to the group to whom Paul was writing?

ANSWER #159 -- The particular reference in this case was to Israel, but the same thing in substance is said in the third chapter of Romans regarding Gentiles also. God has accounted all as in unbelief and all who get to heaven will be saved by faith and will sing the song of redemption there.

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QUESTION #160 -- Please reconcile these two statements: In Luke 23:43, the Savior said to the penitent thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." In John 20:17, He said to Mary, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father."

ANSWER #160 -- Perhaps the difficulty arises from a too literal interpretation of the text from John. The thought is, "Do not detain me now by acts of worship. I will not be immediately ascending to heaven, and later there will be opportunities for such worship. Hasten, now, to tell my disciples that which I have bidden you." And with this thought made clear, there is no inconsistency between this and the other text at all. The converted thief was with Jesus in heaven the day of the crucifixion, and now Jesus was back in His resurrected body. Later in the same body he ascended again to heaven.

* * *

QUESTION #161 -- Please explain the parable of the Unjust Steward in Luke 16:1-9.

ANSWER #161 -- The unjust steward is not commended for being unjust, but for being wise to extend the advantages of his position on into the days when he should be no longer employed. And the lesson which Jesus draws is this: "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves

friends by means of money and such goods as you possess that when these earthly things shall fail those whom you have saved by your right use of your goods shall receive you and welcome you into heaven."

* * *

QUESTION #162 -- What is the meaning of Matthew 7:6 about casting your pearls before swine?

ANSWER #162 -- It is a metaphor enforcing the thought that it is useless to press the claims of the gospel upon some who have set themselves against it. For example, Jesus refused to speak before His enemies at His trial, for they had decided to condemn Him anyway and defense was useless. There are times when we are thrown into company where we can do nothing better than just hold our peace, for there is no chance that our rebuke or witness will be heeded.

* * *

QUESTION #163 -- I was told by a Bible scholar that Jude 9 refers to Moses being resurrected, so that he could appear at the Transfiguration. How then could Christ be the "firstfruits of them which slept"? (1 Corinthians 15:20).

ANSWER #163 -- Without venturing upon the meaning of the passage in Jude, you face the same difficulty regarding Enoch and Elijah, both of whom were translated into their glorified bodies in advance of the resurrection of Jesus, that you have concerning Moses in the case mentioned. Christ's position as the "firstfruits of the resurrection" and head of the new creation is a precedence in something more than time. Just as He was "A Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," it is by Him and through Him that any enter the glorified life. Therefore, in this more important sense, He was before Enoch and Moses and Elijah.

* * *

QUESTION #164 -- In I Thessalonians 5:23 Paul prays for the sanctification and preservation of "spirit, soul and body." Please define and distinguish spirit, soul and body.

ANSWER #164 -- As to essence, as I believe, all there is of man is described as material and immaterial -- that is body and spirit (or body and soul, to use the more current terms). But in function man is compound and complex, consisting of soma, body, an organized system composed of bones, muscles, nerves, blood, etc.: psyche, soul, which is the animal life and the seat of the affections, passions and appetites: and of pneuma, spirit, the immortal principle, which alone possesses the faculties of intelligence, understanding, thinking and reasoning. And the apostle prays that this whole compound and complex being may be sanctified wholly and preserved unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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QUESTION #165 -- Mark 11:13 puzzles me. It seems that Jesus expected fruit on the fig tree, and cursed the tree for not having it, even though it was not the time for figs as yet. How do you explain that?

ANSWER #165 -- People familiar with the fig tree in Palestine tell us that such fig trees as held their leaves through the winter usually have figs at the time of year mentioned, although it was still too early for new leaves and new fruit. The tree with leaves and no fruit was a symbol of nations and of individuals who have profession, but have neither the experience nor the life.

* * *

QUESTION #166 -- Matthew 24:34 says, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." What does the word generation mean here?

ANSWER #166 -- The Greek word genea, in primary definition, means "race, kind, stock, breed," as all lexicons show. The promise, therefore, is that the family of Israel shall be preserved until Christ comes again the second time.

* * *

QUESTION #167 -- Please compare Mark 5, Luke 8 and Matthew 8 and explain. Matthew says there were two demoniacs healed, and the other two writers mention but one.

ANSWER #167 -- The simple explanation is that there were two demoniacs who were healed, but one was much more notorious than the other, so the two evangelists mention but the one outstanding case. But there is no inconsistency here, since the two evangelists do not deny there were two, although they mention but the one. This is evidence that the evangelists wrote independent stories of the life of Jesus, and that there was no connivance among them. This gives the greater value to what they wrote and also testifies to their honesty and independence in the matter.

* * *

QUESTION #168 -- Please identify the. "seven spirits of God" mentioned in Revelation 3:1, 4:3, and 5:6.

ANSWER #168 -- I am aware that some think this is a reference to the Holy Spirit, and that the number seven denotes His manifold gifts and graces. But I stand with the older writers who believe that seven angels are meant (although the original word is the word for spirits), and that these angels or ministers were necessary to complete the picture of the throne of God which the apostle is drawing. The place, the number and the traditions of the times all agree in the idea that it is to angels that the references are made.

* * *

QUESTION #169 -- Please explain Matthew 5:3. Who are the poor in spirit?

ANSWER #169 -- Men have commonly interpreted meekness as weakness, and have given credence to the claims of the proud. But Jesus Christ said the man who is conscious of his own weakness and limitations is on the way to get those needs supplied. The poor in spirit are such as He described Himself to be "meek and lowly in heart."

* * *

QUESTION #170 -- Please explain Romans 8:36, "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

ANSWER #170 -- The place where "it is written" is Psalm 44:22. Both in its original setting and in its place in Romans the statement is used to show how God's people are sharers in the common lot of human suffering, and to indicate the need of patient faith to wait for the justification of all that comes to pass as God may choose to do some time, and also to express assurance that in the long process God has not forgotten and will bring His own out triumphant in the end.

* * *

QUESTION #171 -- What is the meaning in Mark 9:44-48, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"?

ANSWER #171 -- In this connection Isaiah 66:24, and Matthew 5:29, 30 should also be read. The descriptive metaphor is taken from the "Valley of the son of Hinnom" (Joshua 18:16), where the Jews went to the extremes of idolatry, even to the point of burning their children to Molech, and which Josiah deified to prevent any repetition of such abominations (2 Kings 23: 10). Later Jewish writers claim that a continual fire was kept burning here to consume the carrion and all sorts of impurities that collected about the capital. And Jesus used this metaphor as a description of hell. I think the details should not be too much strained in application. "Their worm" as I believe, simply stands for the individual, and efforts to confine the application to conscience or to make it mean something like literal worms in hell are, as I believe, uncalled for and unnecessary in sound exegesis. You have the whole point when you learn that temptation to sin should be instantly and ruthlessly rejected, lest you be overcome, yield to sin, die in your sins and spend eternity in hell.

* * *

QUESTION #172 -- What is the meaning of Mark 13:17, where a woe is pronounced upon mothers who live at the time these words are to be fulfilled?

ANSWER #172 -- Portions of the discourse recorded in Mark 13 refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans and portions to the great tribulation which comes at the end of the present age. In other words, the Jewish and the Gentile tribulations are both mentioned and in such connection that it requires discriminate study to distinguish between them. But the text to which you

refer with its immediate connections, I have no doubt refers to the Jewish tribulation-the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and is therefore in the past.

* * *

QUESTION #173 -- Please explain Luke 9:60, "Let the dead bury the dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."

ANSWER #173 -- The injunction means that earthly duties must not be allowed to interfere with the heavenly calling. It can never be anyone's duty to do wrong. Let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead, but go thou and serve God. The father in question was not actually dead, but (according to the Jewish thought on such matters) was old and needed care. So the son whom Jesus called said in substance, "It is more important for me to take care of my father until his life is finished than to become a disciple." Jesus said, "No, it is more important to become a disciple." And in another passage Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto thee." This means that when we give God first place we serve our loved ones and friends better than if we give them first place and by so doing relegate God to second place. And thus we find that duty is a unit, and that when we serve God fully we fulfill all duty in doing so.

* * *

QUESTION #174 -- Hebrews 7:3 says Melchisedec was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, no end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually." What does this mean?

ANSWER #174 -- The subject is the priesthood of Christ, and of this Melchisedec was typical in that he did not receive his priesthood from his father nor pass it on to his son, but was, in the historic sense, a priest of God the first, last and the only time in which he appears on the stage of human affairs. As a man, Melchisedec had father, mother, beginning and end of days, as have all mortals in this world. But in the priesthood he had no pedigree, and thus became a type of Christ in His ever continuing intercession for us.

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QUESTION #175 -- In Matthew 2:18 is a quotation from Jeremiah regarding Rachel weeping for her children. Why is this quoted here, and what is the meaning?

ANSWER #175 -- When Jacob was on his way home -- back to his father's home -- from Haran, Rachel died at the birth of Benjamin and was buried just outside what later became the site of Bethlehem, where her tomb is found, as I myself have seen, until this day. Rachel was the typical mother, and the mothers of Bethlehem whose children were slain by Herod when he sought the life of the Christ child, are fitly set out under the personal name of Rachel as the ancient prophet saw them weeping bitterly about the tomb of their prototype. The quotation by Matthew was for the purpose of definitely identifying the massacre by Herod with the ancient prophecies concerning Christ.

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XII
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON THE INTERPRETATION OF OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

QUESTION #176 -- Please explain Genesis 9:20-29. Did Noah backslide.?

ANSWER #176 -- Ever ready to take up reproach against a good man, people have been wont to say that Noah "got drunk" -- giving full implication to the sin involved. But the record of the case does not warrant this assumption. It appears from all circumstances involved, that this is the first example of known alcoholic effect upon an individual, and that Noah did what he did with no intention whatsoever of becoming intoxicated. This is the position taken by Adam Clarke regarding the matter, and I believe he is justified in so concluding. No, I do not believe Noah backslid. I believe he fell into an unintentional vice, but that his heart was right, and that thereafter he shunned fermented grape juice just as any intelligent Christian must do to keep a good conscience and a good influence among those who know him.

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QUESTION #177 -- In Judges 14:4 it says of the father and mother of Samson that they "knew not that it was of the Lord, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines." What does this mean?

ANSWER #177 -- The choice of Samson had all the appearance of being bad, and according to the usual rules it was forbidden. And like the most of mortals the parents could see no good in the course their son elected to pursue. It is the same way with us when a son elects to quit school too early or when he chooses a calling that seems to us to have no future. And it still turns out that God may have a purpose that we cannot foresee and that He does often make things work out for good in a manner very unexpected to us.

* * *

QUESTION #178 -- Please explain the meaning of Job 2:4, "All that a man hath he will give for his life."

ANSWER #178 -- It should be observed, first of all that the devil is the author of these words-that should make us suspicious at the outset. The words "skin for skin" which appear as an introduction to the saying in question perhaps refer to the calamities which had already befallen Job, and the meaning probably is that they had but touched the skin or very outside of the man's interest, while his own health and life were in the nature of being the nucleus of the man, which if exposed Job would give up his integrity. But the devil was wrong. Job had something that he valued more than life itself, and that was his standing with God. And two hundred million martyrs have proved that there is something which a true Christian values more than life, and for which he will gladly surrender his life. A Christian man will not give his faith and assurance of acceptance with God for his life. Christ is more to His own than every good besides.

* * *

QUESTION #179 -- Does the son bear the iniquity of the father as mentioned in Exodus 20:5? If so, please explain Ezekiel 18:20.

ANSWER #179 -- The son bears the consequence of his father's iniquity, but not the guilt of it. That is the teaching of the two passages taken together, and I do not think examples are hard to find. Take the case of the drunkard's child: that child bears the brunt of his father's iniquity in depleted fortune, weakened body, and it may be also in appetites predisposed toward drink. But still that child is not guilty because of his father's sin, and if he dies in his innocency he will be as infallibly saved as though he were a preacher's child, and if he repents and turns to God when he comes to responsible years, he will find mercy and help from God as quickly as though he had been "the model child" for health and well-being.

* * *

QUESTION #180 -- In Psalm 9:16 what is the meaning of the words Higgaion and Selah which occur at the close of the verse?

ANSWER #180 -- Perhaps I could do no better than to quote from the Historical Digest of "The System Bible Study": "Higgaion -- Probably originally a musical term, which finally came to bear the additional significance of meditation and solemn sound." "Selah-Beyond the fact that 'Selah' is a musical term, we know absolutely nothing about it, and are entirely in the dark as to its meaning. The general drift of modern interpretation of the word inclines toward the theory that it denotes a pause in the vocal performance at certain emphatic points, while the accompanying instruments carried on the music. It may be remarked of this, however, as of other explanations of the word, that it is mere conjecture. The word 'Selah' appears seventy-one times in thirty-nine Psalms, and three times in the Book of Habakkuk (3:3, 9, 13), usually in places where very warm emotions have been expressed."

* * *

QUESTION #181 -- Please explain Genesis 6:4. Who were the "giants"?

ANSWER #181 -- The giants, whoever they were, were members of the race of Adam. "The daughters of men" were the descendants of sinners, and "the sons of God" were followers of the true God. Perhaps we may think on racial lines and say the daughters of men were the daughters of Cain and the sons of God descendants of Seth. And when these intermarried their children took on the strength of their fathers and the meanness of their mothers and became "men of violence," as some translations read. And so it may be that we are to think of the giants of those days as being huge in strength and in wickedness, rather than of just immensity of meat.

* * *

QUESTION #182 -- On the plagues of Egypt, Exodus 9:6 says, "All the cattle of Egypt died." Then in Exodus 9:19 the Egyptians are bidden to "gather thy cattle." How do you explain this?

ANSWER #182 -- The first quotation is not complete. The latter part of the verse says, "but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one." That is to say, "All the cattle that did die belonged to the Egyptians, but not one died that belonged to the Israelites." There were left to the Egyptians still cattle both to be killed and saved alive in the ensuing plague.

* * *

QUESTION #183 -- Please harmonize I Samuel 31:4 and 2 Samuel 1:10. That is, how did Saul really meet his death?

ANSWER #183 -- The account in I Samuel 31 is the inspired account. The other is a fabrication of the Amalekite invented for the purpose of ingratiating himself with David in the hope of receiving a reward. Saul was struck by an arrow from the bow of a Philistine archer, and afterward fell purposely on his own sword and died a suicide's death.

* * *

QUESTION #184 -- In Exodus 7:3 God said, "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart." Did God actually harden Pharaoh's heart through His will and divine sovereignty?

ANSWER #184 -- God hardened Pharaoh's heart by giving him light and opportunity to repent and do right, just as He hardens any impenitent sinner's heart. Of course we ordinarily explain that the sinner hardens his own heart by rejecting God's call and refusing His promise, and this is true, when responsibility is the question in mind. But when you leave out all secondary factors, God hardens by the same means that He melts and saves -- depending upon whether the sinner rejects or accepts the call of God.

* * *

QUESTION #185 -- In I Kings 6:7 we are told that neither hammer nor axe was heard in connection with the building of the temple. But in 2 Chronicles 3:9 we read "the weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold." How can we harmonize these statements?

ANSWER #185 -- The golden nails were inserted in ready prepared sockets and were not driven with hammers.

* * *

QUESTION #186 -- Please explain 2 Kings 24:8, and 2 Chrorncles 36:9. The first says Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and the latter says he was eight. This seems to be an inconsistency.

ANSWER #186 -- It has been suggested that this king was taken in as associate with his father at eight and became sole monarch at eighteen. At any rate, eighteen was no doubt the correct figure, as it appears from Ezekiel 19:5-7 that he was fully developed in the principles and practices of wickedness. In the Hebrew numbers were indicated by letters, and a very slight change sometimes caused one letter to be mistaken for another. There is another number difficulty like this in 2 Chronicles 21:2022:2. The text as it reads would seem to make the son two years older than his father. Here, too, two explanations are possible: (1) that there was an interlude between the father's death and the son's ascension, or (2) that in the course of time the copyists mistook the letter and thus changed the reading from twenty-two to forty-two.

* * *

QUESTION #187 -- Please explain Jonah 3:10, where it says God repented of the evil He had threatened to do unto the people of Nineveh. Did God tell Jonah to preach that in forty days Nineveh should be destroyed?

ANSWER #187 -- God sent Jonah to preach that in forty days impenitent and sinful Nineveh should be destroyed. But when the people heard the preaching of Jonah they repented. God's threat was against an impenitent people, but He could show mercy to a penitent people. God does not change, but when people change He deals with them according to their change. It was that way in the beginning. God created man and was pleased with the results. But when man sinned and fell, God repented that He had made him and turned to destroy him with the great flood of Noah's day. God always does the best He can for all of us. But His best for us when we do not pray is not the same as His best for us when we do pray.

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QUESTION #188 -- Please explain Jeremiah 12:9, "Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird," etc. Seems to me Jeremiah is complaining that his pagan surroundings threatened to drag him down.

ANSWER #188 -- The passage begins with verse seven, and I think by reading it all you will see that it is God's lamentation over the desolation of His heritage. The word speckled is better translated taloned, and the thought is that God's own people were not kindly disposed toward Him. I think that song about the "Great Speckled Bird," and the whole idea of giving this speckled bird a high standing as representing holy people who are the derision of their neighbors though very acceptable to God, is a misinterpretation.

* * *

QUESTION #189 -- In 2 Chronicles 11:15 I notice the Authorized Version reads devils where the Revised Version has it he-goats. Please explain such a difference in terms.

ANSWER #189 -- The Hebrew word seirim literally means hairy ones, and since the goat is known to have been an object of veneration in Egypt, it is likely that Jeroboam made images of

goats as well as of calves for his idol worship. The Authorized Version gives the spiritual significance, but I think the Revised Version gives a more literal translation of the word.

* * *

QUESTION #190 -- Please explain Jeremiah 31:15-17 where it says, "And they shall come again from the land of the. enemy."

ANSWER #190 -- The literal theme is the return of the Children of Israel from the lands of their captivity, in which case there is of course no mystery whatever-just a promise of the restoration of Israel to national place and prosperity. But Matthew applies these words to the babes of Bethlehem who were slain when the soldiers of Herod were seeking the life of the infant Christ. Wilson suggests that the knowledge that these little babes were His substitutes affected our Lord in His attitude toward little children. And the words of comfort as thus applied should cause every bereaved mother to dry her bitter tears and take comfort in the promise that her little one will come again from the grave to live forever with the Lord and His redeemed.

* * *

QUESTION #191 -- Who is the "queen of heaven" mentioned in Jeremiah 44:17?

ANSWER #191 -- We have here and in Jeremiah 7:18 a description of idolatrous worship, patterned largely after the form of worship used in the worship of the true God. But the object is "the frame or workmanship of heaven" of which the moon is the center. It may be said in direct answer to the question that the queen of heaven mentioned in the text is the moon. But it must be remembered also that the worship described and condemned included the sun, the stars and all the framework and system of the world and the heavens.

* * *

QUESTION #192 -- Please explain Deuteronomy 24:12, "And if the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge."

ANSWER #192 -- The Hebrews were forbidden by the law of Moses to exact interest or usury from their brethren when extending to them loans of money or goods. But they were permitted to take security for the return of the principal, even to the point of holding the man's outer coat But in the case of the poor man, who must use his cloak for cover at night, mercy was to be shown in that the pledge was to be returned to its owner for his use as a bed; but the poor man was commanded to bring it back in the morning. By this means the poor man secured his borrowing during the trading day, and the lender trusted without security during the hours of rest. We have a remnant of this ancient statute in our provision for exemptions in cases of taxes and court judgments in our own land.

* * *

QUESTION #193 -- If Moses wrote the Pentateuch, how could he include a description of his own death and burial? Was this revealed to him before he died?

ANSWER #193 -- There is no statement in the last chapter of Deuteronomy that intimates that Moses wrote it, and I can see no reason for claiming he did. Admission that this chapter was added by the hand of another, by Samuel or Ezra, as some think, in no way reflects upon the evidence that Moses wrote the other portions of the Pentateuch. At least, I find no personal difficulty in such an explanation, and that is what I believe.

* * *

QUESTION #194 -- Please explain I Kings 22:20-22. I cannot conceive of God's tolerating a lying spirit, let alone give it room in heaven.

ANSWER #194 -- I believe, with Calmet, that we are not to take the words of the prophet literally, but as a picture setting forth results in terms of earthly kings. And we should also remember that permission is often mentioned as determining. The downfall of Israel and the slaying of King Ahab were encouraged by the lying prophets whom God permitted to influence the council for war, and not for peace.

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QUESTION #195 -- In Exodus 15:8 it says, "The depths were congealed in the heart of the sea." On that word congeal: did that mean the freezing of the water? The discussion seems to be on whether water can be congealed without being frozen. If it was frozen according to natural law, would that make the occurrence any less a miracle?

ANSWER #195 -- I think we do not gain much by trying to work this out The freezing of sea water in that part of the world would certainly be something unforgettable. And for it to get cold enough for that, and yet not freeze three millions of Israelites in improvised camp life would also be something to challenge our credulity. I think it is simpler to accept it as a miracle in which the results are not clearly connected with natural causes. We believe in a God of infinite wisdom, love and power, and that makes it easy for us to believe He could congeal the waters in some other way than by manipulation of the temperature. It is easy for me to believe in miracles, because I believe in God.

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QUESTION #196 -- Please read Joshua 10:12, 13; Psalm 19:6, and then tell us does the Bible teach that the sun moves and not the earth?

ANSWER #196 -- The Bible is written in popular language -- not in technical language. And in popular language the sun rises and sets, for popular language describes the experience of the speaker and not the cause of his experience. There is nothing in the Bible inconsistent with the idea of a round world and of revolving planets. In fact there is not a proved fact of science that is

at variance with the Bible. It is only the ideas that men read into the Bible and the presumptions of science that are contradictory.

* * *

QUESTION #197 -- Concerning the sad story of the eleventh chapter of Judges, did Jephthah sacrifice his daughter in death?

ANSWER #197 -- There have been many efforts to show by the possibilities of the language used, and by the fact that human sacrifices were not in accordance with the religion of Israel, that Jephthah sacrificed his daughter by devoting her to a life of celibacy. But after considering all that I have ever read or heard on the subject, I agree with Whedon and others in the conclusion that Jephthah's original vow, stated as though it were of very unusual character, involved the idea of a human sacrifice, and that what drew attention was the fact that it was his daughter, his only child, who came forth to meet him, instead of some less favored member of his household. And with such also I agree that the daughter was made a burnt offering unto the Lord in fulfillment of the vow. The only difference in this and what Abraham did on Mt. Moriah is in the literal phases of the matter, for Abraham fully purposed to slay and burn his son in sacrifice to God. When you recall the character of Jephthah as a desert man of little refinement, the case does not appear quite so unlikely. And it should be mentioned that while Jephthah's faith is commended in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, his vow is neither mentioned nor commended.

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QUESTION #198 -- Why was Cain's offering not accepted? I wonder if it was because it was not an offering of blood like Abel's.

ANSWER #198 -- Your thought regarding the matter is very good. Cain offered "the fruit of the ground," Abel brought "the firstlings of his flock." Cain's offering stands for native goodness and justification by works. Abel's was an offering of blood and prefigured the offering of Jesus and justification through atonement If there was a difference in the spirit and temper of the brothers, that is to be expected-it was this spirit and temper that directed their gifts. So that one passes readily from the reason the offering was not accepted to the reason Cain himself found no favor. A bloodless religion has no power to change the heart of the worshiper. Genuine Christians do better than others only because of the grace of God which enables them to do so.

* * *

QUESTION #199 -- Please explain Ecclesiastes 1:9-11: "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after."

ANSWER #199 -- This is just one of the preacher's arguments in showing the utter vanity of human courses. The book of Ecclesiastes should be studied as a unit. Practically all the

intermediate arguments are made without taking God into consideration, and the conclusion is true only when this limitation is observed. But the final argument takes God in and the conclusion is, "Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." I do not think that the verses quoted should be made to say that some former generation of men knew the radio, the automobile, and every present day invention. That application goes both too far and yet not far enough. It would require not only the eternity of matter, but the eternal progression or existence of human affairs. Whereas all there was at first was God. But here it is: "There was something before there was what we now have, and what we now have will give way to something else, and the real summum bonum or highest good is never found in the human course. God and salvation constitute our only hope.

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QUESTION #200 -- Was the Ethiopian woman that Moses married (Numbers 12:1) a Negro?

ANSWER #200 -- No, she was an Arab, "a Cushite," as the Revised Version gives it, born in the land of Midian. But she was not a "daughter of Abraham" and this gave rise to the disparaging charge made by Aaron and Miriam.

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QUESTION #201 -- God told Adam not to eat of the forbidden fruit: why then is it said that Eve was "deceived"?

ANSWER #201 -- The story does not show that Satan ever approached Adam. Adam simply listened to his wife and did as she suggested. But Eve was approached and "deceived" by the false arguments of the devil. Eve sinned not being fully aware that she was doing so. But Adam sinned knowingly.

* * *

QUESTION #202 -- In Genesis 28:20-22 Jacob seeks to put God under obligations to prosper him before he will keep his vow to acknowledge God as his God, and pay his tithe to the Lord. Do you think Jacob's attitude toward God was right: and would we be justified in taking the same attitude?

ANSWER #202 -- I cannot find it in my heart to be especially hard on Jacob. I think he did quite well, considering the chance he had. In the instance before us he sought a covenant that had two parties -- himself and God, and he knew there would not be much to it if God did not agree to it. I do not think of it as an effort to drive a close bargain, but as an effort to make sure of God's pleasure and support. Yes, I think that is really the way to do it It sounds heroic to say, "I will serve God always, whether He blesses me or not." But it is more reasonable and scriptural to say, "If God will bless me, I will testify to His blessing, and seek to make His love known to others." And from what I know of prayer and dealing with God, I believe God is pleased to have us come to Him for assurance, and that He will accept our challenge.

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XIII
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ABOUT THE JUDGMENT, MILLENNIUM, AND TRIBULATION

QUESTION #203 -- Will the words and deeds of Christians be brought before them in the judgment?

ANSWER #203 -- Their good deeds, yes; their wicked deeds done before their conversion or any wicked deeds for which forgiveness has been sought and found, no.

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QUESTION #204 -- Will there be more than one judgment? Will the saints who go up in the rapture be judged at the last general judgment?

ANSWER #204 -- The trouble is, I think, that we have sometimes tried to think of the judgment as a period comparable to one of our twenty-four hour days: whereas it is, according to the Scriptures, a much longer period; and what we call "the general judgment" is the final period of the more extended epoch. The judgment begins with the rapture of the saints at the appearing of Christ in the glory of His second advent and concludes with the great white throne assize, and so far as I can see, there will be no repetitions, but orderly progress from first to last, and the period covered will be long -- perhaps a thousand years. If one is troubled by this statement and cannot think of this as a unified judgment, let him think of Christ's "first coming." Here was His birth in Bethlehem-a subject of definite prophecy. Then there was His appearance in the temple at the age of forty days -- another subject of definite prophecy. Then there were His teaching and healing ministries -- both subjects of definite prophecy. Then there were His Crucifixion, His Resurrection, and His Ascension. All these are mentioned in the ancient prophecies, sometimes as detached from one another. And yet there was only one "first coming" of Christ. This does not explain, but it may assist one in thinking of the Second Coming of Christ as composed of a series of episodes beginning with His coming for His saints, continuing on through the great tribulation on earth, the Marriage Supper in the skies, His return with His saints, the millennial reign, the battle of Armageddon, and the great white throne judgment

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QUESTION #205 -- There is a man here in our town preaching that according to Malachi, chapter 4, the world, man and everything will be burned up like stubble. What is the meaning of this chapter?

ANSWER #205 -- This chapter should be read in connection with Revelation 20: 7-10. By this it will be seen that the occurrences recorded in Malachi 4 are at the conclusion of the battle of Gog and Magog, and that this is to be followed by the resurrection of the wicked and the Great White Throne Judgment. In other words, the destruction described in Malachi 4 is not the end of

those thus destroyed. They are yet to be resurrected and judged and their estate in eternity belongs to another chapter.

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QUESTION #206 -- What peoples will inhabit the earth during the millennium?

ANSWER #206 -- I understand the Scriptures to teach that during the millennium the saints who compose the Church, having been called out and saved during the present dispensation and resurrected or translated at the coming of Jesus Christ for His Church, will be here in their glorified bodies, and that the remnant of the race which survives the Great Tribulation and such as are born to this remnant during the Millennium itself will be here in their "flesh and blood" bodies.

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QUESTION #207 -- In Micah 4:5 it is said, "For all the people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God. for ever and ever." Is this not speaking of the Millennium? And what is the difference in the gods whom others will serve and the Lord our God of whom the prophet speaks?

ANSWER #207 -- The prophet is undoubtedly speaking of the golden future, but he is writing in the then present, and he cannot get away from things as they were and are yet, even when he would speak of the good day ahead. I think the verse might be paraphrased thus (as suggested by Whedon), "Since [at the present] all the people walk every one in the name of his god, therefore we will [or, let us] walk in the name of Jehovah our God forever and ever." "The name of God is that side of His nature which can be revealed to man; and to walk in His name means to live in mystic union with God as He has revealed Himself, and under His protection."

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QUESTION #208 -- Do not the Scriptures teach (Revelation 22:12) that rewards will be given at the coming of our Lord?

ANSWER #208 -- Yes, they do indeed so teach, but by careful reading you will find that all do not receive their rewards at the same time, but that the judgment period will cover at least a thousand years.

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QUESTION #209 -- When does the five months torment by locusts take place (Revelation 9:1-11)? What time do the two witnesses (Revelation 11) appear?

ANSWER #209 -- I do not pose as an expert on the Book of Revelation, but I will tell you what I think. I believe that we are now living in the latter part of the church age described in the first three chapters of Revelation-in the Laodicean period. That we are now up to chapter 3:1422, somewhere in there. And that chapter 4:1 describes the rapture at the second coming of Christ and

that all the rest of the book, so far as prophetic history is concerned, is future. Part of the book follows the Church to the Marriage Supper and part follows the fate of the world after the rapture has taken place, and everything mentioned on to the close of chapter 19 will be fulfilled during the time the Marriage Supper is being celebrated in heaven and the great tribulation is in sway upon earth. Then chapter 20 tells about the thousand years reign, and the great white throne judgment. And the two remaining chapters belong, so far as their prophetic history is concerned, in the timeless age that follows -- eternity. Now I do not say I know this is correct; but I do say I know that is what I believe. To reiterate: Revelation chapters 1-3 inclusive-the church age, ourselves in the latter part of it; chapters 4-19 inclusive: the rapture, the marriage supper in heaven and the great tribulation on earth; chapter 20, the Millennium and the great white throne, judgment; chapters 21 and 22, eternity. And on the basis of this outline I would find the place of all the occurrences mentioned, except those instances in which it is indicated that something aside from prophetic history is intended. We may have deeper sorrows yet before the rapture, but we are taught to pray that we may be counted worthy to escape the woes of the great tribulation and stand before the Son of man. So just as there will be no Millennium of peace until Jesus comes, so there will not be the great tribulation until after the Church is translated at the rapture. The next occurrence for which we are to look and watch and pray and keep ready is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Church, and I personally positively refuse to listen to anyone who tries to tell me, "My Lord delays his coming" while anything else whatsoever is being done. I believe Jesus Christ could come this very day (I am writing early in the morning) and do no violence to the prophecies of the Scriptures; while if He tarries I will continue to work and watch and hope and pray and keep on the wedding garment of full salvation and keep a good supply of Holy Ghost oil for my lamp that I may make sure to get into the marriage whenever the Bridegroom does come. Praise God, hallelujah, and "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

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QUESTION #210 -- What is meant by: "And a little child shall lead them" and the connected scripture?

ANSWER #210 -- The passage in question is found in Isaiah 11:6 and is a part of the description given of the millennial kingdom of Jesus. Among other things it pictures a little child leading ferocious beasts, or such beasts as we have known as ferocious, without danger or hurt. This can happen only after that wonderful change has taken place by means of which the world and the earth, as well as the spirits and bodies of God's own people, shall be added again to the empire of God, and everything that offends is taken away. Sometimes the scripture of which you speak is applied to a child's leading adults to Christ for salvation, and the application is poetical and beautiful, but it is not the meaning with which the scripture was used by the prophet.

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QUESTION #211 -- Please explain Isaiah 65:20, "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed."

ANSWER #211 -- This verse with several succeeding verses in the same chapter is descriptive of conditions that will prevail in the Golden Millennium which shall follow the second coming of Christ. With this in mind, I think the details are not difficult.

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QUESTION #212 -- Regarding the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke 16, do you understand that the redeemed are conversation with the lost? And would their coming face to face with the lost mar their own happiness in heaven?

ANSWER #212 -- This Story of the Rich Man and Lazarus gives us the best look into the future of any passage in the Bible, but I do not think it is intended to show how it will be forever, and in the great eternity beyond the Judgment of the Great White Throne I think there will be no communication between the saved and the lost, and there will be nothing whatsoever to mar the happiness of the redeemed world without end.

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QUESTION #213 -- Some are saying there will be no rapture of the saints before the tribulation, and that the church will go through the Great Tribulation. I expect to be true in either case, but do you think this is a proper view of the calendar of the future?

ANSWER #213 -- No, I do not agree with this idea. Wily then should we be told, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man"? (Luke 21:36). Plainly, I believe this means that we are to pray that we may keep saved and sanctified that we may be glorified at the coming of Jesus in the clouds, and that coming is before the Great Tribulation. But, as you say, we must keep our hearts set to go through with God in any case. For there are good people in the warring nations of the earth who are suffering all they could suffer if they did go through the Great Tribulation. Let us also pray for them.

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QUESTION #214 -- At what period in the Book of Revelation, and at what stage of the Great Tribulation does the Rapture of the Bride occur?

ANSWER #214 -- The Rapture takes place at the opening of the fourth chapter of Revelation, and this is prior to the beginning of the Great Tribulation proper.

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QUESTION #215 -- Please explain Luke 21:19, "In your patience possess ye your souls."

ANSWER #215 -- The general theme is that of tribulation. Especially those tribulations with which, on the fringe of the Great Tribulation, our gospel age shall close. There are so many things which need remedy and which we are powerless to change that virtue and strength are

expressed principally in the ability to bear. And so the Master says ye shall win or save your soul by being patient

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QUESTION #216 -- Who is "the man of sin" that is to "be revealed," mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3?

ANSWER #216 -- This is the "antichrist" who is to be revealed in a time yet future. From many considerations, it appears that this person who offers himself in direct competition with Christ is to come somewhat into sight before the Second Coming of Christ, but is to be fully discovered during the Great Tribulation which reaches its climax after the coming of Christ and the Rapture of the Church.

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QUESTION #217 -- What about the wound of the first beast mentioned in Revelation 13? Does it mean that he is a man wounded by a sword? Also the second beast: what is the mark which people are to receive from him? Do you think we might ignorantly receive this mark?

ANSWER #217 -- I believe that the opening of the fourth chapter of Revelation marks the Second Coming of Christ, and that all that follows that, excepting the symbols and timeless doctrines and exhortations which are indicated as such, as yet future. For this reason it is not possible for us to be sure and clear in the interpretation, and we should not be so. We will understand it better when the time comes, and for the most part the record is fairly literal and clear, except that the time has not yet come. As to ourselves: we must make sure all the time that we are saved and sanctified and ever ready and watching for the Lord's coming, and in this state we have nothing to fear. Nothing outside of us can get inside us and do us harm or affect our standing with God without our consent And by being always "blessed and holy" we are guaranteed a part in the first resurrection, and will not be here when the worst of the Great Tribulation comes.

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QUESTION #218 -- When will the events described in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39 take place? Before, during or after the Great Tribulation?

ANSWER #218 -- The chapters mentioned are a prophetic parable. The same thing is said in more literal form in the twentieth chapter of Revelation. The climax of the judgment mentioned is, historically speaking, the last battle between the forces of God and the armies of Satan, after the Great Tribulation, after the Millennium, and after Satan's loosing-just before the beginning of "the ages of the ages."

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QUESTION #219 -- Please give plain scriptural proof that there is to be a Millennium of Christian triumph in the future.

ANSWER #219 -- The most direct reference, of course, is the twentieth chapter of Revelation, But it has been observed that without exception, scriptures mentioning the resurrection, when there are specifications, place the resurrection of the just first and of the unrighteous second. I suggest that a study of the Scriptures be made with this suggestion as a clue. The logical basis for the teaching of a golden period in which mercy and judgment shall be mingled is the fact that the alternative of this is the breaking off of mercy abruptly and the inauguration of full justice as a crisis. In the natural world there is twilight between day and night, and in the moral world it seems there should be the same, and it seems to me the Scriptures teach it will be so. I am not expecting to wake up some night and find the world on fire, judgment set and mercy gone forever. I do not believe the Scriptures teach it will be that way. I expect that some time soon Jesus will come back to the world the second time and those who are ready will go up to meet Him in the clouds and accompany Him to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. With the influence of the Church withdrawn, the Great Tribulation will come on the earth and sin and wickedness will have their day. Then Christ will come back with His Church and will reign on the earth for a thousand years. This reign will be a period of mercy and judgment mixed, but just as sin had its day during the Great Tribulation, righteousness will have the advantage in this Lord's Day. After this period of mixed mercy and judgment will come the period of judgment and justice unmixed with mercy, and then, "the ages of the ages." This is not citing specific scriptures, as you request, but I suggest that you make a thorough study of the Scriptures with this general thought in mind and see for yourself what the Writings say.

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QUESTION #220 -- What is the meaning of Matthew 24:20, "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day"?

ANSWER #220 -- The subject discussed in Matthew 24 is dual, relating partly to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish tribulation, and partly to the second coming of Christ and the Gentile tribulation. The passage you select refers to the former, and the Christians are exhorted to pray that their flight from the city of Jerusalem shall not be in the winter when their sufferings would be greatly increased by the inclemency of the weather, nor on the Sabbath day when the gates of the city would be closed and their escape would be exceedingly difficult, if not impossible. It is a matter of history that the Christians did heed the warnings of Christ and take note of the signs which He mentioned and that not a single Christian, so far as known, perished in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Let us pray that we may be as wise with reference to the coming Gentile tribulation and that we may be accounted worthy to escape these things and to stand before the Son of Man.

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QUESTION #221 -- Please harmonize 2 Timothy 3:1-5, Daniel, chapter 12, and Habakkuk 2:14. All these seem to be describing "the last days," but how can the last days be both dark and fair? These scriptures do not describe the last days alike.

ANSWER #221 -- The writers are not describing exactly the same period of "the last days." Just now the world is full of sin and violence, and it is going to get worse before it gets better. Before us, and perhaps immediately before us, are the days of the Great Tribulation. But beyond the tribulation is the golden Millennium, and beyond that a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and in which there will be no sin or sorrow. When the prophets of old looked ahead, some of them described Jesus as the "suffering Saviour," others described Him as "the reigning King." Both these were in the vision, but some overlooked the first and spoke only of the latter. And it was thus also when they described the state and condition of our world. But it is encouraging to us to know that the world will be better after it is worse, and that then it will never be bad any more. This is the doctrine of "Christian triumph," and it keeps us strong in the darkest hours, for we know that whatever the road, we shall finally come out right.

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XIV
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON MARRIAGE

QUESTION #222 -- Is it contrary to the Scriptures for a Christian to marry a non-Christian?

ANSWER #222 -- It certainly is. (Read 2 Corinthians 6:14.)

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QUESTION #223 -- The Bible commands a man to leave his father and mother and to cleave unto his wife. But does not this same command apply to the woman, the wife, as well?

ANSWER #223 -- Yes, the commandment applies to the wife just the same as to the husband, and the wife has no more right to cleave to her father and mother after she marries a husband than the husband has to subject his wife to the demands of his paternal home. It is the same for both.

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QUESTION #224 -- Does the thirtieth chapter of Numbers mean that a young woman or wife should obey her father or husband before she obeys the Lord, and does this apply to our day?

ANSWER #224 -- The purpose of the provisions of this chapter was to make as full protection as possible against rash vows, and the arrangement was for the special protection of young women and wives. Vows are of little worth at any time, seeing they are in substance substituting one's own word for the word of the Lord, and they are particularly dangerous very much of the time. They lead to strain and confusion in the individual himself, and also to the committing of greater evils (like Herod who murdered John the Baptist for his oath's sake) in order to keep them. And at no time was it ever anyone's duty to obey any man in preference to obeying God. For God is the only God, and to Him only we owe supreme allegiance.

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QUESTION #225 -- What scripture do you consider justifies remarriage after divorce?

ANSWER #225 -- Matthew 19:3-9.

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QUESTION #226 -- I know a woman who sinned greatly against her husband and family. Now she wants to be a Christian, out is haunted by a feeling that she must confess her wrong and by the fear that such confession will bring great injury and hate. Is she doomed to be lost? What must she do?

ANSWER #226 -- Sin often exacts a tremendous price in remorse and fear. This woman should give her heart to God and trust for His mercy and pardon, and then she will know what and when to do what she must do, and God will help her, and prepare the way for her. She is by no means doomed to be lost, and ought by all means to make her peace with God at once.

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QUESTION #227 -- I have heard husbands and wives admit they are jealous. I have always thought that sanctification eradicates jealousy. But those who hold otherwise quote from the Scriptures that God is a jealous God. What is the truth about this matter?

ANSWER #227 -- Like most words, jealousy requires some modification to express all that is implied in it. Let us start on the upper end of the line: God is a jealous God, so the Scriptures inform us. But what does this mean? It means that God demands to be the sole possessor of our affections, and that He will not share us with any other person or object of worship. To say that we may worship idols and bow down to the false prophet and that God will not care is to misrepresent the God of the Bible. But on the other hand to say that God will take away any person we love or any object we cherish just in order to hold us to Himself is exaggeration. He is jealous only when our love becomes inordinate. Now come to human jealousy: no husband or wife is willing to share the affections of his mate with a third person, and we do not expect him to do so. And when there is evidence of infidelity of one party or the other we do not condemn the innocent one for being hurt and feeling misplaced. But there is a sinful jealousy that exists without cause, and this sort is nonexistent in the Christian whose heart is pure.

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QUESTION #228 -- I heard a preacher preach that people who have been divorced and married again should separate, no matter for what cause they were divorced. Just what can anyone do in a case where they were divorced in their sinful days and before they had light on the matter and are now married again) with children, and all are trying to live the Christian life?

ANSWER #228 -- I think the preacher was speaking as though he were wise beyond what is written, and I advise you to forget what he said. As to what can be done in cases like you

mention: another wrong would not make a former wrong right. mist God for mercy and pardon and for grace to live right and go on as you are-there is nothing else you can do.

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QUESTION #229 -- I Corinthians 7:14 reads as though the children of sanctified parents are born holy, but this cannot really be the meaning.

ANSWER #229 -- No. The meaning is that the marriage described is legal and the children are legitimate.

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QUESTION #230 -- What can Christians do when their married life is unbearably unhappy? Is there anything to do but just "grit one's teeth and bear it," no matter how acute the problem becomes? The persons I have in mind have been married a long time and have several children. For the children's sake if for no other reason, they would not even consider a divorce. Yet they have been very unhappy right from the first of their marriage. They have honestly tried, with all Christian charity, to make a "go" of it, but each year seems more unhappy than the last. The husband has become a nervous wreck whose irritableness and harsh words keep the wife in a constant state of fear and dread. Her health has collapsed as a result of child-bearing and the enforced neglect of poverty until she is not in a fit condition to be a wife at all. Under these conditions what would you do?

ANSWER #230 -- In the first place, I cannot admit all the premises. I believe that even one good sanctified Christian can make a go of a marriage proposition, although of course it is much easier when two co-operate. There are many complications even in the lives of the most fortunate people, but the grace of God makes husbands and wives overcomers, and that almost without regard to complications. The only cure for family trouble that I know of is just the same as the cure for drunkenness and the use of tobacco -- just plain, old-fashioned full salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The trouble is people become selfish and sentimental and want some easy kind of happiness, whereas genuine peace and joy come from abandoning everything to God and burying one's personal preferences in the will and love of God. The people of whom you speak are of course to be pitied in the fullest sense. But that weak pity which would make their trouble anything but sin and their remedy anything but grace would be cruel as well as weak. There is a way for them, and it is the simple way of the cross and the Pentecostal experience.

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QUESTION #231 -- Could we safely infer, by taking the negative view of Matthew 19:6 that some married people are not married in the sight of God?

ANSWER #231 -- No, such an inference is neither correct nor safe, and any attempt to hold and propagate it will add confusion. Marriage has to do with human society, as well as with individual relation, and to hold that people who are divorced and remarried without having had scriptural ground for divorce are not married is an insult to common sense and in the way of an

effort to loosen the bands of human society and throw the world into chaos. I always advise divorced people, no matter what the occasion of their divorce, not to remarry. Practically all who do so have trouble with their own conscience later, and I believe, for the sake of Christian influence, they should live as Paul the apostle did. But after they marry, there is nothing they can do to atone for the mistakes of the past except to do all within their power to make their present marriage a success. And with the exception of a few overzealous reformers here and there, this is the position held by leaders and teachers in the Protestant Church in all ages.

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QUESTION #232 -- I know a married couple who both claim to be Christians. The wife lives a good, humble life, keeps her house clean and sanitary and does all she can to make her home pleasant. But the husband is kind only in the presence of others. In his home he is unbearable. He treats his wife as though she were just a drudge, and shows her no kindness at all. If he does not change the home is going to be broken up. Can't you say something that will help?

ANSWER #232 -- Husbands and wives should both remember that it takes two to make marriage successful, and as Christians they should not forget that the same courtesy that makes them acceptable in business and shop is required of them at home. There may be a lot of silly shallow excuses for boorishness, but the fact is that any one who is truly a Christian can find grace to be just and pleasant, and if he finds it hard to do so, he should make it the subject of prayer. The failure of marriage and home is too serious a matter for any one to allow. Two Christians can make their home a happy home, and for the love of Christ they should do so.

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QUESTION #233 -- How far can a Christian woman go in concession to her unconverted husband as regarding places of worldly amusement?

ANSWER #233 -- I think every person will have to work out this program for himself. To say there is no problem here would be foolish, and the line between Christian charity and hurtful compromise is too narrow for general definition. My mother, for example, would never permit even a deck of cards in the house, although she was not a Christian in my childhood days. But I have heard the story of the drunken husband who brought his evil companions to his home in the night and compelled his wife to get up and prepare a meal. And her patience, so the story goes, won the husband and his companions to the Lord. But strain as I may, I cannot imagine my mother doing anything like that, and yet she impressed her lessons of sobriety and honesty in a way her children could not forget.

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QUESTION #234 -- Please tell me why Matthew 19:9 gives one ground upon which divorce may be secured, while Luke 16:18 does not give any grounds, but seems to forbid it.

ANSWER #234 -- There is no inconsistency here. Luke stops with statement of general prohibition, while Matthew gives, in addition to the general prohibition, the one exception

allowed. One must take all the Bible says on any subject before he can justly say what the Bible actually teaches regarding it.

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QUESTION #235 -- If miscegnation or the mixing of races was a sin in the days of Joshua and Ezra, would it still be a sin today to mix the blood of different nations? (Joshua 23:12; Ezra 10:10).

ANSWER #235 -- If by sin you mean an act that brings individual condemnation, then I would have to say no, the mixing of the races is not sin And I base this judgment upon two things: (1) The emphatic statement that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26); and (2) the implied equality of men on the basis of the universal adaptability of the gospel. The limitations under which the ancient Jews lived in this respect passed, along with the old ceremonies, limitations of diet, etc. This answers all the question you asked, and I suppose I should stop here. But to avoid any possible misunderstanding, I think it should be said that, although legal from the New Testament point of view, miscegnation does not stand up very well (except within pretty circumscribed limits) under the test of expediency. The fact is, marriage, to be successful, has to respect a lot of things, and should ordinarily not be required to bridge any great distances of race, culture, religion or social and financial status between its contracting parties.

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XV
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ABOUT MONEY

QUESTION #236 -- I am a Christian and have talked and voted dry for years. I am now a widow of sixty years and live in Colorado. Am entitled to a pension, but part of the revenue to provide the pensions comes from the sale of liquor. I do not know whether to accept it or not.

ANSWER #236 -- I think you should accept the pension and use it for your living and for the glory of God, and keep on talking and voting dry. In a complicated civilization like ours you cannot escape some connection with the results of unrighteousness in government, when such exists, but I believe you can keep your own record clear by putting in every lick you can for God and civic righteousness. If the principle you suggest were carried out, then all who work for the federal government and all who receive pensions from the federal government would be involved, for the federal government receives income from the liquor business and then pays out to its workers and wards. If we are to merit the exaltation that righteousness brings to a nation, we must rid our states and our country of the legalized traffic in alcohol. We must come up again by way of education, local option, and statewide prohibition. But your refusal to take your pension on the ground that liquor is involved in the fund would be a fruitless way to fight the giant rum. The fact is that politicians inject this liquor business into old age pensions and other such laudable affairs to give a sort of decency to the liquor business. But the truth is that liquor income is involved in all the functions of the state which follows the license plan, and everyone who receives pay from the state or accepts any favor from government is getting some part of the liquor income. We deplore

the situation and will do all in our power to change it, but while it remains, take your pay or your pension and live right, serve God and talk and vote dry.

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QUESTION #237 -- Please explain Luke 16:9, "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

ANSWER #237 -- It means, "Use your money and your goods to spread the gospel and save souls, that, when you die, those whom your efforts and gifts have saved (they having died and gone on before) shall welcome you to heaven."

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QUESTION #238 -- Is it right for us who preach against the wearing of jewelry to sell it for others to wear?

ANSWER #238 -- Most of the jewelry given in the missionary collections is sold simply as old gold. Precious stones have use as mere items for investment, as well as for decorative purposes, and I believe it is right to dispose of them and use the money for the spread of God's kingdom.

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QUESTION #239 -- A man owes my husband a debt for work. The man could pay if he would, but he says he will just take his own good time about the matter. We have been advised to turn the debt over to a collector. But we keep thinking of the passage in the Scriptures which forbids going to law. What do you think we should do?

ANSWER #239 -- I think you should keep on thinking about that passage that advises against going to law. Think of that scripture and obey it, and God will see you through some way and in the end and along the way you will be happier.

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QUESTION #240 -- Please explain the meaning of, "The love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Timothy 6:10). Should we assume that Adam and Eve had been using money in the Garden of Eden and that the love of it led to their partaking of the forbidden fruit?

ANSWER #240 -- There is nothing in this text to even suggest that evil may not spring from many other roots besides the love of money. Rather the idea is that all kinds of evil may spring from the love of money (although of course it may spring from other things also). And the Revised Version reads, "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." No, I do not think the love of money was the cause or root of our first parents' sin.

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QUESTION #241 -- The merchants of our town are giving away an automobile. Each fifty cent purchase entitles one to a ticket, and a ticket will be drawn from a barrel at Christmas time and the holder of that number will get the car. Also a leading merchant has a jar full of nuts. You sign your name, and make a guess on the number of nuts in the jar. The one guessing the closest will receive a turkey. Do you think Christian people should have anything to do with such methods?

ANSWER #241 -- No, I think these and kindred methods are appeals to the "gambling instinct," and that Christian people should avoid them. If anyone imagines they are not forms of lottery, let him ask the merchants to send notices of the plan through the United States mail. And it really seems we should not want to define lottery any more liberally than the United States government defines it.

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QUESTION #242 -- A friend here says buying "stock" is gambling, just the same as betting on dice, etc. Is he correct in this proposition?

ANSWER #242 -- Every man who undertakes any kind of business proposition must contend with some element of chance. The farmer does it when he plants his crop, the merchant does it when he buys goods, hoping to sell for a profit, the banker does it when he accepts deposits or makes loans, even the preacher does it when he buys his railroad ticket to a certain point where he is to preach and where someone is supposed to take up a collection to cover his expenses. But we are accustomed to call that gambling in which the margin of chance is unreasonably wide. For instance, when the farmer mortgages his home place to get money for the down payment on "the eighty just north of him," he is gambling. When the merchant buys an unusually large stock of goods to supply an uncertain market, he is gambling. When the banker speculates in unauthorized investments or makes large, unsecured loans, he is gambling. Stocks are issued as evidence of ownership, and someone must furnish the money to own and operate all legitimate business. Therefore stocks are just as good as the properties and business that back them, and stocks are just as "righteous" as deeds, mortgages, bonds or titles of any kind. But when investors take "long chances" of losing their capital on the slender hope that they will make a large profit, they have widened the chance margin to the extent that makes their dealings gambling. When investors are urged to buy certain stock on the plea that they will make a very large percentage of profit, they should know that they are also being asked to take a good chance of losing what they put into such stocks, and if they are wise, they will reject such offers as being "nothing short of gambling." But it would be just as foolish to regard all stock buying as gambling as it would to dub buying real estate as gambling.

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XVI
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON PRAYER

QUESTION #243 -- Is it unscriptural to address God with familiar and endearing terms, as "Dear Lord," etc.? And should prayer be made to God in Jesus' name?

ANSWER #243 -- The Scriptures enjoin reverence in worship, and familiar and endearing terms are not in full keeping with the form of reverence. I would say, therefore, that we should train ourselves to use reverent language in prayer and in praise, lest our liberty deteriorate into sacrilege. Yes, that is the correct form: ask of God in Jesus' name.

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QUESTION #244 -- If we. pray for things that are in keeping with God's will, and pray on persistently, do you not think in most cases our prayers will be answered?

ANSWER #244 -- All such prayers are answered. We may not in every case get just what we asked and at the time when we expected it, but in His own best way God answers all true prayer.

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QUESTION #245 -- Some say it is God's will to heal all sick people, and that we are to blame for their not being healed when we pray, "If it be thy will." Is this the correct scriptural view?

ANSWER #245 -- I am confident this is not the correct scriptural view. It is God's will to save all men, and we may pray and labor for their salvation without the injection of any if. But sickness, mistakes in judgment, poverty, unpopularity and all other external things are subordinate to the spiritual interests of men, and there is no statement of universal divine will concerning them. I cannot presume that God every time wants me to be prosperous. I must hold fast in faith when poverty looks in at my window. I cannot presume that God wills to me infallible judgment, so I must stand ready always to rectify any error to which my faulty intellect may expose me. Likewise, health and sickness are both servants of righteousness, and I must not become discouraged when healing is denied. God's highest will for me is better than health and all blessings. Healing is indeed in the atonement, as blessings are, but it is not offered on terms that all may meet, as salvation from sin is. Let not the holy sick give up their faith.

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QUESTION #246 -- Some people ask the Lord in their prayers to keep them humble and true. Is it not the part of the Christian to keep himself humble and true?

ANSWER #246 -- Yes, it is the part of the Christian to keep himself humble and true, and one of the most effective ways of so keeping himself is to pray insistently for God to keep him thus. The fact that a thing is our duty does not remove that thing from the realm of prayer.

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QUESTION #247 -- How do we know when God has heard our prayer for any certain thing?

ANSWER #247 -- It is easy for us to mistake evidence that God is pleased with our coming as assurance that a certain thing is going to be as we wish it to be. For example: when a loved one is ill, we go to prayer for him and God receives us and blesses our hearts. We go away and say the loved one is going to get well. But he does not get well. Then we are confused. But what we got when we went to God in prayer was evidence of His good pleasure at our coming and assurance that He has heard and will do what is best in the matter of our petition. Speaking personally, I find the greatest help when I get into the presence of God in prayer and have spiritual evidence that He hears me, to just say regarding the petition in full abandonment, "Thy will be done." Thereafter I claim His favor no matter what happens, for He has assured me that He has taken my matter in hand.

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QUESTION #248 -- Is it ever right to pray for a soul when the real motive is just social or financial betterment?

ANSWER #248 -- I would not attempt to judge the motives of those who pray. I believe it is a good thing to pray, even when the motive at the start is not of the highest. Somehow praying has a tendency to purify one's motives. It is like Bud Robinson's conclusions relating to sinning prayers: he says either the praying will stop the sinning or the sinning will stop the praying.

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QUESTION #249 -- I have been told that God will not answer a sinner's prayers. But five years ago, while I was yet unsaved, my little girl lay at the point of death. I prayed that God would spare her, and I believed He would, and she was spared. My husband would not pray, for he said people who pray only at times like that soon forget their promises. But I have been troubled to understand this. Do you believe God heard and answered my prayer when I was yet a sinner?

ANSWER #249 -- I do not believe anyone understands all the philosophy of prayer, and I think the majority err on the side of "limiting the Holy One of Israel." Yes, I believe God answered your prayer and spared your little one, and I believe He did it for His own glory, and that it has worked out to that end. As to how and why it can be that way-well, "We'll understand it better by and by." I have prayed for the bodily healing of sinners, and God has answered and healed. I cannot explain it, except I know that God is merciful, and His goodness is often more surprising than His severity.

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QUESTION #250 -- Does prayer change the mind of God? I say that prayer changes the conditions so that God can answer. But is not God's mind fully made up as to just what will happen? Our Bible class is somewhat undecided on this question.

ANSWER #250 -- There is a whole science known as Theodicy which deals with the question of the vindication of God in permitting evil to exist, and it is a deep and interesting study. I think this is a field in which we are likely to accept a partial truth as the whole truth. I am sure that prayer does prepare us so that we can receive things that otherwise would be denied us, but I am also quite sure this is not the whole philosophy of prayer. I know it sounds presumptuous for us to suggest that we can influence God, but let us not forget that our God is a person possessed of intelligence and love, as well as of power. And let us not confuse our God in any sense with that blind law which pagans think works on in unmitigated regularity, regardless of all that can be said or done. Prayer does change conditions so that God can answer, and God does do things when we pray that otherwise He would not do. This is a brief statement of a truth concerning which volumes have been written, but it is a true statement, even though it is mysterious.

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QUESTION #251 -- In I Thessalonians 5:17, Paul advises us to "pray without ceasing," and in Matthew 6:7-13, Jesus warns us against repetition. If we pray without ceasing, how can we avoid repetition?

ANSWER #251 -- I do not think either passage is intended to be taken too literally. Speaking personally, I find it much more important to keep "in the spirit of prayer" always than it is to spend a certain amount of time in the attitude of prayer. I believe Paul meant that we are always to live in a prayerful mood, and that we are to keep up our stated prayers regularly -- every morning, every night, no time off for the busy harvest or the time of seed sowing. And then you note that Jesus speaks of "vain repetitions." This was and is yet the practice of the heathen. They think there is virtue in saying prayers repeatedly -- counting beads, turning prayer wheels, etc., and all belong in this category. But to pray in earnest more than once for something that is laid upon our hearts is, I think, not only no violation, but certainly is in keeping with the Master's promise (freely translated), "Keep on asking, and ye shall receive; seek earnestly, and ye shall find; knock persistently and it shall be opened unto you."

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QUESTION #252 -- In our church the pastor sometimes calls on someone to lead in prayer and then he and one or two others just "holler" so loud that the one leading in prayer can scarcely hear his own voice. One sister in particular pounds on the seat and prays so loud that the leader is drowned out. Do you think this is a good practice?

ANSWER #252 -- There are times when united praying is permissible and helpful, but in the regular services of the church, like the morning worship service and the opening part of the evening evangelistic service, united praying is confusing and generally hurtful to true reverence and worship. Even people who are called on to "lead in prayer" often misunderstand their province. Such a person should not get down there in public and pray as he would in private or at his family altar-about things of personal concern. He should do his best to "lead the prayer." That is, he should seek to voice the prayers of the people there assembled for worship. And since this is the case with the "leader," certainly there is something very incongruous in the conduct of those who intentionally or carelessly drown out the leader. An occasional amen is in place, for this

indicates that the leader is succeeding in voicing the prayer of at least one person besides himself. But loud, boisterous, noisy interference when the intention is to have an orderly and reverent service is just as bad as static on a radio set. These noisy services are one extreme of which cold, dead, formal quiet is the other. The golden mean in which the leader's voice is respected, and sanctions and repetitions are spoken in a lower tone is, I think, better than either of the extremes.

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QUESTION #253 -- I can pray and believe God for everything except for the salvation of souls. My loved ones reject Him repeatedly and harden their hearts, although I pray for their salvation. I know God is not willing that they should perish, but how can He save them against their will?

ANSWER #253 -- It is in the spiritual as in the natural-best things cost a higher price. But do not be discouraged. George Mueller testified that during a period of fifty-five years he witnessed fifty thousand definite answers to prayer, and his accomplishments were so manifest that men learned to know him as "The Apostle of Prayer." And yet he said one day that there were six men for whom he had been praying for fifty-five years and they were not saved yet But he added, "I still believe they will be saved before they die." Some of them were not saved when Mueller died, but a biographer kept the list and reported that the last of the six did get in before he himself died. As to not saving men against their will, remember it is the devil who interferes with men's making the right choice. Your prayer is not for God to interfere with their will, but to nullify the devil's interference so they can exercise their powers of choice properly and be saved. Perhaps they glory in the thought that they are "free," but they are bondsmen to sin and the devil. Continue to pray for them that the Spirit of God may break the spell that binds them and that thus they may be enabled to repent and believe the gospel. It may be you are nearing a gracious victory even now -- do not slacken your pace. Press on until the light breaks in.

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QUESTION #254 -- We have had family worship in our home for twelve years now, but lately my husband has lost interest, and says family prayer is just a form. What shall we do?

ANSWER #254 -- Family prayer does not take the place of secret prayer or of public prayer, but it takes its place along with the other two, and it cannot be omitted without loss to both the individuals and to the influence of the home. Of course there is something in the nature of form about family prayer, but it should be something more than form. Of course I cannot tell why your husband has lost interest or why his views are changed, but perhaps the family service was allowed to become too much a routine affair. Have you tried using the quarterly, Come Ye Apart, as an assistance to variety and interest? It will be more difficult without your husband's assistance, but I believe you and the children should go right ahead with the family altar just as you would be expected to do if your husband should die or become helpless with illness. Avoid making it uncomfortable for him, and do not nag or accuse him. But go on and have regular, stated prayer with the children.

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XVII
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON REGENERATION

QUESTION #255 -- If regeneration leaves one with the carnal mind and inbred sin and an impure heart, what has regeneration profited him?

ANSWER #255 -- Regeneration means rebirth, it is the same as Jesus mentioned in John 3 as being "born again." Its function is to give spiritual life to one who previously has been "dead in trespasses and sins." It is a work of the Holy Spirit in the human heart which accompanies the justification of that individual in the heart of God through the forgiveness of sins. That there remains in the hearts of the regenerate the root of inbred sin is no reflection upon the work of regeneration, since the scope of regeneration is complete at the boundary which marks the beginning of the second work of divine grace, which is sanctification. And while sanctification cannot take place until regeneration has been accomplished, and while regeneration requires entire sanctification as a complement, the two works of grace are yet complete each within itself in that it involves a definite task which it definitely accomplishes.

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QUESTION #256 -- What is meant by "And when thou art converted," in Luke 22:32?

ANSWER #256 -- You know, of course, that conversion is a somewhat variable term, and that in its intense form it means such moral and spiritual change as can take place only when the will and faith of man have found answer in the grace of God. In other words, evangelical conversion involves both repentance and regeneration. In the case of Peter in the text before us: his complete moral and spiritual collapse was prophesied and likewise his recovery. And there were involved in his restoration both the human and the divine factors. "when thou art converted" meant when thou hast repented and God has forgiven you and restored you to His favor. In this case full evangelical conversion is meant, although the case is what we ordinarily call "reclamation."

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QUESTION #257 -- In I Corinthians 1:2 Paul addresses the Corinthians as sanctified people, but in I Corinthians 3:1 he says they are carnal. Were they sanctified when they were carnal?

ANSWER #257 -- All regenerated people are sanctified, but all regenerated people are not sanctified wholly. On the question of initial sanctification there are no debates whatsoever. It is only on the point of the possibility of being sanctified wholly in this present world that the lines are drawn. The sanctified Christians at Corinth needed to be sanctified wholly, and it was the burden of Paul that they might obtain this grace. But men so commonly think of sanctification as entire sanctification that when you ask the average Christian if he is sanctified he will say he is not, unless he has pressed on into the second blessing, as it is his duty and privilege to do.

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QUESTION #258 -- What is the spiritual state of a person described in the seventh chapter of Romans?

ANSWER #258 -- The seventh chapter of Romans is a description of the conflict with sin covering all the time that sin exists in the human heart. It applies to the awakened sinner and to the justified believer, but not to the sanctified Christian. In fact the purpose of the whole passage is to show the way out in deliverance through Christ.

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QUESTION #259 -- Are all Christians baptized into the body of Christ when they are regenerated? What is the difference in meaning between I Corinthians 12:13 and Acts 1:5? Are those who are regenerated members of the Church? If so, is there any distinction between the Church and His body-the Bride? If not; what is the difference positionally between the regenerated and the sanctified? Please explain fully.

ANSWER #259 -- Yes, all regenerated people are members of the Church, and there is no distinction between the Church and His body. The difference in meaning between the two passages of scripture cited is that the first sets forth the basis of the unity of the Church as a constantly existing order-like the indwelling of the human spirit unifies the human body: and the other describes that Pentecostal crisis at which time we are cleansed from all inbred sin and empowered for the service of God. There is no difference positionally between the regenerated and the entirely sanctified; but there is a difference in their state and condition. As Dr. Godbey used to say, "Justification gives us the right to heaven, and entire sanctification gives us the qualification for heaven."

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QUESTION #260 -- Does the spiritual birth put us into the family of God? or does it require adoption to give us this position?

ANSWER #260 -- Doctor Jessop in his book, "Foundations of Doctrine," gives a splendid putting of this matter. Without attempting to quote his words: he says there are four aspects to the first work of grace: (1) the sovereign -- the act of forgiveness; (2) the judicial-the fact of justification; (3) the parental-the work of regeneration; and (4) the family aspect-the position of adoption. And these are just four aspects of the same thing. The logical (and in a sense the chronological order) is that herein given, but anyone who is forgiven is justified, regenerated and adopted, so that the terms are useful only for variety's sake and for the purpose of making clear the full rounded change which takes place when a sinner becomes a Christian.

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XVIII
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON THE SABBATH

QUESTION #261 -- My Roman Catholic neighbor claims that the Catholic Church changed the Sabbath day from Saturday to Sunday. Now if we broke away from the Catholic Church in other matters why do we not break away on this and return to keeping the day that Jesus kept?

ANSWER #261 In the first place, the Roman Catholic Church did not change the Sabbath day from Saturday to Sunday. The Seventh Day Adventists usually say that Constantine, the Roman emperor made the change. But neither is this claim true. What Constantine did was to issue a decree which exempted the soldiers from drill service on Sunday, and far from marking the beginning of the observance of Sunday as the Christian Sabbath, this was but an admission that its observance was a well established custom already. The Christian Sabbath is as much "the seventh day" as the old Jewish Sabbath, for as informed people know, the Jewish Sabbath did not go in unbroken succession throughout one year, much less throughout long periods of years. The subject is too complicated for me to discuss it here, but the Jews followed the lunar or moon calendar, and in order to make their weeks correspond with the solar or sun year, they added in days between certain weeks at certain seasons of the year, and these days did not count in the regular succession. That resulted in the Sabbath coming on various days of the week, and in the course of time every day of the week was observed, so that Seventh Day Sabbath people are more rigid and hidebound than the ritualistic Jews, and the Sabbath they keep today-I do not know when they made their start on calculation-may be any day of the old Jewish week, and there is no record that any Sabbath at all was kept for 2,500 years after creation. So that assuming they are in the succession established by that first week of days mentioned in Genesis is utterly without either proof or likelihood. And what is more, in the calendar of today the days do not agree with what they were before the calendar was corrected. Even George Washington was not born on February 22. He was born on February 11. But when the calendar was corrected eleven days were lopped off, and February 22 took the place of what was February 11 in 1732, 50 we have gone on celebrating the 22nd which does now mark the anniversary of Washington's birth, but neither the day of the month nor the days of the week correspond. And more yet, Seventh Day people around the world do not keep the same day right now. They cannot do it. At the International Date Line in the middle of the Pacific Ocean there is a change in the days of the week and month, and part of the Seventh Day Sabbath people in the world are keeping Saturday, and the others are keeping either Friday or Sunday, counting by the calendar of the other group. It is just all a lot of nonsense and illustrates how impossible it is to put the wine of Christianity into the worn-out bottles of Judaism. The Jewish Sabbath was given to a special people to be observed in a special country -- Palestine and its extension to the Gentiles and to the whole face of the earth is a fallacy and an impossibility. The Christian Sabbath, on the other hand, belongs in the list with "the new song," "the song of the Lamb." It commemorates the Lord's Resurrection, and has been the "Lord's Day" with Christians from the earliest times of the present age. It is the Church's principal occasion for propagation and evangelism, and is more significant than either the Saturday Sabbath of the Jews or the Friday Sabbath of the Mohammedans. I suggest that you send to the Nazarene Publishing House for a copy of Dr. Corlett's book on "The Christian Sabbath." It is inexpensive and yet convincing. In the meantime, do not listen to any who would spy out this liberty we have in Christ and get you to turn back again into bondage.

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QUESTION #262 -- What is meant in the fourth chapter of Hebrews where a day of rest is mentioned so many times? Especially the eighth verse seems almost to indicate that we should keep Saturday as a rest day.

ANSWER #262 -- This "rest" in the book of Hebrews has no fundamental reference to any weekly rest day whatsoever, but to a spiritual rest which is the heritage of all God's people. It is the rest of holiness, the rest of soul experienced by those who, after they were born again, have been baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire by means of which they are cleansed from all sin and filled with the perfect love of God. This is the rest that is essential and the Sabbath that is satisfying. Let us by all means "labor" (and here you have the same idea as that used in Joshua when it is said the people "made haste to pass over") to enter into this rest.

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QUESTION #263 -- Do you think it is necessary for a person who has been taught to say "Sabbath" from his childhood to change to saying, "Sunday," as seems to be the general custom in our church?

ANSWER #263 -- Sabbath and Sunday are not really interchangeable words, and if you want to be really accurate you will say Sabbath when you refer to the religious significance of the day and Sunday when you refer to the day in the ordinary sense. For example I may say, "I will come over to your house next Sunday and we will attend the Sabbath services at your church." But here again is a distinction that is not generally observed. But if you have been taught to say Sabbath and want to continue to say it I believe you should train yourself to make the distinction more than is expected of those who have grown up to use the secular name. For instance, in enumerating the days of the week, say Sunday, and in speaking of any thing, like a birthday or the other idea not connected with the religious significance of the day, say Sunday, otherwise you are degrading the more significant name.

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XIX
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON THE SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

QUESTION #264 -- Is there any age limit for those who participate in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? If not do you think it wise to administer it to the children under five?

ANSWER #264 -- There is no age limit, but I think children under five could scarcely be expected to understand enough of the meaning of the sacrament to be profited by it. It would vary with different children, of course, but I think seven young even for those who have been trained in our homes, Sunday schools and churches.

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QUESTION #265 -- Please explain in I Corinthians 11:30, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

ANSWER #265 -- This is a part of the apostle's treatise on the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The careless manner in which the Corinthians had been celebrating it had led to other and more serious offenses and to weakness and backsliding among the members. Irreverence in the house of God breeds contempt for the things of God and brings about shallowness and spiritual declension. I have seen instances in which parents allowed their children to run and play in the church or tabernacle until I am sure the spirit of the meetings was hurt. And I have seen singers and preachers proceed with an evident lightness that presaged the running of the spiritual plow out of the ground. Let us take warning and instruction from Paul's words to the Corinthians which concluded with the words, "Let everything be done in decency and in order."

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QUESTION #266 -- The Roman Catholic Church believes that the bread and wine. for the Lord's Supper actually turn into the flesh and blood of the Lord as soon as the priest sanctifies it. Two Chinese Catholic priests recently told me of an instance in which a Protestant in Italy or France entered a church during high mass, and being utterly opposed to the idea that the bread and wine become flesh and blood, he rushed to the altar, snatched the bread from the hand of the priest and began to cut it into pieces. To his horror and amazement the blood began to flow freely from the supposed bread. I am told there are many stories like this. Is there any foundation for such stories? If not, what does the Lord mean when He says, "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me. and I in him. Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man and drink of his blood ye have no life in you. Whosoever eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day"?

ANSWER #266 -- There is of course no foundation in facts for these fabulous stories by which Rome keeps credulous people under her influence. And what is more, the whole Roman Catholic theory of transubstantiation is a fabrication of the hierarchy and is unscriptural and pagan. As to the meaning of the scripture quoted above: the plain meaning is that one must draw his spiritual life from Christ or have no life at all. At the time these words were spoken they were applied as a present test, and yet the sacrament of the Lord's Supper had not yet been established. We may therefore be sure that there is no direct reference to this sacrament in the passage. The meaning is deeper and more fundamental. One might partake of the elements of the sacrament and still have no life. But if he eats the flesh and drinks the blood of Christ he invariably and without fail does have life. The reference is not therefore to any outward ordinance but to faith in Christ by means of which one becomes partaker of His vital salvation and abiding life. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" is a parallel passage. And "He that believeth not shall be damned" is the equivalent of the other side of the statement Except one partake of the life which is provided in Christ he abideth in death.

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QUESTION #267 -- The scripture which says, "Repent and be baptized" seems to make water baptism a very important part in fully and wholly obeying the Scriptures. Is this not so? If a

person was baptized as an infant, will this baptism answer for the baptism which is commanded in connection with repentance?

ANSWER #267 -- It is difficult for people to get away from the idea that water baptism is in some sense a saving ordinance: hence all the controversies concerning mode, etc. Baptism is "an outward sign of an inner work of grace," and a sign of the covenant of grace. It should not be refused nor neglected. But if one is satisfied with the baptism which was administered to him in infancy, who is there that is authorized to become conscience for him and compel him to do that which his own conscience does not require?

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XX
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON SANCTIFICATION AND HOLINESS

QUESTION #268 -- What is the difference between sanctification and the baptism with the Holy Ghost?

ANSWER #268 -- The baptism with the Holy Ghost is the efficient cause of our sanctification, so that whoever is baptized with the Holy Ghost is sanctified, and no one is sanctified except he is baptized with the Holy Ghost. I think this is made quite clear by the whole tenor of New Testament scriptures.

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QUESTION #269 -- Does sanctification destroy the carnal nature root and branch? If so, how is it revived when one who has had the blessing loses it and his justification also?

ANSWER #269 -- Sanctification does destroy the carnal nature root and branch; it is revived in one who loses the grace of God out of his life just as it made its first appearance in Adam when he broke fellowship with God. It is like darkness in a room at night You bring in the light and the darkness is dispelled, but when you take the light out darkness returns. The full answer to the question involves the whole question of the nature of evil. I cannot take space to go into that, but I am sure the statements I have made here are consistent with what is found when such a survey is undertaken.

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QUESTION #270 -- Please explain Hebrews 12:14, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." Does this have some general meaning or does it refer to the second work of grace? Does seeing the Lord refer to having fellowship with Him or does it mean that an unsanctified person cannot get to heaven?

ANSWER #270 -- I cannot see much distinction in the language used. The meaning is both general and specific. The biggest factor in the making of heaven is fellowship with God. As I understand the text, no one can come into the fullest fellowship with God in any world without

holiness. And no one will get into heaven who is not holy. This does not mean that people who die in a state of regeneration will go to hell. But it does mean that in life or at the time of death they must be purged from all sin by the fire of the Holy Spirit and they must enter heaven holy. So far as I know, no church or authorized teacher of Christian doctrine holds that anyone can get into heaven with sin in him. They all agree that holiness is a prerequisite for heaven. The divergence is on the matter of the time when this holiness can be obtained. Some hold it is done at the time of regeneration. But with this practically the universal Christian testimony disagrees. Some hold that it can take place only at death. Some hold that it takes place in purgatory (a Roman Catholic invention). Some hold that it takes place in the resurrection. But we believe the Scriptures teach that it is done by the Holy Spirit on the basis of the efficacy of the blood of Jesus and that its condition is faith. And believing this, we have come to God on the terms and condition which we understand to be requisite, and it is our joy to say God has not disappointed us. Personally, I am glad to say the blessed Spirit has purged my heart from inbred sin and does now sanctify me wholly. If some get this blessing at death, I shall not object, but I am glad I got it before I died. If the Catholics should prove to be right in positing a purgatory, then, thank God, I shall not need to go there. If some get it in the resurrection, I shall rejoice to welcome them into the company of the blood-washed. Even if what these say is true, I have lost nothing, for the blessing is a heritage of immeasurable value, and I am glad I have it now and that I shall have it when I come to the place where the others expect to get it. But if it should turn out that the others are mistaken-well, I am glad this way works anyhow. The blessing of entire sanctification received by faith subsequent to regeneration measures up to the requirement of Hebrews 12:14.

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QUESTION #271 -- Please explain what is meant by being wholly sanctified. How may one know he has that grace, and what more should be expected of the wholly sanctified than of those who are born again, but not yet sanctified?

ANSWER #271 -- Wholly sanctified is not strictly speaking a scriptural term. But it is an expression necessary to bear the thought contained in I Thessalonians 5:23, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And the next verse says, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." When one is truly converted or born again he is initially or partially sanctified, for he is cleansed from the guilt of sin But there yet remains within him that "prone to wander," that "bent to iniquity," that "sin that so easily besets," that "depravity of nature" with which we are all born and which is the root of sin as action, and from which the gospel promises deliverance. If any ask why this was not also cleansed away at the time of conversion, I would answer, for one reason, because the conditions upon which such cleansing is promised cannot be met until one has been born again. But God has provided this full cleansing in the blood of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 13:12; I John 1:8), its condition is faith, and its executor is the Holy Spirit. And since this blessing is invariably received after regeneration, John Wesley spoke of it as "The second blessing properly so-called." It is sought in prayer, and is to be instantaneously wrought whenever the consecrated Christian believes fully for God to do it The Holy Spirit himself witnesses to it, just as He does to pardon and sonship. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is witness to us" (Hebrews 10:14). As to the difference in the life of one who is sanctified and one who is not-but perhaps we had

better say the difference in one after he is sanctified and before: the difference is principally subjective or internal. The standard for outward conduct is holiness and righteousness for all, and the justified Christian may be able to approximate this standard, but he does it by virtue of continual suppressions, and counteractions. But the wholly sanctified do it without any inner warfare as between the flesh and the spirit, since the old fleshly nature is eradicated and burned out. Suppression is a good doctrine as applied to the living of a justified Christian, but the Bible teaches something so much better in the experience of entire sanctification where the Christian knows that his old man is crucified and the body of sin destroyed (Romans 6:6). It may not always be possible for an observer to tell the difference between a justified and a sanctified Christian, but the Christian himself knows the difference in himself without fail.

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QUESTION #272 -- If it is possible to be sanctified and to have that high religious experience and life that is recommended by the periodicals and books from the Nazarene Publishing House, why is it that so few people possess such an experience and life?

ANSWER #272 -- From one approach, I admit that this is a great mystery. Full salvation is such a grand and blessed possession that it would seem all who hear of it would immediately sell all they have to possess it. But, on the other hand, we must not forget that there is a mighty personal devil who is supported by myriads of fallen angels to deceive and lead men astray. Then we must not forget that the natural heart of man is depraved and fallen. And we must not forget that there is power in numbers, and that the predominance of numbers favors the worldly life. Perhaps there is no greater mystery here than in many other things. Take alcohol for example: all intelligent people know that alcohol is a poison injurious to the body, mind and morals of those who take it, and yet the country is liquor soaked as it has not been before within the memory of any living. Both these classes of facts testify to the total depravity of man, and exhort us with loud voice to make sure of our own calling and election. But, in the meantime, let us remove the "if." It is possible for sinners to become Christians and it is possible for all Christians to be sanctified here and now. The failures are all human failures. God is able to save to the uttermost and keep until the judgment day. Let us, you and I, make sure we get the fullness of the gospel blessing ourselves, even though the reluctance of others may be a mystery and a trial still.

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XXI
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON THE SECOND COMING

QUESTION #273 -- I am not just clear as to when and where the Marriage Supper of the Lamb occur. Please explain.

ANSWER #273 -- I think, after all these years, there has not appeared a better treatise on the Book of Revelation than that written by Dr. J. A. Seiss and printed in three volumes under the title, "Lectures on the Apocalypse." I commend this work to anyone who desires to make a fuller study of this wonderful book with which our wonderful Bible concludes. In substance there are two phases to the Second Coming of Christ: the first is intimated in I Thessalonians 4:15-18, the

other is intimated, though not developed, in Revelation 1:7. Concerning the first phase, the occurrences are as follows: (1) The return of Christ for His Church-a secret coming, so far as the world at large is concerned. But upon His approach to the world, the holy dead will be resurrected and the holy living translated (the equivalent of resurrection, but not involving death) and together they will ascend to some place in the regions above the earth where the Marriage Supper of the Lamb will be held. While this feast is on in the chosen place in the heavens, the Great Tribulation will be on upon the earth. (2) At the end of the Marriage Supper and the Great Tribulation period (a period many estimate to be from three and one-half to seven years), Jesus will return to the earth (coming this time clear back to the earth and His feet touching again upon the Mount of Olives-at His first appearance to and for His Church His feet will not touch the earth) and will establish His glorious millennial reign which shall continue for a thousand years. Then the end-time occurrence centering about the Great White Throne Judgment will take place.

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QUESTION #274 -- What event is to take place first, the Rapture of the saints or the battle of Armageddon? Where in the Scriptures is the answer to be found?

ANSWER #274 -- The Rapture of the saints comes first, at the time of Christ's coming for His Church. This is the next event due in the order of the future. There is of course no place in the Scriptures where a regular ordered schedule of events is given, but I believe you will find something pretty close to that in I Thessalonians 4:13-5:11.

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QUESTION #275 -- In Matthew 16:28; Mark 9:1; and Luke 9:27 it is said there were some there present who should not taste of death until they should see the kingdom of God. Does this refer to the Second Coming of Christ? What is meant here by the kingdom of God? What is the difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven?

ANSWER #275 -- I know some have thought the verses in question referred to the Second Coming of Christ, and they have thought to explain by suggesting that John was translated and did not die. But you will notice that in each case the Scriptures go right on to describe the Transfiguration. And I think this is the explanation. There were three persons present who within a few days time saw Jesus in His glory on the holy mount. And the transfiguration was a miniature of the Second Coming. And in these passages the term kingdom of heaven means the kingdom of the glorified. There is no essential distinction between the terms kingdom of God and kingdom of heaven and they are used interchangeably. In the first form emphasis is laid on the King, in the second on the kingdom. As to the exact meaning in any case, one must depend pretty much on the context; for sometimes the reference is to the spiritual kingdom, sometimes to the church in visible form, sometimes to the kingdom of the glorified, etc. But as a rule there is no great difficulty in the matter; for the context makes it plain.

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QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON SIN

QUESTION #276 -- If sin is willful transgression of God's law, and outbreaks of carnality are against the will of the converted person, should we say the person who has had an outbreak of carnality is backslidden and must be converted again?

ANSWER #276 -- When sin rises up in a justified believer he should not cast his confidence away, but should immediately seek a place of private prayer and should confess his sin and acknowledge his weakness and definitely trust the blood of Christ to cover all. And we should instruct Christians just this way. But upon the basis of such outbreaks we should urge all justified believers to go on at once and get sanctified wholly-that is the only cure for carnal uprisings, and no Christian can afford to tolerate these in himself. But nothing can be gained by our legalism by which we make chronic seekers out of faulty Christians. There is a better way to help them on into the grace of holiness.

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QUESTION #277 -- What is the meaning of the "second death" (Revelation 21:8).

ANSWER #277 -- The first death is condemnation for sin, the second death is damnation for sin The sinner dies in that he is separated from fellowship with God while in this world. But his separation is final and irreparable when he dies in his sins and goes to "the bottomless pit," and this is the "second death" -- damnation, the execution of the penalty of guilt

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QUESTION #278 -- Some of my Sunday school scholars asked how it can be that a lost sinner can yet be rewarded in the future for the good deeds he does in this life. Please explain this to us.

ANSWER #278 -- This question is in substance the same as Jesus asked, "what is a man profited if he gain the world and lose his soul?" and the answer to that question evidently was "nothing." One must save his soul before he can save his life. If he misses heaven he misses all. It is like that in this world. One must be alive before he can own anything. A dead man cannot hold titles. Sinners will be rewarded in this world for any kind deeds they may done -- rewarded by the inner glow of an approving conscience, if not otherwise, but they cannot be rewarded in heaven, for they will not be there to be rewarded, unless they are saved in this world by the free grace of God.

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QUESTION #279 -- I John 5:18 says, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not." But Ecclesiastes 7:20 says, "There is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not." How do you reconcile these two statements?

ANSWER #279 -- The passage from Ecclesiastes and one of like import in 2 Chronicles 6:36 are given to enforce the liability of all men to sin Hebrew scholars, without exception, I think, agree that the rendering most consistent with the evident meaning is, "There is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and may not sin." This is a fact beyond dispute. No man alive has yet finished his probation, and he is yet liable to temptation and to sin "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." As to the text from I John: it is a fact proved by universal experience that no one can keep his fellowship with God and still commit known sin Either his fellowship with God will stop him from sinning or else his sinning will break his fellowship with God. A man must live right if he would be right.

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QUESTION #280 -- Please explain I John 3:6, "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him." Does that mean that anyone who sins after he claims to have become a Christian proves by his sinning that he never really knew the Lord?

ANSWER #280 -- I think the whole difficulty arises from the mixture of tenses. It would be plainer for us if we read it, "whosoever continually abides in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth does not (at the same time) see him or know him," and that would be in keeping with the real meaning. The statement is just an affirmation of the truth also stated in other scriptures to the effect that one cannot sin and at the same time be saved and right with God. It is a moral impossibility for one to be a Christian and a sinner at the same time, just as it is impossible for one to be truthful and a liar or honest and a thief at the same time. There is nothing here to contradict the fact that a sinner may repent and find forgiveness, even though his sinning may take place after he has been regenerated, or that other fact that we also know is true -- a Christian may give up his faith and drift into backsliding and into final apostasy.

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QUESTION #281 -- Please explain Hebrews 10:26. Does this mean that once we have had a good Christian experience and f all there remains no sacrifice for our sins? If so, how do you explain I John 2:1, "If any man sin, we: have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"?

ANSWER #281 -- The warning in Hebrews means that the Jewish sacrifices had lost their efficacy and that one who thought to turn from Christ back to these would find no safety there. The text from I John 2:1 is our faith and hope. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Let us come to God through this advocate and we shall never have our petition denied.

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QUESTION #282 -- Many in my community hold to what they call "eternal security," but I believe the Bible teaches it is possible for Christians to backslide, and that we should be always on our guard lest we fall. I have many scriptures which I believe teach this. What do you think about it?

ANSWER #282 -- I believe this idea that one who has been born again cannot be "unborn" or that it is a reflection on the power and goodness of God to suppose one can backslide after having been made a child of God, arises from a too literal interpretation of the symbols by which the grace and power of God are set forth in scripture and Christian literature. The opposite of "born" is not "unborn," but "death," and relationship with God is for the whole course of human life on earth based upon conditions. To hold anything else is to hold that probation ends at conversion instead of at death. I think you are just right in your judgment, and that your position is in agreement with the Word of God. I Corinthians 10:12, I think covers every possible case and is a warning no one can afford to ignore.

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QUESTION #283 -- What is the line between the human and the carnal emotions? Is a wounded spirit or hurt feelings a sign of carnality? If so, what are the scriptural proofs? Is an emotion of anger possible to the sanctified? Please explain, "Be ye angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Ephesians 4:26).

ANSWER #283 -- The line between the human and carnal emotions is the point at which ethical content becomes involved. Let us take covetousness as an example: it certainly is legitimate for a Christian to desire money and goods -- even to some degree beyond the creature requirements of the moment and the day, and beyond the measure of that which will sustain life on its lowest plane. And desire for such things is the basis of industry, economy, and many other virtues, so that we cannot define covetousness -- the sinful kind which Paul says is idolatry -- just as "desire for things we do not actually possess." Rather, we must come to think of covetousness as excessive desire for that which belongs to another." And notice: it is not simply excessive desire, but excessive desire for that which belongs to another. Things belong to people who earn them, and when I reach the place where I desire to possess that which I do not earn, ethical content has entered into my desire, and the desire is sinful and carnal. But the man who desires, even excessively desires, an opportunity to earn what he would possess, is not sinfully covetous or carnal. The same principle enters into other emotions. It is no indication of carnality for one to be wounded and hurt -- only if he bears it patiently. Christianity is not stoicism. It refines the feelings, but does not destroy them. A sanctified wife is hurt by the brutishness of an unthinking husband. A sanctified parent is wounded and deeply hurt by the choices of a wayward child. In fact a sanctified Christian is capable of the deepest hurt the human heart can know. But ethical content is involved when there is present a desire for revenge. Take the case of our own Master: in the synagogue, among the cold, legalistic Pharisees, when He was about to heal the man with the withered arm, it is said, "He looked about upon them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts." But there was here no emotion of revenge. It was the hurt and anger of insulted justice and mercy, but this was mixed with a deep desire to do good to those who sinned against themselves. And on the text which you mention: Anger is a thing of degrees. Yesterday I saw some coarse boys tormenting a weak, incompetent little fellow, and I resented the unfairness to the point where I was compelled to espouse the cause of the unfortunate. I felt I would be a coward and a partaker of their sin if I did not interfere. But I went just far enough to rescue the boy, and not far enough to take vengeance into my own hands, and when it was over I was ready and anxious to do any favor I could to the offenders. Even justifiable resentment against evil must not be cherished,

lest it become an obsession, and take on the qualities of carnal wrath. I think it is much better and much safer for us all to remember that the human may quickly become the carnal, and that we are never safe except when we are on guard. The idea that some bestowal of grace will work automatically, and that we have no further need of care and restraint and the purposeful practice of temperance, has, I think, caused much spiritual disaster. This grace will work, only we have to work it by observing its conditions.

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QUESTION #284 -- What is the meaning of I John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

ANSWER #284 -- The whole question along here is how to get rid of sin. John says that if we deny we have sinned, we make God a liar, for God has said, "All have sinned." Further, John says that if we say we have no sin principle (inbred sin) we deceive ourselves, and sin still remains. We cannot get rid of the guilt of sin by refusing to admit we have sinned, and we cannot get rid of inbred sin by denying we have it. What then shall we do? Why, says John, confess your sins, God will forgive you; confess your depravity, God will cleanse and sanctify you. Sin exists in two forms: guilt and pollution, and it takes two works of grace to rid us of it, and those two works of grace are forgiveness and cleansing, justification and sanctification.

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QUESTION #285 -- If sin is a voluntary act, involving choice and intention, is it not possible for a child to be brought to Christ before he has committed any actual sin? I know the Bible says, "All have sinned," but does that prove that all must sin?

ANSWER #285 -- As your thesis suggests, it is theoretically possible for the innocent child-that is innocent of knowing transgression -- to be brought to Christ and saved. But in this connection, it might be well to remember that the basis of the need of the new birth is in the fallen state and not in the guilt of actual transgression. Therefore the child, if brought in, as you suggest, would at the time of his faith in Christ have the same inward moral change wrought as adults have when they are regenerated and born of the Spirit.

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QUESTION #286 -- In Psalm 19:17 David prays to be kept from "presumptuous sins." What are presumptuous sins? I have been told that it is judging other people by putting our construction on their deeds and words, and that we should not do this.

ANSWER #286 -- Matthew Henry says presumptuous sins are those sins in which men sin against the habitual convictions of their own conscience, in contempt and defiance of law and its sanctions. It is high-handed sin, and for this reason is called "the great transgression." The distinction here is as between the sins which men commit in uncertainty -- not being sure whether the course is right or wrong-and the sins they commit against clear light. And David prays especially to be saved from sins which have no possible cover-these are the presumptuous sins

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XXIII
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON THEOLOGY

QUESTION #287 -- What is fundamentalism? A certain well known fundamentalist team was refused admittance to all the churches in town except the holiness church. Yet the team teaches anti-holiness doctrines and would have been excluded from the holiness church at any other time. Is not the doctrine of holiness one of the fundamentals?

ANSWER #287 -- Certain good publicity agents took advantage of the term fundamental, a good word of general import, and gave it a factional meaning. In the list of generally accepted doctrines of the Christian Church they injected their own pet notions, making one plank in the platform a committal to the false and dangerous heresy of Augustinian and Calvinistic interpretation of unconditional and unavoidable perseverance on the part of the regenerated. This old heresy they dubbed with the new title "Eternal Security." But a list of "fundamentals" containing this erroneous and factional commitment would bar out James Arminius, John Wesley, Dr. Bresee, and, I think, the Apostle Paul. It is really a great pity that men committed to the task of defending the historic faith against the inroads of other ancient heresies which came out under the new name "Modernism" should adopt a policy that is so reprehensible and of such doubtful morality. But since they elected to do that, they were consistent in that they did not forsake their old heretical notions regarding the nature and incurableness of sin. It would be a pity for orthodox holiness teachers to be stained with a method of publicity which is open to such just criticism. Certainly, holiness is one of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible and of the Church. It is so fundamental that the Bible says without holiness no man shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).

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QUESTION #288 -- In the Herald of Holiness for April 20, Dr. Corlett mentioned verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. Please explain more fully the distinction.

ANSWER #288 -- These two terms do not stand on a common plane and comparison is difficult. Plenary means full, complete, and verbal means expressed in words, oral, literal. Thus plenary has reference to the extent and verbal to the method of inspiration. And as related to the Scriptures, verbal is included in plenary, although plenary extends to other methods also. To illustrate: one who believes in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures believes that "All scripture is God-breathed," as Paul said literally in 2 Timothy 3:16, although he may not be ready to say whether this was done by the express inspiration of every word or whether it was by means of thought, allowing some scope for the personality of the holy man who was the human author. But one who believes in the verbal inspiration believes also that "All scripture is God-breathed," and that the method employed by the Holy Spirit was that of taking complete charge of the mind and hand of the human author and dictating every word with no allowance for any variation through the channel of human agency.

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QUESTION #289 -- A woman here is puzzled. She says she was converted before she was born again. Isn't conversion and being born again the same thing?

ANSWER #289 -- If one is speaking technically, then of course conversion is a human act and the new birth is a divine act, and conversion does precede the new birth or regeneration. But in this sense conversion is just the equivalent of repentance. In ordinary language conversion and the new birth are the same thing. I speak of the time when I was converted, meaning the time when God converted me by regenerating my heart, rather than of the time (which was completed just at the moment when God touched my heart) when I converted myself by repenting and turning to God. I, personally, practically always use the terms conversion and the new birth as synonyms.

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QUESTION #290 -- Please give the original of "which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29); and "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself' (Hebrews 9:26).

ANSWER #290 -- The word for sin is the same in both cases. It is hamartia which originally meant the missing of a mark, and which applied to moral things doubtless implies the missing of the true end of life. It is the general word for sin in the New Testament, and means both the act of sinning and the result, the sin itself. Or, speaking a little more discriminately, it includes both actual and inbred sm. But the word for "taketh away" in John is airoo which is translated to raise or lift up (Mark 16:18; John 11:41); to bear or carry (Matthew 4:6; Luke 9:23); to bear away or carry off in general (Matthew 21:21; John 19:31); to remove by death (John 17:15; Matthew 24: 39); as well as describing the redeeming work of Christ (John 1:29 and I John 3:5). On the other hand the word in Hebrews 9:26 is athetasis and appears only one other time in the New Testament, in Hebrews 7:18 where it is translated "disannulling" in both the Authorized and Revised Versions, although I think most literal translations give it "a putting away." I would say that the general idea in John 1:29 and Hebrews 9:26 is the same, only in John the statement is simply that Jesus is the Lamb of God to bear away the sin of the world, without designating in just what manner He bears it away. While the word in Hebrews emphasizes that He bears it away by nullifying it and robbing it of its power by substituting Himself for the victim which it has the right to claim. But in both cases there is an actual putting away of sin, and the texts are both consistent only with the fullest forgiveness and the most far reaching cleansing. There is no room for a sinning religion or for suppression or counteraction in either one of them.

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XXIV
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ON TITHES

QUESTION #291 -- How does our church get the authority for teaching tithing for present-day Christians?

ANSWER #291 -- There is a common error to the effect that tithing was a matter of the Jewish economy and that it belongs "under the law." But you will find in the Old Testament that

Abraham and Jacob paid tithes, and their casual manner suggests that the practice was common among their contemporaries, a long time before the law was given to Moses. And in the New Testament there is no set and regular plan for the support of the church apart from what was already known and practiced, and there is abundant evidence that the tithing plan which came long before the law was given continued to live after the ceremonial part of the law had become obsolete. The tithing plan is scriptural and practical, and it works. I suggest that you try it

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QUESTION #292 -- Should Christian people pay tithes?

ANSWER #292 -- Since you have stated the question this way, I am tempted just to answer with an emphatic yes, and let it go at that. Even those who still contend that the tithing system belongs to the Old Testament age and is not obligatory now could not reasonably object to such an answer. For leaving the legal phases of the question out, there are three benefits that come from systematic tithing that cannot be denied: (1) Paying tithe gives one basis for a good conscience in good times and in ill. (2) Paying tithes of necessity injects order into one's business (for if one knows what one tenth of his income is, he must also know what ten tenths are) and this within itself is worth all it costs to the average person. (3) If all God's people should tithe scripturally and systematically the program of the gospel would be adequately supported. For even when the tithe is not sufficient for such support, tithers will be liberal also with their freewill offerings. And there is really no possibility for anyone, poor or rich, to complain against the justice of the tithing plan. For when one has little income, his tithe will be small, and when he has a large income, he will have plenty left after he pays his tithe.

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QUESTION #293 -- We hear from the. pulpit quite often, "Now if you do not give God your tithes and offerings, He will get them anyhow, even if He has to take a cow, horse, car, barn, or your health, or something else of money value." Please tell us how God gets the tithe in this way, and also tell us whether people who tithe and make offerings ever suffer financial loss.

ANSWER #293 -- There is evidence of carelessness in the statements which you quote. God sends His rain on the just and on the unjust, and affliction also is the common lot of humanity. Some saints are poor and sick and even die at an early age, and some sinners have good health, long life, and temporal prosperity. If it were like as is intimated in the quotation you make it would secularize the kingdom of God in spite of all. It is much better as it is. But there are many advantages in paying the tithe and in making offerings for the promotion of His kingdom, even as there are advantages in keeping all His commandments and doing the things which are pleasing in His sight There is a business advantage in systematic tithing, for if one knows what one-tenth of his income is, he must also know what his whole income it, and this bookkeeping element is worth more than the tithe involves to the average person. So that it often happens that the tither has the advantage in this one particular enough so to mark him as more prosperous than his non-tithing neighbor. Then the tither literally takes God into partnership in his business, and this makes for honesty and carefulness and industry-great factors in prosperity. But most of all, the tither has a good conscience, and when adversity and afflictions come, he bears up better than his careless

neighbor and comes back to health and prosperity much sooner and much oftener. I sat at the table with a man who has been almost a life long tither. He said, "Afflictions and reverses have come to me, but I have found sweet refuge in the knowledge that I have never wasted anything God ever gave me and have never failed to tithe whatever came into my hand. So I know my adversities are not judgments." The tither has the advantage in times both of prosperity and adversity-there is no doubt about that

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QUESTION #294 -- I am a local church treasurer and have to see some things that cause me to wonder. Some people, I find, refuse. to pay their tithes if they do not like the preacher. Some others use the tithe in their own business and just pay up once or twice a year when they can afford to do it. Do you think these practices are justified?

ANSWER #294 -- If one is to get the full blessing that God promises, he must pay his tithes to the Lord, not to the preacher, and he must pay regularly. The work of God must go on as well as a man's private business, and no one can tell when the opportunities of the year may be the best. Pay your tithe fully and cheerfully and regularly and God will bless you with spiritual and temporal blessings. If you do not like the preacher, here is the chance for you to be true to God under a handicap, and if you are full and cheerful and regular under these circumstances, you will gain an extra blessing. I believe all this with all my heart. You try it for a couple of years and then if it does not work, drop me a card.

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QUESTION #295 -- What is the income of a farmer who owns his own farm? What is the income of a tenant farmer who has to borrow money to meet his part of the expenses? What is the income of a factory man or wage earner who has to pay transportation to hold his job? How would the tithe be computed in each case?

ANSWER #295 -- Income has two forms, viz., gross and net. As to the gross, there is usually no question, for it is all the income one has from all sources whatever. But the tithe is due on the net income and here one has to face the question of what is the expense of production. Sometimes people say they are not making anything at all. But when you inquire you find they mean they are unable to make any permanent saving above their living, and they are inclined to count their living costs in with the production costs. But this is not correct. The great majority of people are unable to make any permanent saving in the whole of their lives above the family and personal cost of living. In the examples given above, the wage earner is certainly entitled to deduct the cost of transportation to and from his work, the tenant farmer is entitled to deduct the interest on his borrowed capital, and the farm owner is entitled to deduct the taxes on his farm. All this is apparent right on the face. But there are instances in which questions arise as to whether certain items are production costs or living costs. In such cases, it is best to "give God the benefit of the doubt" and reject the deduction. Genuinely Christian people get so much joy out of paying their tithes that they get to where they seek rather to make the tithe as large as they can, rather than as small as they dare. Tithing is both a duty and a grace: both a requirement and a privilege.

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QUESTION #296 -- A, who has been a tither for years while in business, bought a farm in March, 1930, expecting payments on a property he had previously sold to meet the considerable balance on the purchase price of the farm, and to buy stock and equipment. But the expected payments have not been made and may never be made, so A is left with a heavy debt and without the equipment to make his farming operations profitable. He cannot meet outside obligations, let alone support himself and wife. Under these circumstances what would you consider his duty regarding tithes?

ANSWER #296 -- The tithe is based upon the "increase" -- this is fundamental. The case you present is just a matter of one's absorbing his increase in the endeavor to recoup a loss in his capital, and that is a delicate matter indeed. A number of rich American bankers tried to do this regarding their income tax accounts, and they got by on the legal technicalities, but the country in general did not approve, and the reputation of bankers as men of honor suffered. I believe that in the case you present this farmer should figure out the income just as he did when he was in business, and that just as he did then, he should count the value of whatever he and his family consume as income and should pay tithe on this. The only case in which a man who continues to exist has no income at all is the case where he is drawing directly from his accumulated capital which has already been tithed at the time when it was produced. And such a man will have means for "freewill offerings," or else his day of complete penury must be right now at hand. The tithing method of supporting God's work is such a blessing to those who follow it sincerely that they usually strive to find a way to have tithes, and do not seek to avoid them.

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QUESTION #297 -- I am a Christian and believe in tithing. My husband is unsaved and objects to my paying or giving anything to the church. I do what I can, but feel uncomfortable when he asks me about what I do with money, 'Low much I give to the church, etc. I am not clear just what to do. Should I go on as I do now, make bold to have an understanding with my husband on the matter or give over to him as regarding this question?

ANSWER #297 -- I would not advise you to jeopardize your home and family peace in this regard. God understands and will not demand anything unjust of you. I believe you should keep it always clear to your husband that you would rather give your money to God than to spend it for any other purpose and never quit praying that God may touch his heart. And while waiting for the answer to this prayer, I think you should not do anything that makes you ashamed before your husband. In the end I believe you will win and that the church will be better off than it will be for you to take chances on this secrecy which, after all, is probably no great secret to your husband.

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XXV
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ABOUT THE TRINITY

QUESTION #298 -- From Hebrews 1:4, 5 arose the question, "Did the Trinity always exist in the Godhead?" (Although John 1:1-14 seems to answer the question.)

ANSWER #298 -- Yes, I think John 1:1-14 does answer the question-in the affirmative. The adorable Godhead is one in essence, but is manifested in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and we do not know any way there could be a change in either the essence or the manifestation in either the past or the future. But remember that the Trinity is simply a fact of the Scripture -- the Scriptures holding both that there is one God and also that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God -- and that we are not to look for analogies in nature or for differentiations in consciousness.

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QUESTION #299 -- Is the Father, Son and Holy Ghost one being in three personalities? What is the teaching of the Church of the Nazarene concerning the trinity?

ANSWER #299 -- The Church of the Nazarene holds to the historic orthodox tenets regarding this difficult thesis. The basis of the matter in the Bible is this: the Bible teaches there is only one God. It also teaches that the Father is God, that the Son is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God. And the only way two such lines of teaching can be worked out is the way it has been done by Trinitarians down through the centuries. Those who hold to the idea that Jesus was but a man and the Holy Spirit is just an influence of course have no difficulty in believing and teaching the unity of God. But they do find it positively necessary to reject some of the very plainest statements of the Bible and ignore the clearest implications of Christian consciousness. But statements on this subject have to be made with great care lest they say either too much or too little. The most approved wording of the tenet is that God is one in essence and three in personal manifestation. He cannot be one and three in the same sense. The relation of the three persons in the Godhead is described as generation and procession. Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. Angels are created sons, men may be redeemed sons, but Jesus is the only one with the relation of begotten. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and from the Son, but in precisely what manner we cannot tell. Trinity is a doctrine of the Scriptures and has no analogies in nature. Some have said man is a trinity: spirit, soul and body. But here we have three essences in one person, while the trinity is three persons in one essence and that is no analogy. And it is like that with every illustration that has yet been proposed. So the whole subject stands just as first stated: God is one, but the Father is God, the Son is God and the Spirit is God-three in one, hence trinity. This is our faith as founded upon the holy Bible, and we are not polytheists, even though we worship three persons as God, for these three persons are one in essence.

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XXVI
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ABOUT THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

QUESTION #300 -- Are there other sins, besides blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, that may become unpardonable sins? Does "crossing the dead line" mean that the individual will die

physically before he. has another call from God? May not the Lord leave one for a time and then return, as in the cases of His dealings with the ancient Hebrews?

ANSWER #300 -- Any persistent sin may become unpardonable. Crossing the dead line does not always imply early physical death. There are doubtless people still living who have been abandoned by the Holy Spirit for thirty or more years. Yes, there may come another call of the Spirit after a long period of cessation of such striving.

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QUESTION #301 -- Twelve years ago I came to feel that I had committed the "unpardonable sin." Nine years ago I was awakened to find this was a false notion and I sought God's mercy and found it in abundant pardon. I was taught that I should be sanctified; I sought for that experience and finally professed it, but I think now I never did have it. Now I have drifted far away from God, have lost my relish for the Bible and spiritual things and now feel that I have in reality passed the "dead line" and that there is no mercy for me. My heart is so dead and indifferent that I am distressed beyond measure. Do you believe there is still mercy for me?

ANSWER #301 -- I certainly do believe there is mercy for you. The fact that you wrote me the detailed letter shows that you are interested in spiritual things and that God has not left you. The devil has tripped you at the same point where you fell before. Quit worrying about what God will do and come to Him in all sincerity-He will not fail you. There is a lot of preaching on "The Unpardonable Sin" that is a travesty on the character of God, but remember that if you think there is no mercy and as a consequence do not seek it in faith, it is the same as though there were none, for you will never find it This is where the devil uses the fallacy to drive people into insanity and sink them into hell. Resist the devil. Refuse to believe your doubts. Seek God with all your heart in true repentance and faith and as sure as God is God and truth is truth His Spirit will come to you in healing, even as He has already come to you in bruising. Death lurks only in procrastination. Life looks out from faith and obedience. "Look to Jesus now and live."

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QUESTION #302 -- I am afraid I have crossed the dead line, and can never be saved. And yet I do have a desire to love and serve God. But I am haunted with the idea that about two and a half years ago I crossed the line between God's mercy and His wrath. Do you believe I am doomed to be lost? Is there not any way for one who has sinned against the Holy Ghost to get back to God?

ANSWER #302 -- I certainly do not believe you have sinned against the Holy Ghost or that you are fated to go to hell. If this were the case, a merciful God would not continue to call you by His Spirit and make your hell the more intolerable by giving you a glimpse of heaven. But I do believe you are the victim of the devil's scheme to keep you from ever coming to God in faith for pardon and mercy. Argument will probably not help much, so I am going to exhort you to "doubt your doubts and believe your faith," and come to God for immediate pardon and salvation. If He turns you down, you will be the first who ever came that way that He turned down.

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XXVII
QUESTIONS/ANSWERS ABOUT WAR

QUESTION #303 -- I am a Mennonite minister, but I love the Nazarenes. How do you harmonize holiness and resorting to carnal weapons in time of war?

ANSWER #303 -- Our church has never made any pronouncement upon the question of war or pacifism or laid down any rules for the conduct of its members in time of war. I cannot therefore presume to present the "Nazarene view." About the best I can do is to tell you how I fix it for myself. I believe that civil government is of God in the sense that He ordained it as an expedient to fill in between the time when Adam gave up his sovereignty of the world until the time when "the second Adam" will come the second time and resume it. I believe He did this in mercy to men to save them from the fearful confusion that would have resulted without this semblance of order. And believing this, I believe that every Christian is a citizen of two kingdoms and owes tribute to both God and Caesar. I believe this is the teaching of both the Old and New Testaments. And if this is correct, it is the Christian citizen's duty to pay his taxes and support the government in time of peace, and to defend and support the government in time of war -- even to the point of doing a full soldier's duty. The ethics here is no different from that involved should the citizen defend his home against a robber and murderer, or join in with the sheriff's posse to capture the destroyer of his neighbor's child. This is not an ideal world, and peace and safety can be had only by enforcing the sanctions of law. If the people of the world were all Christians it would be different. But wickedness among men and nations must be restrained, and this means there are likely to be clashes between the forces of lawlessness and righteousness. And yet war is always a cruel and terrible thing. Let us pray for peace. Let us pray that the rulers and leaders of nations may be so restrained and so willing to listen to reason that war may be averted. But if war comes, let us pay the debt which citizenship requires of us. I think this is the view the vast majority of Christians have held all down through the centuries. And it is a view that remains consistent in times of war and in times of peace. Those who claim the protection of government and yet withhold their support and allegiance are inconsistent; and those who plead for the privilege of serving in noncombatant relations in time of war are but dodging the issue, not solving the problem. In reality there is no middle ground between complete withdrawal from organized human society and the proper support of human society. But since one cannot literally leave the world unless he commits the sin of suicide, it seems to me that it is useless for him to place himself in a cramped and impossible relation. As to the morality involved, it is practically the same as that involved in the militant prayers of David. You know he prayed God to break the jaws of his enemies and literally obliterate them from the earth. How could a holy man do that? The answer is that he was not praying thus against his personal enemies -- these he always spared and showed favors. He was praying against the enemies of God and of His Church. Likewise the Christian must distinguish between his personal enemies whom he is commanded to love and favor, and the enemies of the state (bandits, criminals, kidnappers, and alien armies in time of war) whom he must account opponents of the powers which are ordained of God. That is how a man can be a Christian and also an officer of the law or a soldier in the army and on the battlefield.

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QUESTION #304 -- What attitude does the Church of the Nazarene take toward militarism?

ANSWER #304 -- The Church of the Nazarene, so far as I know, has never made an official expression on the subject of militarism. There was some agitation favoring such expression just before the outbreak of the World War. Dr. Haynes had several editorials in the Herald of Holiness bearing upon the subject. It was believed by some that if the church would give official expression to its opposition to war its young men could obtain exemption from military service in case of war. But experience during the World War revealed that membership in a pacifist church had little to do with it. Men who had conscientious objections to combat service were given positions in the engineering or medical branches and were, in many cases, more exposed to death than would have been the case had they gone into the regular service. And those who made conscientious objection altogether to military service on their individual responsibility fared just as well as those whose church membership made their stand necessary-none of them fared very fortunately. And really the present agitation in church circles regarding non-cooperation with the government in case of war does not commend itself very fully; for it is in most cases mixed up with a social program or with communistic philosophies in such a manner as to make one suspect that it is not really Christian after all. The program of the Church of the Nazarene is predominantly evangelistic. We believe we can make our best contribution to world peace and every other reform and world good by preaching old-time, personal salvation and praying down a heaven-sent revival upon our churches and upon the world. Like every other human ill, war is an effect and not a cause. It comes from the sinfulness and selfishness of men and of nations, and the remedy is in crowning the Prince of Peace in the hearts of men rather than in making vows regarding what we would do in case of national crises. Please God there shall be no more wars. But if war comes, then every Nazarene, as well as other people without regard to their peace-time vows, will have to do the best he can in the light of those evil days to "render unto God the things that are God's and unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's."

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QUESTION #305 -- Is there: such a scripture as "Stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood"? To what extent should we keep aloof from current warfare and murderous happenings?

ANSWER #305 -- The scripture you mention is in Isaiah 33:15. I am not sure I can set a definite line as regarding the extent to which we should keep aloof from the news of war and murder in our own days, but I am sure there is danger in being too much taken with it. We can scarcely refuse to know anything of the evils of the world, lest we should become indifferent to the world's fearful plight. But, on the other hand, too much living with the news of evil has a hardening effect. Perhaps we would better set up the standard Susannah Wesley gave to her children, and that is, "Whatever hinders your communion with God should be avoided."

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QUESTION #306 -- Do you believe a Christian can keep his standing as a Christian before God and men and go to war?

ANSWER #306 -- Yes, I believe he can.

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THE END