

Christian's • **Expositor** **Journal**

ISSUE EDITOR: DON PRUITT

3 MOZAMBIQUE

Don Pruitt

7 WHEN ENEMIES THREATEN—PRAISE GOD!

Doug Edwards

17 THE NAME “CHRISTIAN” (ACTS 11:26)

Smith Bibens

23 THE LAST TWELVE VERSES OF MARK

Carl Johnson

29 CHURCH DISCIPLINE

James Orten

39 CARNAL WARFARE AND THE CHRISTIAN

Paul O. Nichols

Spring 2003

Volume 17 Number 1

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY BLANK

MOZAMBIQUE

Don Pruitt

The work in Mozambique is growing at a phenomenal rate. In March 2001, Bro. Ron Wood, a leader of the church at Fieldstone, Missouri, and I went to Africa to assist the brethren there in writing the documents for the Mozambique government that would allow us to register the church in that country. As far as we knew there were between sixty and seventy churches meeting around the border of Malawi. As Jim Franklin had opportunity to visit and work with these brethren, government officials took notice and told him that it would be necessary for these congregations and their preachers to be registered with the government. By the time we left Africa three weeks later, we knew that there were at least 125 congregations and the number was growing. There was little opportunity to communicate except by the face-to-face exchanges of the preachers who were busy working and establishing new churches. So the news about congregations would come to Bro. Franklin slowly. We completed the required paper work and submitted it to the appropriate government officials.

Mozambique had been a troubled nation for a number of years. Until 1975, it was a Portuguese Overseas Province and much of the wealth had been stripped away by this foreign government. Upon its freedom from outside powers, Mozambique was then challenged to decide how and by whom it would be ruled. This nation was ravaged by civil war from 1977 to 1992, as various political groups tried to gain control. Thousands of people fled their homeland, finding refuge in Malawi and other neighboring countries. During their stay in Malawi, many of these people became famil-

iar with the church, heard and obeyed the gospel. When the war was over, they took their families back home and carried the gospel with them. It was the story of the first century church retold. “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4).

Almost two years later, we received a response from the government concerning our registration. There was another church registered under the name “The church of Christ of the New Testament.” We chose this name because we needed to be recognized as different from those churches that do not worship according to the New Testament pattern. The government sent us some instructions. There were four things listed.

1. Another group is registered by that name.
2. Contact that church and see if you are the same. If so, you are already registered.
3. If you are not the same, try to work out your differences and become united.
4. If you cannot be united, resubmit these documents with a different name.

So our initial effort in Mozambique was not finished.

God’s providential care in our lives and in His work is often not even noticed by us. But sometimes it is amazingly obvious. Within three hours of receiving these directions from the government, a man came to the home of Jim Franklin with some questions. He had seen a sign at one of our congregations and he wanted to know who we were. His name was Dias Bento Feliciano. This was the man the government had told us to find. He had registered 370 congregations as “The church of Christ of the New Testament.” He and his brethren had become so unhappy with what was happening among the digressive brethren that they had decided to stop the slide toward liberalism and be recognized as a different group. As he and Brother Franklin began to discuss the worship of the church, he stated that they had already made those changes and were doing only what the Bible said to do. There were still some things that had to be changed, but his attitude and his desire to do only what the Bible said encouraged us. They agreed to meet with leaders from both groups and to study the issues, which separated us. Jim called me and asked us to come to Mozambique and assist in those studies. He believed it was important for the church in Fieldstone to continue to take the lead in this work. We agreed.

Ron and I left St. Louis Monday morning, March 10th. We arrived in Blantyre on Tuesday, but our luggage did not. The airline found it in Johannesburg and promised it would come on Wednesday. It came Thursday. We claimed our luggage, cleared customs, and got back to the house at 11:30a.m. I quickly got out of the clothes I had worn for 4 days, threw a few things in my duffel bag, ate a sandwich, and we left at 12:30. We were on our way to Gurue, Mozambique to meet and study with Bro. Feliciano and his brethren. Because of impassable roads, we traveled other impassable roads until we arrived at Gurue a little after midnight. We found a hotel and fell into bed at 1:30 A.M.

We had no idea what the arrangements were for the next day, but we were excited about the possibilities. I couldn't sleep, and was back up at 3:30. Bro. Feliciano had given Jim a copy of the documents used to register their congregations. There were some significant problems, especially concerning church government, as well as some other issues that would have to be discussed. So we had an opportunity to prepare our presentation. We met Bro. Feliciano about 7:00 A.M. and informed we were to preach to the congregation at 9:00. When we arrived at the building, we were welcomed by about 550 people, and preached to them about the church and its worship.

After the service, Bill Davis, Jim Franklin, Stephen Kasenda (our translator), Ron and I, met with Bro. Feliciano and 35 other preachers and leaders. They invited us to come into that country under their registration and to work in unity with them. We had to reject their offer, and discuss with them the problems of their document. You cannot imagine the anxiety we were feeling. I had participated in many Bible studies through the years, but none like this one. These men represented 370 congregations and 18,000 to 20,000 souls. The weight of that moment was tremendous. In addition to the vast numbers that were involved, we had to use three translators, so everything had to be said four times. But God is good and it is wonderful to be able to sit so close while he does His work! Brother Feliciano is a very humble man. He admitted their error and assured us they did not want to do anything that was contrary to the Word of God. We offered to them the documents that we had submitted to the government, and asked them to circulate it among their congregations and preachers, and correct us if we

were wrong. To make a long story short, after taking the document among their congregations, they have accepted God's plan in every way and have united with us in this work.

With the addition of these brethren, we now have about 700 congregations worshipping scripturally in Mozambique. The government has accepted our documents for registration and has welcomed us to send missionaries into the country on either short-term or long-term work permits. The congregation at Fieldstone is working toward accomplishing that goal. This country offers to us an amazing opportunity. Jim Franklin and Bill Davis, who have worked very closely with us in this effort, have both said that the work in Mozambique will become larger than any work we have done in the world in our lifetime. Please pray for this great opportunity!

Don Pruitt

1111 Garst

Cabool, MO 65689

417-962-9987

donpruitt@mchsi.com

WHEN ENEMIES THREATEN—PRAISE GOD!

Doug Edwards

As Christians, the restoration of New Testament Christianity should interest us greatly. Previous generations of Christians have worked hard to restore the worship, organization and plan of salvation for the church. Today, as we serve God in an acceptable manner, it is because of the untiring efforts of faithful men and women who lived before us. We enjoy the fruits of their labor. Yet there are certain practices of Christianity that each generation must work to restore. True spirituality is one such practice. Each generation of Christians must learn spirituality because that cannot be inherited from previous generations. Just because your father or mother was spiritually-minded does not automatically mean you will be spiritual.

Praising God is another aspect of Christianity that needs restoring in every generation. It was a practice of the early church to habitually meet together and praise God. Luke writes, “So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people” (Acts 2:46-47). These simple folks found the time, on a regular basis, to express their gratitude to God through praise. They observed firsthand that God often demonstrates His marvelous power through praise.

Even a casual glance in Psalms shows the power of praise in the lives of the Israelites. The different writers of this book simply cannot find enough times to praise God. The joy and thrill of serving God continually leap out at the readers. Note these words from Psalm 147:1: “Praise the Lord. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him!” Here, the Bible teaches two reasons for praising God. First, it is “pleasant.” Praising

God is good for us bringing joy to our lives like nothing else will. Second, it is “fitting.” That is, praising God is proper and right. God is worthy of our praise and deserving of our honor. Throughout the Bible, God instructs man to praise Him. These instructions are obstacles to some people. Generally, we do not like people who demand that others constantly praise them. We tend to think they are egotistical. For many years the religious writer C. S. Lewis was an unbeliever. He had problems with a God who demanded praise for Himself. He eventually came to the conclusion that while humans are equal and cannot demand praise from others, that God is greater than man and can expect praise. God deserves our praise because He is worthy.

The ability to praise God is wonderful tool that Christians possess when enemies threaten. What do you do when confronted with danger? Our natural reaction is either to run for safety or fight for deliverance. Rarely do we think that an enemy’s attack is a perfect opportunity to stop and praise God. Yet God often demonstrates His marvelous power through praise.

When Enemies Threaten

One of the good kings of Judah was a man named Jehoshaphat. This good king saw the need of inquiring of God when he had to make important decisions. On one occasion a large army invaded Judah composed of Moabites, Ammonites and Meunites. Naturally, great panic swelled in the hearts of the people. Drastic times call for drastic measures, so Jehoshaphat proclaimed a fast, assembled the people at the temple and he led them in this prayer:

O Lord God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and You hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, “If disaster comes upon sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine-we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name is in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save” (2 Chron. 20:5-9).

Please note that Jehoshaphat began this prayer with words of praise. Danger was imminent, and Judah greatly needed God's help, but first he praised God. In approaching God in this manner, Jehoshaphat teaches us something. He teaches us that even in our darkest hours, when we desperately need God's help, it is proper to begin our petitions with praise to Him. When enemies threaten, praise God.

God answered this prayer of praise and petition for help by sending His spirit upon a man named Jehaziel who prophesied in the assembly, "Thus says the Lord to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's'" (2 Chron. 20:15). Jehaziel furthermore told them that while the army should prepare to march out into battle, that they would not fight, God would fight in their place. They would witness with their own eyes the love of God for His people through the destruction of their enemies.

The reaction to this wonderful news was immediate and spontaneous worship.

And Jehoshaphat bowed with his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the Lord, worshipping the Lord. Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with voices loud and high (2 Chron. 20:18-19)

This is the second time in this story that praise to God is mentioned. How can anyone remain silent when the goodness of God is manifest?

Early the next morning the army of Judah marched out to the Wilderness of Tekoa. Jehoshaphat encouraged them to believe in the Lord and they would prosper. The Bible then says,

And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the Lord, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying:

"Praise the Lord,
For His mercy endures forever."

Now when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated (2 Chron. 20:21-22).

“Friendly fire” is an expression that has found its way into most of our vocabularies because of recent wars. This term describes the tragic events of battle confusion when one army begins to fire on its own men. Some of the American and British casualties in the recent war with Iraq came because of friendly fire. God seems to have used the tactic of friendly fire against the enemies of Judah. He caused these armies to begin fighting among themselves, and so brought about their defeat without the army of Judah becoming personally involved. It was a great victory.

This particular story closes with these words,

Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat in front of them, to go back to Jerusalem with joy, for the Lord had made them rejoice over their enemies. So they came to Jerusalem, with stringed instruments and harps and trumpets, to the house of the Lord. And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries when they heard that the Lord had fought against the enemies of Israel. Then the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around (2 Chron. 20:27-30)

The power of praise is the key ingredient in this story. When faced with an overwhelming enemy, the people of Judah could have pursued several options. They could have trusted in their own strength, rallied the troops and sent them off to battle. They could have sent ambassadors to the enemy and negotiated for some peaceful settlement. They could have even surrendered and thrown themselves on the mercy of their enemy. But they chose none of these options and instead raised their voices in praise to God. Their praise began with Jehoshaphat's prayer, continued after hearing the words of Jehaziel, and then as the battle began, and finally when they returned to Jerusalem in victory. God demonstrated His great power through praise.

Powerful lessons come out of these Old Testament stories. Inspiration records them our learning (Rom. 15:4). Surely, we would all agree as to the value and importance of praise within our lives. The New Testament certainly echoes the power of praise within the lives of Christians. Hebrews 13:15 tells us that we are to continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise. Peter writes that in all things we should praise God through Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 4:11). The early church made it a regular practice to meet in the temple courts, break bread from house to house and praise God (Acts 2:46).

What about in our lives? Do we regularly stop to praise God? What about in our worship services? Sometimes we are around denominational people who praise God for everything. Every other word seems to be "Praise the Lord!" and those outbursts have the tendency to make us feel a little uncomfortable. We know they are wrong doctrinally, but we sometimes feel a little guilty because they seem to have a joy about them that we may not have. What about in our worship services? Do you sometimes feel that you have come and gone without praising God? When we worship, we are to encounter God (1 Cor. 14:23-25). Do we feel that way in our worship?

If you feel that you are not praising God enough in your worship here are simple steps to help.

- Learn the language of praise. Read the Psalms. The words of these godly men will help us to learn how to pour out our hearts to God. No one has ever praised God the way David did. We can learn from him.
- Praise God in every prayer. Be like Jehoshaphat and begin your prayers with words of praise to God. Do not pray without including praise somewhere in your petition. In our public prayers, we will spur the hearts of those who listen to praise God.
- At times, give prayers of praise alone. Do not ask for anything. Simply thank God for all He has done for you and tell Him how much you love Him.
- Sing your praises. Learn simple songs of praise, and then sing them as you go about your day.

- Listen to children. As we grow older, we sometimes become more judgmental, cynical, and set in our ways. Listen to children. Observe their pure and innocent hearts. Note how completely they love and adore. When kids describe things that are important to them, we can see the awe and wonder in their eyes and in their hearts. We need to imitate that.

Robbing God

Most Christians are familiar with the words of Malachi 3:8 that say, “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! but you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.” Most preachers have used this verse as text to warn Christians that if we are not generously giving to God our money, time and energies, then we are effectively robbing God. Certainly, it is a dangerous practice to rob God. But there are other ways to rob God besides the three just mentioned. When we fail to praise God, whether by embarrassment or simply becoming too busy, we rob ourselves of a great joy. More significantly, when we fail to praise God we rob Him of that which He so richly deserves. We would never think of robbing God, but when we do not give Him praise that is exactly what we do. Sometimes even people around us can rob us of the joy we feel in rendering honor to God. There are many examples in the Bible of people who tried to rob others of their praise for God.

Michal (2 Sam. 6:16-22)

Do you remember the time when David brought the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem? It was a time of celebrating. The ark had been gone for many years. When he first tried to bring the ark back, disaster struck. David’s men placed the ark on a cart, and when the oxen pulling it stumbled, Uzzah reached out to the ark to keep it from falling. God struck Uzzah dead on the spot and great fear came upon everyone (2 Sam. 6:6-10). David went home and did his homework and discovered that the Levites were to carry the ark rather than placing it on a

wagon. The second effort to move the ark was successful and so a happy procession marched into Jerusalem. In ecstasy, David put off his royal robes and danced before the ark in a simple linen garment. Michal, David's wife, watched him dancing before the ark and became angry at his actions. The Bible says, "Now as the ark of the Lord came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw David leaping and whirling before the Lord; and she despised him with her heart" (2 Sam. 6:16).

When David returned home, he hoped to see excitement coming from his family. Instead, he saw disgust written on Michal's face and heard sarcasm dripping from her every word.

Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!" So David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before the Lord. And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maid-servants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor" (2 Sam. 6:20-21).

What a sad story. What should have been a time of celebrating turned into a major family problem. Unfortunately, there are some who continue to follow in the path of Michal. Michal's view of worship, as applied today, equates the decency and order of 1 Corinthians 14:40 with sterility and lifelessness. Worship can become more like a funeral than a celebration. What a tragedy it was to have God come to town and be unmoved by His presence. It was a marvelous day to praise God but Michal completely missed the opportunity. Let us be careful not to dampen the enthusiasm of others. When young people are on fire for the Lord, let us not try to extinguish that fire by our words or actions. Sometimes young people and new converts are excited about the gospel, but not always knowledgeable of all the truths of the Christian walk. Instead of dampening their enthusiasm, why not

channel it the correct way and encourage them. Perhaps our young people's enthusiasm can be contagious!

The Pharisees (Lk. 19:37-40)

The Lord's initial entrance into Jerusalem during the Passion week was a monumental event. As he rode the donkey into the city, the crowds greeted Him with praise and shouts of Hosanna. However, not all of the crowd was so excited to see Him. The Pharisees stood by, looking bewildered, at the excitement of the crowd. Luke records this glorious event with these words:

Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying:

“Blessed is the King who comes
in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest”

And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.” But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out” (Lk. 19:37-40).

What was the problem with Pharisees? Why could they not give praise to Jesus? After all, they committed themselves to the Scriptures, and they stood for obedience, order and righteousness. The Pharisees' view of worship had everything to do with technical correctness and nothing to do with a relationship with God through Jesus. They could not praise God that day because they had no relationship with Jesus. What a tragedy to be standing in the presence of the Messiah, the One they have long studied about, and not even recognize Him. What about you, dear friend? Is Jesus a mere concept in you life, or is He real? Do you really know Jesus, or do you just know about Him? There are people who are not even Christians that know a lot about Jesus, but they have no personal relationship with Him. Sometimes even professed Christians who know a lot about Jesus do not have a personal relationship

with Him. If we are in this situation, we lose opportunities to praise God because we do not know His Son.

The Older Brother (Lk. 15:25-32)

Most people are familiar with the parable of the “prodigal son” as found in Luke 15. The story is timeless, illustrating man’s fall into sin and God’s full acceptance of the penitent sinner. The story of the older brother’s attitude of the return of his brother is a remarkable study of those who cannot find the means to praise God for His wonderful grace. When this older brother came in from the field and discovered a celebration was taking place for his younger people he became so angry that he would not even step foot in the house. The Bible says,

But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. So he answered and said to his father, “Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him.” And he said to him, “Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found” (Lk. 15:28-32).

Someone has said that we can almost see this older brother standing out in a field, leaning on a hoe with an expression that could sour fresh milk! What was the oldest son’s problem? Why could he not give God praise during this highly emotional moment? He cannot give God praise because he does not understand grace. He thinks that people should get exactly what they deserve, nothing more, nothing less. In one sense, he is right. Little brother does not deserve the warm reception, the robe, the ring or the feast. But is that not what grace is all about? Grace is God’s undeserved, unmerited favor. We do not deserve salvation, but through His grace God gives us the opportunity for salvation. We must learn to praise God for His wonderful grace. We must praise Him even if we do not understand all of His ways. Do not be like the

older brother and think that you can pick and choose who is worthy of God's grace.

Concluding Thoughts

What have we learned thus far about praise? First, we have learned that there is a two-fold purpose in praise: (1) it is pleasant, and (2) it is fitting (Psa. 147:1). Second, we have learned that we can rob God of the praise He so richly deserves. Others can rob us of our praise to God by their wrong attitudes if we allow them, or we ourselves can rob others of their praise to God by our wrong attitudes. Third, we have learned that when enemies threaten, we must praise God.

Are there enemies currently in your life, with whom you are struggling? Why not stop and praise God. You do not necessarily praise God for the enemies, but for the fact that God is gracious, kind and powerful. Are you having financial problems, or health problems, or are your children not being what they should be spiritually, then praise God. Not for the actual problems, but for His being God and helping us in difficult times. God has the ability to unleash His awesome power during praise.

*104 N. E. 8th Street
Moore, OK 73160
doug.deb@juno.com*

THE NAME “CHRISTIAN” (ACTS 11:26)

Smith Bibens

Few words are more generally abused and misused today than the word “Christian.” To some, anyone who is a good citizen and of a pleasant disposition is a “Christian.” To others, anyone professing to be a follower of Jesus Christ, among the numerous sects and denominations, has a valid claim upon the name. But for a proper understanding of the name “Christian” we must go to the Bible.

Who Called the Disciples Christians?

Scripture reveals that the name “Christian” was given to disciples of Jesus Christ. “The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch” (Acts 11:26). It was apparently the first congregation of the disciples of Jesus Christ composed of both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 11:20-21). Nearly eight hundred years before this time, the prophet Isaiah had promised that God would “call his servants by another name” (Is. 65:15). This would be when “the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name” (Is. 62:2).

Modern denominations, in an effort to minimize the importance of this name, and to defend the wearing of party names, have claimed that the name is of human origin. **Harper’s Bible Dictionary** says that the name was given in derision by non-Christians (98). Another points to the fact that the name is only used three times in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16). This, it is claimed, indicates that it was not a popular name with disciples of Jesus—“The Christians themselves apparently did not appreciate the name, but, like many other nicknames, ‘Christian’ stuck” (**Baker’s Bible**

Encyclopedia, vol. 1, 432). Kenneth Wuest says of the name: “The name was coined by pagans of the first century to identify the followers of the Christ” (**Treasures from the Greek New Testament**, 67). As we shall prove in this study, these statements are patently false.

Just as Isaiah prophesied, a new name was given to the people of God when the Gentiles began to be numbered among God’s people. This name was given by “the mouth of the Lord” (Isa. 62:2). This name was “Christian.” This may be proven by an examination of the Greek text of Acts 11:26.

The Greek verb that is translated “were called” in 11:26, is **chreematizo**. The ordinary Greek verb for “to call,” is **kaleo**, from which we derive our verb “call.” If the disciples in Antioch were “called” Christians in derision by their ungodly neighbors, then **kaleo** would have served the Spirit well to communicate that meaning. However, **kaleo** is *not* used in Acts 11:26. It was God who called the disciples Christians at Antioch. Therefore, a word that conveys that idea— **chreematizo**—was employed. Thayer gives three meanings for **chreematizo**:

1. to transact business, esp. to manage public affairs; to advise or consult with one about public affairs; to make answer to those who ask advice, present inquiries or requests, etc.; used of judges, magistrates, rulers, kings. Hence in some later Grk. writ. 2. to give response to those consulting an oracle...to give a divine command or admonition, to teach from heaven...Lk. 2:26...; to be divinely commanded, admonished, instructed, [R.V. warned of God], Mt. 2:12, 22; Acts 10:22; Heb. 8:5; 11:7...to be the mouthpiece of divine revelations, to promulgate the commands of God, of Moses, Heb. 12:25...3. to assume or take to one’s self a name from one’s public business...to receive a name or title, be called: Acts 11:26; Rom. 7:3 (**Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament** 671).

From the foregoing, the word originally signified the answer of a high official to a request or petition. In time, the word took the significance attached to definition 2, that is, “a communication or revelation from God.” This is how the Spirit uses the word in the Greek New Testament. Notice the other passages where the word is used by the Spirit (italicized words note the translation of **chreematizo** per **New Englishman’s Greek Concordance**):

And it was *revealed* unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ (Lk. 2:26).

And *being warned of God* in a dream that they should not return to Herod (Mt. 2:12).

But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, *being warned of God* in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee (Mt. 2:22).

And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man...*was warned from God* by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee (Acts 10:22).

Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses *was admonished of God* when he was about to make the tabernacle (Heb. 8:5).

By faith Noah, *being warned of God* of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house (Heb.11:7).

For if they escaped not who refused him *that spake* on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven (Heb.12:25).

The noun form, **chreematismos**, is found in one passage:

But what saith the *answer of God* unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

The only other occurrences of chreematizo are in Romans 7:3 and Acts 11:26. Romans 7:3 reads, "So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

According to Thayer, the word in these places means "to receive a name or title; be called." From whom does the adulteress receive her name "adulteress?" It is the law of God that names the woman who is "married to another."

er,” while her husband lives, an adultress. “And the man that committeth adultery with another man’s wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death” (Lev. 20:10). Her neighbors may properly call her an adultress, but it is so because that is what she is according to God’s Word.

In view of the foregoing, if chreematizo in Acts 11:26 refers to disciples of the Lord Jesus being called “Christians” by pagans, it is the only such occurrence in the New Testament. The truth is, this glorious name was not given by the mouth of some antagonistic pagans! Allowing the Bible to interpret the Bible and keeping in view the prophecy of Isaiah, it is clear that the name “Christian” is divinely given.

The Best Name

Our Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, has been given “a name which is above every name” (Phil. 2:9)—above John the Baptist, Martin Luther, John Calvin—any name one can think of. By the unfathomable grace of God, we may be partakers of the glory of that Name when we wear the name “Christian” and it alone. Why would man want to trade it off for a name devised by human wisdom or pride? Doing so displays the same profane character that Esau displayed in trading his birth-right for a mess of pottage.

Sectarians and heretics need party names to keep track of “who belongs to who,” in human terms. Not so the disciples of the Lord, for they belong to Him. As the bride wears her husband’s name, so the church wears the name of her Husband, and only His name.

Wear it Well

If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf (1 Pet. 4:14-16).

Those who wear this glorious name should not sully it by living in sin. Solomon said “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches” (Prov. 22:1). The world dishonors one who drags his father’s name through the mud. Most of us would not think of living in such a way as to bring reproach upon our family name. But what of the “Christian?” Will not the heavenly Father be dishonored if His child drags this divinely given name through the filth of sin? Will he go unpunished? So much harm has been done-is being done-because the name “Christian” has not been worn well (2 Pet. 2:2)!

During the life of Alexander the Great, a young soldier was brought before him, charged with desertion and cowardice in battle. He was forced to his knees before the mighty despot. After hearing the charges, Alexander asked the young man his name. Back came the muffled reply, “Alexander, my lord.” There ensued a period of stunned silence in the court. Finally, the mighty Grecian king lifted up the head of young man, looked into his eyes, and pronounced the sentence, “Alexander, you must change your name or you must change your conduct.” Dear Christian, are you honoring the name that has been bestowed upon you by God? Are you truly a disciple-a learner and follower-of the One you call Lord and claim to revere? If not, heed these words: “Change your name or change your conduct.”

*717 N. 13th St.
Ozark, Missouri 65721
sbibens@cepsn.org*

Preachers' Study Notes

We still have for sale Preachers' Study Notes from 1982 through 2000. The 2001 and 2002 volumes are in preparation for publication. Lord willing, the 2001 volume will be ready late Autumn 2003, and the 2002 volume as soon thereafter as possible. Write the CE or visit our website at www.cepsn.org for a complete index of topics 1982-2000.

2000 PREACHERS' STUDY NOTES

\$16

Theme: Difficult Passages of the Bible • Modest Apparel & The Role of Women *Melvin Blalock* • Commonly Misapplied Passages *Allen Bailey* • Angels and the Gospel *Glen Osburn* • Questions About Evangelists and Preachers *Dennis Smith* • Difficult Passages on the Kingdom *Doug Edwards* • Jesus and the Holy Spirit *Jimmy Smith* • God's Foreknowledge and Control *Alan Bonifay* • The Head and Its Covering *George Battey* • Because of the Angels *David Stands* • Imputed Righteousness *Johnny Elmore* • Is It Ever Right to Do Wrong? *Richard Bunner* • Warnings Against Immaturity and Apostasy *Jim Crouch* • Congregational Autonomy *Bennie Cryer* • Christian Liberties *Raymond Fox* • The Christian and the End of Time *Ronny Wade* • Domestic Qualifications of Elders *Glenn Ballard* • Christians and Their Use of Money *Art Lynch*

1999 PREACHERS' STUDY NOTES

\$16

Old Testament 2 (The Prophets & Poets, History of Israel From Captivity to the Messiah) • Amos *James D. Orten* • Hosea *Greg Gay* • Jonah *Alan Bonifay* • Obadiah *Richard Bunner* • Joel *Melvin Blalock* • Isaiah: The Messianic Prophecies *Doug Edwards* • Isaiah: Contemporary Prophecies *Duane Permenter* • Micah *Bennie Cryer* • Nahum *Charles McConnell* • Zephaniah *Allen Bailey* • Habakkuk *Michael Fox* • Jeremiah and Lamentations *Carl Johnson* • Daniel: Setting, Structure *Ron Courter* • Daniel: Prophecies *Terry Baze* • Ezekiel *Johnny Elmore* • Haggai *Ryan Conner* • Zechariah *Art Lynch* • Malachi *Wayne McKamie* • Nehemiah *Mike Criswell* • Ezra: Restoration of Israel *Ronny Wade* • Esther *Jerry Dickinson* • Introduction to Hebrew Poetry *Smith Bibens* • Job *Raymond Fox* • Psalms *L. G. Butler* • Proverbs *Taylor Joyce* • Song of Solomon *Glen Osburn* • Ecclesiastes *Wayne Fussell* • The Silent Years: Between the Testaments *Jim Crouch*

1997 PREACHERS' STUDY NOTES

\$16

(Old Testament 1: Genesis through the Captivity) • The Old Testament World *James D. Orten* • Critical Theories in Old Testament Literature *Raymond Fox* • The Creation, The Temptation, and The Fall *Smith Bibens* • The Genesis Flood *Johnny Elmore* • The Hebrew Patriarchs *Mike Criswell* • "Let My People Go!" (A Survey of Exodus) *Doug Edwards* • A Survey of Leviticus *Alan Bonifay* • A Survey of Numbers *Alan Bonifay* • A Survey of Deuteronomy *Duane Permenter* • Joshua *J. Wayne McKamie* • The Work of the Judges *Michael Fox* • Ruth *Wayne Fussell* • Social Life in Israel *Richard Bunner* • The Reign of Saul *Bennie Cryer* • The Reign of David *Ron Courter* • The Reign of Solomon *Carl Johnson* • An Introduction to the Divided Kingdom *Jim Crouch* • The Northern Kingdom, Jeroboam to Jehoram *Jim Crouch* • The Northern Kingdom, Jehu to the Exile *Bill Davis* • The Southern Kingdom, Rehoboam to Hezekiah *Taylor Joyce* • The Southern Kingdom, Manasseh to the Exile *Jim Crouch* • Israel and Judah in Captivity *Ronny Wade*

Visit our website at www.cepsn.org for subscriptions, gift subscriptions, information about upcoming issues, CE Special Issues, Preachers' Study Notes, article reprints, and downloadable back

THE LAST TWELVE VERSES OF MARK

Carl M. Johnson

The Gospel according to Mark is unique in several respects, including the abruptness with which the Gospel begins and ends. The abrupt beginning has no prologue except for the title, and the ending is just as abrupt. In fact, there has been a textual controversy over the ending of the book for many years. Bible scholars have debated for some time as to whether the last twelve verses are original with Mark or whether they are an interpolation added by a later scribe. An analysis of this controversy is most suited to the science of textual criticism.

Ending of Mark

Textual criticism was one of the earliest approaches to studying the New Testament, and it was developed as the result of an effort to establish the accuracy of the existing manuscripts of the New Testament. Obviously, no book of the New Testament survives in the original autograph copy. What do exist are copies, and copies of copies, of the original. The earliest copies still in existence were written more than a century later than the autographs, and these exist on fragments of papyrus, a paper-like material that tends to become dry, brittle, and crumbly with age. Copies made on vellum—specially prepared animal skins—have been more durable than the papyri and many of them survive in fairly complete condition. The earliest surviving vellum manuscripts of the New Testament date from the fourth century, more than a century later than the papyri. John Pritchard adds, “The care in their making and the better preservation on vellum tend to counterbalance their later date and to give them textual value at least equal to the papyri” (15).

Early in the Christian era, the vellum manuscripts were preserved in codices. A codex is a book-like volume that replaced the roll. The oldest and most important of these codices make up a group called “uncials,” manuscripts dating from the fourth century and written in capital letters. The three most highly regarded uncials in existence today include **Codex Vaticanus**, which was written in the fourth century, and has been in the Vatican Library since it was first catalogued in 1475. It is designated by the capital B. **Codex Sinaiticus**, also from the fourth century, was discovered in 1844 by Constantin Tischendorf, and is designated by the Hebrew letter **aleph** (א), the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet; and **Codex Alexandrinus**, from the fifth century, is designated A.

The other major grouping of codices is called “cursives.” This is a group that contains more than 2,500 manuscripts written in a running hand-style dating from the ninth to the fifteenth century.

Textual critics compare these codices with papyri manuscripts in an effort to establish a New Testament text as close to the original manuscripts as possible.

The last twelve verses of Mark have long posed one of the greatest textual problems of the New Testament because ancient manuscripts show at least three endings for Mark's gospel. Because some of the most authoritative manuscripts omit the last twelve verses of this Gospel, debate has raged among scholars for years over whether 16:9-20 should be considered a part of the original gospel canon or as an interpolation later added by a copyist. No one denies the truthfulness of what is said in these verses because these teachings are found in other places in the New Testament. The debate is over whether the last twelve verses are original with Mark.

The Long Ending

The vast majority of the Greek manuscripts contain 16:9-20, known as the “long ending.” With the exceptions of Codex B, Codex (and a much later uncial manuscript, L, of about the eighth century, all the uncial manuscripts maintain the last twelve verses. The evidence of the cursives is unanimous in favor of the disputed verses.

Dean John W. Burgon, in his passionate defense of the integrity of Mark's last twelve verses, clearly shows that these verses were read in the public services of the church in the fourth century, and probably much earlier (97-110).

The testimony of the Ante-Nicene Fathers also supports the belief that these twelve verses are authentic. Justin Martyr (c. A.D. 160) quotes from the last verse of Mark when he says "...His apostles, going forth from Jerusalem, preached everywhere..." (Vol. I, 178). Even more striking is the testimony of Irenaeus (A.D. 180), who quotes verse 19 in his third **Book of Heresies**:

Also, towards the conclusion of his Gospel, Mark says: "So then, after the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God;" confirming what had been spoken by the prophet: "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool" (Vol. I, 426).

Irenaeus's testimony shows conclusively that in Gaul, Asia Minor, and Italy in the second century there was no doubt as to the genuineness of the passage.

Ending with Verse Eight

Other manuscripts show Mark's gospel ending with verse 8. The strongest argument of scholars who believe the last twelve verses of Mark are an interpolation, and therefore no part of the original gospel, is that these verses are not found in codices **Ⲙ** and B. While it is true these verses are not found in Codex B, this manuscript retains a blank space at the end of Mark exactly equivalent to these twelve verses. The blank space left by the copyist could mean he intended to include these verses later or knew of the longer ending and rejected it for some reason. Hugo McCord adds:

Support by B is weakened by a blank column with space that would accommodate verses 9-20. For longer interpolations or omissions "the application of stichometric reckoning" was a "rough and ready check on the general accuracy of a manuscript, for obviously a document which was short of the total number of stichoi was a defective copy" (Metzger, *The Text*, 15). Matthew has 2560 lines, Mark 1616, Luke 2750, John 2024. Mark in B does not have 1616 lines, but enough space is left for the lines that would make 1616. This implies "the presence of 16:9-20 in Mark" (Metzger, *ibid.*) (516-517).

Third Ending

Several manuscripts, dating from the sixth to the thirteenth century, have two endings. A shorter ending, following verse 8, reads:

But they reported briefly to Peter and those with him all that they had been told. And after this, Jesus himself sent out by means of them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation (RSV).

This “short ending” is followed by verses 9-20. Heibert says, “There can be no doubt that this short ending is not original but was a scribal addition prompted by an abrupt ending at verse 8. It was added because the account concluding at verse 8 was felt to be incomplete” (102).

Internal Evidence

Scholars who believe 16:9-20 is a scribal interpolation point out there is a marked difference in literary style between these verses and the rest of Mark's gospel and that these verses are too clumsily connected to the first eight verses to be authentically written by Mark. It is ironic, however, that scholars unanimously agree Mark's style of writing is without polish, clipped, quick-moving, and sometimes awkward; yet reject the authenticity of the last twelve verses because they are awkwardly connected to the first eight verses of chapter 16. Furthermore, Burgon shows without question that 16:9-20 “is exceedingly like the style of Mark 1:9-20” (255-270).

Burton Coffman offers additional internal evidences as to the authenticity of Mark's last twelve verses.

The most distinctive feature of Mark's gospel is the recurrence of the connective “and.” It is used 43 times in chapter 13, 86 times in chapter 14, 64 times in chapter 15, and 33 times in chapter 16—226 times in 176 verses, or an average of approximately 1.3 times per verse. The 12 verses we are considering have it 19 times, a little more than the 1.3 average. Furthermore, verses numbered 9-20 (the same numbers as here) in chapter 13 have this connective 19 times, exactly the same as in verses 9-20 at the end of Mark! And something else, the omission of “straightway” from 16:9-20 is exactly paralleled by

its omission from 13:9-20. Thus the two most decisive words of the Markan vocabulary bear witness to the genuineness of the text (13).

All of the above testimony, from ancient manuscripts, early Church fathers, and internal evidences, make a strong argument that the last twelve verses of Mark 16 are genuine and are rightfully included in the sacred text. J. W. McGarvey agreed.

Our final conclusion is that the passage in question is authentic in all its details, and that there is no reason to doubt that it was written by the same hand which indited the preceding parts of this narrative. The objections which have been raised against it are better calculated to shake our confidence in Biblical Criticism than in the genuineness of this inestimable portion of the word of God (377-382).

*1400 Northcrest Drive
Ada, Oklahoma 74820
carlmj@cableone.net*

Works Cited

- Burgon, John W., B.D. **The Last Twelve Verses of Mark**. Reprint. Faith and Facts Press, n.d.
- Coffman, James Burton. **Mark**. Austin, Tex.: Firm Foundation, 1975.
- Hiebert, D. Edmond. **An Introduction to the New Testament**. Vol. I. Chicago: Moody Press, 1975.
- Irenaeus. **Ante-Nicene Fathers**. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.
- Justin Martyr. **Ante-Nicene Fathers**. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

McCord, Hugo, Th.D. **New Testament Translation.** Henderson, Tenn.: Freed-Hardeman College, 1988.

McGarvey, J.W. LL.D. **New Testament Commentary-Matthew and Mark.** Delight, Ark.: Gospel Light Publishing Company, n.d.

Pritchard, John Paul. **A Literary Approach to the New Testament.** Norman, Okla.: University Press, 1972.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

James D. Orten

Over the fifty years that I have been an adult member of the church, I have observed several instances of a brother being disfellowshipped from the body. The last one was just a few months ago. As far as I can remember, in every case this extremely serious action by the church had a bad effect. The Christians disciplined did not repent, and in many cases it caused trouble in the congregations. With such results, I see no way to define these actions except as colossal failures.

In my judgment, the reason for such disappointing results was that the congregations had not prepared for church discipline before they got into the stress of actually doing it. Because they were guided by emotions, rather than reason and Scripture, they were not effective with the subjects, and often did not obtain full support of the churches. Thus, I believe every congregation should study church discipline when no need for it is in view. That is precisely the time, perhaps the only time, the topic can be studied objectively, and a clear Biblical plan made for doing the task appropriately.

The Basis for Discipline

Church discipline is based on the principle that every Christian is a member of the body of Christ, the church. Each member must function in unity with the body so that the member may be nourished spiritually and the body may function properly. Clearly, this principle was intended to benefit individual members and the body. Consider the human arm as an example. If it is cut off from the body, it will dete-

riorate within several hours and can never be restored. But the body too will suffer; it can continue to live, but it can not function as well as it should without its arm. That is exactly the principle Paul sets forth in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31.

Other Scriptures teach the same principle. "Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct" (Heb. 13:7). The word "remember" means to keep in mind, especially considering the work they do and the responsibility they have.

Hebrews 13:17 restates this principle in stronger terms: "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would not be profitable for you." In both verses the phrase "those who rule over you" means "your leaders." Several translations say, "Obey your leaders..." In the ideal case, these leaders would be qualified elders and deacons. But the apostle did not say elders and deacons. He used a general term for leaders, probably suggesting the truth that all churches have leaders, whether or not they have ordained elders. And the obligation for all Christians to work in unity with their leaders applies.

Consider Titus 1:5: "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you." Most people believe Christianity was established in Crete by Jews who heard Peter preach on Pentecost and took the gospel with them when they returned home. Persons from that island are specifically mentioned among the nations represented in Acts 2:11. This would suggest that some of those churches had existed for years, perhaps thirty years, before Paul wrote to Titus in A.D. 65 or 66. Even though these churches did not have ordained elders, they did have leaders, because they had men who were spiritually advanced enough to qualify as elders and be ordained by Titus.

Thus, all churches have leaders, and all Christians should work with their leaders under the direction of the Great Shepherd, Christ. And all churches should conduct Biblical discipline as needed and appropriate.

Purposes of Discipline

All acts of church discipline are done for two purposes that are of equal importance. Such phrases as “that the spirit may be saved” (1 Cor. 5:5), “restore such a one [to fellowship in the body]” (Gal. 6:1), and “that they may learn not to blaspheme” (1 Tim. 1:20), point to an emphasis on saving the erring brother. Even a brother who has been put out of the church is not to be simply forgotten. We are told not to “count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother” (2 Thess. 3:15). This refers to continued efforts to reclaim him to repentance and salvation.

The second goal of church discipline is to protect and spiritually strengthen the church. Speaking of the incestuous fornicator and heretic at Corinth, Paul said “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (1 Cor. 5:6). Leaving that incestuous person in the church would weaken respect for the morality the Christian life demands. Putting such an unrepentant one out would confirm the church’s faith in the morals it taught. Paul also suggested that this man’s flagrant and open life would harm the reputation of the church. He said that such “sexual immorality is not even named among the Gentiles.” The man’s excommunication showed the world that he was living an aberrant lifestyle that was not approved by the body of Christ.

We cannot correctly understand disfellowship, if we remove it from the broad context of church discipline. Yet, that is what we usually do. We often speak and behave as if disfellowship were the only form of discipline available to the church. If that were true, the church would be comparable to parents who for every infraction of their rules—large or small—beat their child in the severest manner. That would be a prescription for destroying the child. In contrast to that, disfellowship is the terminal point in a continuum of discipline; it is the action of last resort.

A Continuum of Discipline

1. Teaching and instruction. Just as all children need to learn in order to face life on their own, so all Christians must grow spiritually to prepare to live with the Lord in eternity. The truths and principles of Christ are food for the soul. Instruction against sin is preventive dis-

cipline. Whenever we learn new truths and submit ourselves to them, we are accepting discipline. All Christians need such instructions throughout their lives. Such positive discipline compares to parents who give their children allowances to help them learn to manage money. It assumes good intentions on the part of the teacher and the taught. Every teacher contributes to church discipline and every listener receives it.

2. Mild negative discipline. The word for this in Scripture is “reproof.” In 2 Timothy 4:2, Paul told Timothy to “reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” The word “reprove” seems to combine the ideas of teaching and rebuke. Several translations give the word as “convince,” others say “correct.” The writer suggests that the hearer is not accepting the teaching readily and needs somewhat more urging to do so. But the ideas of teaching and patience are still present. Note that Paul says “with all longsuffering and teaching.”

3. Rebuke is similar to reproof but with a stronger tone. The Greek word Paul used means “a strong expression of disapproval.” Even here, however, Paul’s charge for patience and instruction is still in effect. Just stopping wrong behaviors is never sufficient. We must teach the spiritual behaviors that should be put in their places.

4. Sharp rebuke is a still stronger reprimand. Paul recommended it to Titus (1:12-13): “One of them, a prophet of their own, said, ‘Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons. This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith...’” The Cretan society had apparently influenced Cretan Christians to live a riotous lifestyle. According to verse 10, “whole houses” had been subverted. As sin always does, their consciences had become hardened. Only severe rebuke would likely crack the shell of these stubborn hearts.

5. Disfellowship is the final act of discipline for an offending Christian. In the early days of Christianity, this action acquired the descriptive title of excommunication, but it is spoken of in Scripture by such terms as “withdraw yourselves

from” (2 Thess. 3:6), “have no company with” (2 Thess. 3:14), “mark and avoid” (Rom. 16:17), and so on. After this action, there is nothing more church leaders can do to reclaim a sinner, except to pray for him.

Discipline Directly from God

There is a more severe form of chastisement, but it is exercised directly by God. When there were divinely inspired prophets and apostles it was sometimes administered through them. Paul called this form of divine discipline “delivering to Satan,” and spoke of it in I Corinthians 5:5 and I Timothy 1:20. The first case was that infamous fornicator in Corinth, and the second was two brothers, named Hymenaeus and Alexander, who had sinned so that their consciences were defiled. Some Bible scholars believe the “destruction of the flesh” spoken of by Paul was literal, meaning these men would get sick and die if they did not repent. We know that the man at Corinth did repent (2 Cor. 2:14); we are not told of the results produced in Hymenaeus and Alexander.

There is remarkable agreement in good commentaries (i.e. Ellicott, MacKnight, Clarke) on the two passages noted above. Here is a sample comment by Ellicott on 1 Timothy 1:20:

In this fearful formula the offender is delivered over to Satan, the evil one. It is a solemn excommunication or expulsion from the church, accompanied with infliction of bodily disease or death. In ordinary cases, the offender was quietly expelled from the Christian society. But an apostle, and only an apostle, seems to have possessed the awful powers of inflicting bodily suffering in the form of disease and death.

God’s direct discipline was also administered by Peter on Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-11 and by Paul on Elymas the sorcerer in Acts 13:8. It was administered on Moses in Exodus 4:24-26 because he had not circumcised his youngest son. In these and other cases in the Old

Testament, the direct actions of the Lord are clear. We can infer the reasons for God's actions, and they fit the purposes for discipline noted earlier. This form of discipline, along with other special powers of the Spirit, passed out of human hands with the death of the inspired apostles. That does not mean that God does not still administer it. Paul said, "whom the Lord loves he chastens..." (Heb. 12:6).

When we look at this continuum, we can infer from it how God wants discipline administered. He wants church leaders to inform the unlearned, strengthen the weak, correct the unruly, and humble the hard-hearted. He clearly does not want a one-size-fits-all approach in which a tender new convert is given the same discipline as an arrogant heretic. Several passages lead to this conclusion.

"And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). There is a companion verse in Colossians 3:21. MacKnight explains that verse as: "Fathers, do not exasperate your children by harsh commands, or by rebuking and chastising them more severely, and more frequently, than their faults deserve, lest they be discouraged."

Several times over the years I have heard brethren say "strong discipline is what causes people to repent." That may well be true of stubborn and arrogant persons. But administered indiscriminately, I am certain it will hurt as many Christians as it helps.

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all" (1 Thess. 5:14). One brother said that we behave as if this passage read, "Warn the unruly, warn the fainthearted, warn the weak, and be patient with no one."

"And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh" (Jude 22-23). MacKnight gives verse 22 like this: "And making a distinction in your methods of reclaiming sinners, have compassion indeed on some who have erred through ignorance and weakness, and reclaim them by the gentle method of persuasion." He advises stronger methods for those whose behavior shows a corrupt heart.

The type of measured discipline we have been talking about was not foreign to the Old Testament. There is a wonderful parable in Isaiah 28:23-28 that explains how God disciplined Israel, and it was in the same way His inspired writers taught it in the New Testament.

Taken together, these Scriptures teach that the effective discipline God wants is discipline that is fitted to the condition of the sinner's heart and to the behavior he commits. A mean-spirited, unruly person needs sharp rebuke, in contrast to a tenderhearted but misguided person who needs gentle instruction and support. Not all of this discipline can be done from the pulpit. It seems a miscarriage of justice to lash out at an entire congregation for the sins of one or a few persons. Just as most parents would shrink from disciplining their children in public, so the pulpit is not a fit place to carry out much of the discipline needed in a church. Even the process of excommunication is to start in private (Mt. 18:15).

What Sins Merit Church Discipline?

The answer to the above question is "all types." Christians should be taught that sins of every sort are against our new nature in Christ and should be put away (2 Cor. 5:17). The great principles of spiritual living should be taught so as to cause Christians to shrink in horror from sin. As with children, an emphasis on positive training will often obviate the need for harsh discipline later.

Although the church through its leaders executes formal discipline, all Christians can help in the training and growth of their brothers and sisters. Whenever we see a fellow Christian sin, or one who is not growing spiritually, we should talk with him. Talking with others, however, obligates us to learn to do it appropriately. One is not a good parent just because he spans his child; he is a good parent only when he effectively instills godly principles. A church leader is not effective just because he gets an erring Christian "told;" he is effective when he incites spiritual growth. Although all sins call for training and instruction, not all sins merit excommunication.

What Sins Merit Disfellowship?

We have great difficulty answering this question. There has been general agreement on some sins, such as fornication (1 Cor. 5:11), but other sins named in the same passage are ignored. How many persons have you known to be disfellowshipped for covetousness? And questions arise even on those that seem clear at first. For example, why did Paul order the church at Corinth to put out the incestuous man in 1 Corinthians 5, and not tell them to take action against other fornicators who were in the same church (see 2 Cor. 12:21)? I believe our difficulty here is that we are asking the wrong question.

The church does not disfellowship sins, it disfellowships Christians who commit sins. The appropriate question is, "What type of erring Christian merits disfellowship?" The answer is, a Christian who stubbornly and openly continues in sin, for which lesser forms of discipline have not worked. An application of this principle will help one understand Paul's seemingly inconsistent actions discussed in the preceding paragraph.

Not all Christians who commit the same sinful act are the same type of sinners. One may be sinning out of ignorance, another may be a new convert who has not yet grown, another may be under milder forms of church discipline, and on and on. All Christians deserve an opportunity to repent. Christ gave Jezebel of Thyatira, a fornicator and heretic similar to the man in 1 Corinthians 5, "time to repent" (Rev. 2:21). We will have no person who is more a disgrace to, or corrupter of, the church than was she.

A congregation might have to postpone excommunication of a brother because to do so at the time would hurt the church more than it would help. It makes no sense to "protect the church" by a process that might destroy it. Doctors must constantly weigh the benefits of an operation with untoward consequences it may have. This truth is taught in Jesus' Parable of the Tares and the Wheat in Matthew 13. Stated succinctly the principle there is: Save the wheat first. And it is the principle that explains Paul's decision not to throw out at once all fornicators in Corinth. He said, I am "prepared to punish all disobedience, when your obedience is completed" (2 Cor. 10:6). MacKnight paraphrases Paul's statement: "And with respect to those who profess

themselves Christians, [we] are prepared by our miraculous power to punish all disobedience, as I shall do in Corinth, when the obedience of such of you as are disposed to repent is completed.”

The Process of Disfellowshipment

How is excommunication performed? The process of the final act of discipline is given in Matthew 18:15-17. It consists of:

- A first warning given in private. The reason for this seems obvious. A person approached in private by someone he respects is more apt to listen. If he repents, “you have gained your brother.” If he does not repent within a reasonable period:
- A second warning is given in the presence of one or two witnesses. The person sent the first time, and those added as witnesses, should be individuals most likely to elicit repentance. If after another period for reflection the person still refuses to repent:
- The matter is taken before the church for final action. Note that in churches with fully qualified elders and deacons, this action must be done by a majority of the body. The man in I Corinthians was delivered to Satan on Paul’s orders by a “majority” of the church (2 Cor. 2:6). Apparently some in the church continued to support him, but the majority followed Paul and the action was effective. “This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man.”

Throughout this process the congregation should maintain an attitude of mourning for the loss of the sinner’s soul and for the hurt done to the body of Christ. The appropriate attitude toward a brother who sins is sadness, not anger (Mt. 18:31, 1 Cor. 5:2, and 2 Cor. 12:21). The reason for this response is that grief is an emotion that pulls people together (witness how people behave at funerals), while anger repels them. Any disciplinary action taken in anger is almost certain to harden rather than soften the sinner.

I am aware that some Christian’s take the position that the process described here applies only to “personal sins” while “sins against the church” may be handled differently. Usually the appeal is to I Corinthians 5 and the wish is to dispense a faster form of “justice.” But the Scriptures do not substantiate such a conclusion. First, Paul said the man in I Corinthians 5 had

sinned against a person. "I did not write to you for the sake of him who did the wrong, nor for the sake of him who suffered the wrong.." (2 Cor. 7:12). Second, no sin hurts only an individual. All sins are against God whose law has been broken. Most sins are against other persons; and all sins hurt the church to some extent. For example, the man who commits fornication sins against his own body (1 Cor. 6:18), against God (2 Sam. 12:13), against the partner with whom he participates in sin, against the spouse of his partner (2 Cor. 7:12), and against the church (1 Cor. 5:1). The brother against whom a sin was committed is the logical one to start the process of discipline because he knows most about it, but Jesus (in Matthew 18) was talking about how to handle sin in the church.

Church leaders have the responsibility of learning to use the full continuum of procedures that promote spiritual growth. When that is done, there will be few instances in which a brother or sister will require the discipline of last resort. When it is needed and done in the appropriate attitude and the right way, it will likely leave the church stronger and probably reclaim the erring disciple.

*9005 N. 134th E. Ave.
Owasso, OK 74055*

CARNAL WARFARE AND THE CHRISTIAN

Paul O. Nichols

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds:) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled (2 Cor. 10:3-6)

It is our intention to look into God's Word and see whether or not it is scriptural and right for the Christian who engages in the spiritual warfare to also participate in carnal war. A faithful child of God will allow the Bible to settle the matter in his mind.

First, let us notice a prophecy found in Isaiah 2:2-4.

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

There was a time when the nation, Israel, was God's chosen people, but today this is not the case. God has people in all nations. All who will obey the gospel, regardless of where they live, become the children of God. The arrangement is entirely different from Old Testament days when God ruled in one nation. The religion that Jesus brought into the world was not for one nation but for all people. The Bible tells us that Jesus gave to his apostles the command, "Go ye therefore into all of the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:15,16). Again, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Mt. 28:18-20). This suggests that all nations of the world have an equal right to salvation. There is no particular nation that is favored.

The religion of Jesus Christ is a religion of peace. The Apostle Paul says in Hebrews 12:14, "Follow peace with all men." The prophecy of Isaiah 2:2-4 foretold a time when peace would come upon the earth, not as a general rule, but as something that was obtainable in the Lord's house. According to the prophecy, all nations would flow unto the mountain of the Lord's house. When they did so, they would find out His ways. Once they learned His ways, they would learn war no more. In this dispensation of time, we have the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah. The Christian learns war no more.

The Apostle Paul, in 1 Timothy 3:15, tells us that the house of the Lord is the church. So when Isaiah was prophesying that these things would transpire in the house of the Lord, he was simply saying when the church came into existence that these things would become a reality. "The weapons of our warfare, are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down of imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

Even though the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, the Christian has a fight that he must continually wage. In 2 Timothy 1:18, Paul says,

“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.” Again, Paul says in Ephesians 6:11-17,

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness: and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherein ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

We are told in Hebrews 4:12, “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Thus we have outlined in the Scriptures the armour of the Christian soldier.

Our warfare is against enemies of the cross. Notice that Paul says, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph. 6:12). We should never lose sight of the fact that there are those who seek to uphold these things that must be opposed. Paul teaches Timothy, “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Tim. 2:3,4). Paul was a man who could be followed as an example of what a Christian soldier should be. In 1 Corinthians 9:26, Paul said, “So fight I, not as one that beateth the air.” At the close of his life, shortly before his death at Rome, he could write to Timothy and tell him that he had “fought a good fight.” In Philipians 3:14-20, he said,

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so ye have us for an example. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) For our conversation is in heaven: from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul teaches that the Christian has a spiritual battle to wage constantly. Since our battle is spiritual, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds and the casting down of imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. In Mark 12, we have an account of a lawyer asking Jesus what the greatest commandment is. Jesus replies, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these" (vv. 30-31). John says, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (Jn. 4:20-21). In His sermon on the mount, Jesus teaches,

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you: that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do no even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than oth-

ers? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect (Mt. 5:44-48).

Love is the cardinal principle of Christianity. Jesus teaches that a Christian is to love even his enemies. This teaching does not mean that he is to love his enemies in the same sense as he does his wife or children, but it does mean that he is to love them to the extent that he will do good to them rather than evil. The Apostle Paul instructs in Romans 12:17-21,

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest on the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

This is the teaching of the religion of Christ, and one who is truly a Christian will practice this principle of love. In Romans 13:8-10, Paul teaches,

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

You can see how much stress is placed upon the subject of love in the New Testament, helping us understand the attitude of the true Christian. In Malachi 3:1, it was foretold that John the Baptist was coming to make straight paths for the feet of Jesus. He was to prepare men's minds to receive the teaching of Christ. In Luke 3:14, there were soldiers who asked John what they should do. His reply was, "Do violence to no man." Not even a soldier was permitted to exercise violence in the line of duty!

Also, in Matthew 26, we read the account of Jesus being taken in the Garden of Gethsemane.

And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. And Jesus said unto him, friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him. And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword (Mt. 26:47-52).

People in this day and age talk about “moral” and “immoral” wars. There is no such thing as a “moral” war as far as the Lord is concerned. The principles of Christianity are diametrically opposed to the destruction of property and the killing of human beings. The Bible teaches “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.” Listen to James:

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law (Jas. 2:10-11).

What it means to become a transgressor of the law is that one is in violation of the teaching of God's Word. John says, “Whosoever sinneth transgresseth also the law.”

Hatred is the motive for killing. In 1 John 3:15, John says, “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” Not only does God condemn murder or killing, but He even condemns the motive behind it. In Galatians 5:19-21, Paul enumerates the works of the flesh, and among them is murder. He says, “They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” In

Revelation 21:8, John says, “But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

Sometimes, in an effort to justify war, people will appeal to the Old Testament Scriptures. There were times, they say, that God ordered His people into battle. This fact is true. But, at that time God was dealing with one nation, and that nation was made up of God’s chosen people. They were often told to go into battle against the enemy. However, we are living in a new dispensation of time, and the religion that we now serve under is Christianity—not Judaism.

In this dispensation, there is no place in the New Testament that tells us we may go into battle; fighting, killing, maiming, halting, and blinding our enemy. Christ is called the Prince of Peace. We serve God under His banner, and the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.

Some believe Romans 13 teaches that Christians must submit to the higher power, even if they demand disobedience to the commands of God. Let us notice what Paul says:

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due: custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

In connection with this passage, we notice 1 Peter 2:13-14. Peter says,

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

In Acts 5:29, Peter says, however, "We ought to obey God rather than men." Sometimes the leaders make mistakes, as all of us know. When they do, and should they command us to do something contrary to the will of God, we must obey God rather than men. We are not to understand that the Apostle Paul is teaching in Romans 13 that we must go into battle contrary to the will of God and fight and kill just because our leaders tell us to. Remember, the Bible teaches the same thing the world over, and that means that Christians in other nations will have the same orders and the same responsibilities; therefore we could have Christians killing Christians. Often men pose a hypothetical question and ask "What would you do under the circumstances?" The answer is, "A Christian who is faithful to God will do what the Lord has taught him to do." Paul says, "There is no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13). Also, in Romans 12:17 Paul says, "Recompense to no man evil for evil." Again, he says, "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good." This principle is what the Bible teaches, and if we are going to be faithful followers of Jesus, we are going to have to accept these principles and live by them. A Christian must submit himself to the will of God in complete obedience. Jesus said, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt. 7:21). James says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receiveth the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas. 1:12).

It is not always easy to live a Christian life. But the Bible does not promise that the path of Christian will be strewn with rose petals. In fact the Apostle Paul said, "All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). We must learn that when problems arise and

temptations come, we must be guided by those things which the Bible teaches in order to be faithful to God.

When Jesus was crucified on the cross of Calvary, He had the power to call on twelve legions of angels to defend Him; but instead he prayed for His persecutors. He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). Stephen, the first martyr to die for Christ, prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). This man did as Jesus had taught His followers to do, "Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Mt. 5:44). Praying for our enemies is not easy for anyone, but it is the will of the Father.

The purpose of living the Christian life is to go to heaven. We are told in Revelation 2:7, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." We are encouraged to keep right on serving the Lord in the midst of adversities and trials and tribulations, if need be, because Jesus promises, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Mt. 24:13). Again, He says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). Our first duty and allegiance is to Him who purchased our redemption with His own blood, King Jesus, "King of kings and Lord of lords."

*14970 Forest View Ct.
Bonner Springs, Kansas 66012
pon.wjn.ks@juno.com*

Preachers' Study Notes

We still have for sale Preachers' Study Notes from 1982 through 2000. The 2001 and 2002 volumes are in preparation for publication. Lord willing, the 2001 volume will be ready late Autumn 2003, and the 2002 volume as soon thereafter as possible. Write the CE or visit our website at www.cepsn.org for a complete index of topics 1982-2000.

2000 PREACHERS' STUDY NOTES

\$16

Theme: Difficult Passages of the Bible • Modest Apparel & The Role of Women *Melvin Blalock* • Commonly Misapplied Passages *Allen Bailey* • Angels and the Gospel *Glen Osburn* • Questions About Evangelists and Preachers *Dennis Smith* • Difficult Passages on the Kingdom *Doug Edwards* • Jesus and the Holy Spirit *Jimmy Smith* • God's Foreknowledge and Control *Alan Bonifay* • The Head and Its Covering *George Battey* • Because of the Angels *David Stands* • Imputed Righteousness *Johnny Elmore* • Is It Ever Right to Do Wrong? *Richard Bunner* • Warnings Against Immaturity and Apostasy *Jim Crouch* • Congregational Autonomy *Bennie Cryer* • Christian Liberties *Raymond Fox* • The Christian and the End of Time *Ronny Wade* • Domestic Qualifications of Elders *Glenn Ballard* • Christians and Their Use of Money *Art Lynch*

1999 PREACHERS' STUDY NOTES

\$16

Old Testament 2 (The Prophets & Poets, History of Israel From Captivity to the Messiah) • Amos *James D. Orten* • Hosea *Greg Gay* • Jonah *Alan Bonifay* • Obadiah *Richard Bunner* • Joel *Melvin Blalock* • Isaiah: The Messianic Prophecies *Doug Edwards* • Isaiah: Contemporary Prophecies *Duane Permenter* • Micah *Bennie Cryer* • Nahum *Charles McConnell* • Zephaniah *Allen Bailey* • Habakkuk *Michael Fox* • Jeremiah and Lamentations *Carl Johnson* • Daniel: Setting, Structure *Ron Courter* • Daniel: Prophecies *Terry Baze* • Ezekiel *Johnny Elmore* • Haggai *Ryan Conner* • Zechariah *Art Lynch* • Malachi *Wayne McKamie* • Nehemiah *Mike Criswell* • Ezra: Restoration of Israel *Ronny Wade* • Esther *Jerry Dickinson* • Introduction to Hebrew Poetry *Smith Bibens* • Job *Raymond Fox* • Psalms L. G. *Butler* • Proverbs *Taylor Joyce* • Song of Solomon *Glen Osburn* • Ecclesiastes *Wayne Fussell* • The Silent Years: Between the Testaments *Jim Crouch*

1997 PREACHERS' STUDY NOTES

\$16

(Old Testament 1: Genesis through the Captivity) • The Old Testament World *James D. Orten* • Critical Theories in Old Testament Literature *Raymond Fox* • The Creation, The Temptation, and The Fall *Smith Bibens* • The Genesis Flood *Johnny Elmore* • The Hebrew Patriarchs *Mike Criswell* • "Let My People Go!" (A Survey of Exodus) *Doug Edwards* • A Survey of Leviticus *Alan Bonifay* • A Survey of Numbers *Alan Bonifay* • A Survey of Deuteronomy *Duane Permenter* • Joshua J. *Wayne McKamie* • The Work of the Judges *Michael Fox* • Ruth *Wayne Fussell* • Social Life in Israel *Richard Bunner* • The Reign of Saul *Bennie Cryer* • The Reign of David *Ron Courter* • The Reign of Solomon *Carl Johnson* • An Introduction to the Divided Kingdom *Jim Crouch* • The Northern Kingdom, Jeroboam to Jehoram *Jim Crouch* • The Northern Kingdom, Jehu to the Exile *Bill Davis* • The Southern Kingdom, Rehoboam to Hezekiah *Taylor Joyce* • The Southern Kingdom, Manasseh to the Exile *Jim Crouch* • Israel and Judah in Captivity *Ronny Wade*

Visit our website at www.cepsn.org for subscriptions, gift subscriptions, information about upcoming issues, CE Special Issues, Preachers' Study Notes, article reprints, and downloadable back issues.